

Sunday Reading.

Love.

"Love God, and He will dwell with you.
If love be perfect there remains no fear;
If God its object—He is always near;
Not like a transient guest,
But He will still abide,
In storm and sunshine
Ever at thy side.

How blest the home where God Himself doth dwell,
How safe its haven, though the torrent swell;
Calm reigns within the breast,
Bright is the sky above;
Its joy unfeigned,
Changeless as God's love.
F. PERRONET BISSON.

On the Sea Shore.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

It is not often that you find a seafaring man who is an atheist. Addison tells us of a time when he was on board a ship, and there was a passenger on deck who was an infidel. He was reported to the captain as an atheist, and neither he nor the sailors could make out what sort of a strange fish that might be, and asked him what he meant. They were told that he did not believe in God. A storm coming on, the men proposed that they should pitch him overboard, seeing he did not believe in God Almighty; but he was soon cured of his unbelief, for, when things looked threatening, the first person who was down on his knees, crying for mercy in great terror, was the precious atheist, who soon got rid of his atheism when he felt in danger of his life.

God made the sea; you can mark His wisdom there. Philosophers tell us there is just as much water in the sea as there ought to be, and no more. That the sea is salt, and therefore does not corrupt; that it is moved with tides and currents, and therefore does not stagnate; that it evaporates, and therefore does not increase so as to drown the earth, are all instances of Divine wisdom. If its waters were more or less salt than they are, many fishes would die, and the floating power of the ocean would change. The more we study the sea, the more shall we say, "Thy way, O Lord, is in the sea, and Thy path in the great waters."

And certainly no man can deny the power which thunders across the billows. What tremendous force is there displayed! "The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods have lifted up their waves. The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." When one has seen the damage the sea has wrought upon our coasts, the way in which the hardest rock has been worn away—when one has sadly watched a huge barque tossed to and fro like a plaything, and when one has heard how the hugest vessels are caught in cyclones and whirled away like feathers, one bows upon his face before the Almighty Lord who rules the sea.

And yet God's goodness is there as well. The sea is a great benefactor. Where were the clouds, and where the rains, and where our harvests, if it were not for the ocean? The sea feeds myriads with its fish, and enriches many more by its commerce. It was once thought to divide nations, but now it has become the highway by which they communicate, a silver belt by which all lands are bound to one another. England, above all nations, has reason to see the goodness of God in the sea. Perhaps we had not even remained a nation if the silver streak had not separated us from the Continent. Most probably we had not been a free nation or a Protestant nation, if the Lord had not bidden the waters encompass us.

Every attribute of God shines in the sea, although the more spiritual and precious are but dimly seen, these being reserved to be manifested in Christ Jesus the Lord, before whose feet the sea crouched in reverence. Perhaps even those attributes will be discovered to be there in some degree, when our eyes shall be strengthened to see the glory of the Lord in all His works. Till then we will listen to the sea and think of it as an

Impassioned orator with lips sublime,
Whose waves are arguments which prove a God.

Religious Conversation.

BY REV. THOMAS SPURGEON.

It is truly wonderful how soon solemn impressions and subdued feelings wear off, especially if these have been induced by a superstitious reverence for times and places. Not more quickly vanishes the morning mist or the early dew before the sun than does a fancied piety at the door of the place of worship. Conversation with friends, and the jostling of the crowd help to strangle the holy thoughts which had just been born, and the good seed seems likely to be trampled on and destroyed immediately after leaving the sower's basket. Sometimes, thank God, it springs up again; indeed, the very trampling can be used by the Great Husbandman as one means towards the glorious end He has in view; but as far as human judgment can decide, much of the seed is destroyed by the too rough harrowing that it undergoes at the very first.

Then, on the road from church to home, the converse is not always all it should be. Acquaintances are met, family or business matters are discussed, and after a brief remark about the preacher, the more serious matters are quite forgotten, and levity, in some cases, rules the hour. Christian people thus frequently lose the opportunity of experiencing that blessed heartburn which those who talk of Jesus know when Jesus Himself joins their party and turns even its sadness into gladness. Alas, how often an unconverted friend, who has, perhaps, been impressed by the sermon, finds the impression more than counteracted by the irrelevant converse of his professed friends!

I do not know a better opportunity for the disciple who is a little timid in speaking to others about their souls than when homeward-bound from a religious service. It surely is not hard to speak a word for Jesus then. The friend can not deem such converse out of place, nor be offended at it. The sermon is fresh in his memory and in yours. You have a text to hand, and something to start with, and if the service has been a blessing to you, you should be just in the right trim to tell of Christ's love. Try it, dear friend—try it as soon as you can. Clinch the nail that the preacher has tried to drive. Stamp the wax which he may have been the means of melting. Your success will surprise you. If we only knew what others think of our ordinary and inappropriate conversation we should, if only for our own sakes, engage in more solemn and profitable converse en route for home. But we have higher motives: the urgent need of the unconverted, and the glory of our Saviour, should prompt us to use this most fitting opportunity of spreading the truth.

I would far rather that the audience should speak of sermon and preacher, and criticise them both, however unfavourably, than that they should be placed together on the shelf of forgetfulness. The sermon and its solemn truths ought to occupy the mind and thought of those who have just heard it. Mrs. So-and-so's new bonnet is a usurper if it gets all the attention. Yet how often the crying of a baby, or the fainting of a woman, or the number of the audience or the singing takes the place of the rightful theme of conversation!

Only one Day, at a Time.

A certain lady met with a serious accident, which necessitated a very painful surgical operation, and many months' confinement to her bed. When the physician had finished his work, and was about taking his leave, the patient asked, "Doctor, how long shall I have to lie here helpless?" "Oh, only one day at a time," was the cheery answer; and the poor sufferer was not only comforted for the moment, but many times during the succeeding weary weeks did the thought, "Only one day at a time," come with its quieting influence. I think it was Sidney Smith who recommended taking "short views" as a good safeguard against needless worry; and One, far wiser than he said: "Take therefore, no thought for the morrow. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Bishop Ireland says "The men who babble about social reforms without pointing to the saloons as the first causes of poverty and degradation talk in the air."

The Pittsburgh Banner says that thirty-two per cent. of the murders and crimes of violence in Germany are committed on Sunday.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has sent four missionaries to China, two to Mexico, and two to Brazil; and the Women's Board has sent four ladies. Twelve in one year shows an advancement.

Associational Sermon.

(Published by special request of the Association.)

Greater Works.

A SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE N. S. EASTERN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION AT TREURO, JULY 9TH, 1883.

BY REV. D. A. STEELE.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto the Father."—JOHN XIV. 12.

The works of the Master were exceptionally great. Take them altogether they were such as had not been performed by the prophets of the Jewish race. Moreover, in the case of Moses, Elijah, and Elisha, the notably illustrious wonder-workers, the power had never been claimed by the prophet. Jehovah had wrought through the servant. At the command of his God Moses stretched out his rod, and the waters rolled over the Egyptians. Elijah prayed, and God sent fire from heaven to burn the wood and lick up the water. But Jesus invariably did the work Himself. "I do the work." "I cast out devils." "Lazarus, come forth." "I say unto thee, arise." There is no wonder-working rod, no long continued supplication for power; He had it. "In Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

This declaration is all the more surprising, then, "My miracles are exceptional; they are wrought by the direct authority of Deity, and yet my disciples shall do these very works, yea, and greater." John xiv. 12.

We have here the key which opens a great gate. Let us open it and behold. Our interpretation is to be found in the events following the Resurrection, and, linked in with these, in the progress and triumphs of Christianity. We need not, perhaps, do more than point to the fact that the disciples did the same specific things which Jesus indicated when He said, "The works that I do, shall he do also." Wherever the new order of things penetrated the sick were healed, demons were cast out, the dead were raised. See the Acts of the Apostles everywhere. Nor need we stop to consider whether the gift of speaking with other tongues, and their interpretation, was included in this declaration. Most likely they were. But these, as the apostle Paul tells us, were to cease. It is to the permanent, the abiding elements of the gospel that we are chiefly to address ourselves, as exhibited in the whole progress of Christianity. The sayings of our Lord are, it seems to us, to be largely interpreted in light of history.

I. THE OPERATIONS OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORLD INVOLVE A HIGHER ORDER OF PROCEDURE THAN THE WORKING OF MIRACLES.

1. Immediately the words were verified. Christianity was bound in its swaddling-clothes. It was tongue-tied. Scarcely had the ascension taken place when it sprang forth a strong armed man. The Holy Spirit descended, and there were the audible and visible tokens of His presence. There was the Pentecostal prophecy in the flaming tongues that the disciples should speak with new powers of utterance, winning the obedience of the people, "opening their eyes, and turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." This sort of blessing ranges itself, in any moral estimate, far beyond that of a merely physical demonstration of power. The salvation of a soul is a greater work than the creation of a loaf of bread to feed him with.

2. The organizing of Christianity by the first preachers, or more specifically, by the apostles, is another illustration of our Lord's words. The genius for organization in secular affairs is confessedly of a high order. Behold, then, the first builders laying the foundation. How simple, yet how strong and symmetrical was the form of the New Testament churches! The apostles preached, the people believed, accepted Jesus as the Messiah, were baptized, and formed into compact bodies, with a distinctive head and subordinate officers for each church. "They appointed for them elders in every church," (Acts xiv. 23; Titus i. 5). The apostolic letters were written to the churches, "with their bishops and deacons," (Phil. i. 1). I believe if the Saviour stood here to-day He would give us His assent to this paraphrase of His words: "Yes, in the founding and disciplining of these churches on New Testament principles all over the world, (in China, in India, in Burmah, in England, and in America), in the ingathering of the converts, and in indoctrinating and marshalling them for effective work, I recognize more important doings, more substantial results than in my own wonder works of healing the sick, feeding the hungry, and raising the dead." If this seem to you, my brethren, far-fetched, or bordering on audacity, remember who has started the comparison, my Lord, not I.

3. The Infinite Moral Force of the Gospel may be regarded as another illustration. Wherever Christianity has gone it has always been followed by the same great results. It has first subdued the sinners, then it has energized the nation, lifted it up into a new life, and given it a higher form of civilization. Like as in chemical processes, it has newly arranged the various particles, fusing the whole mass of otherwise chaotic material. Witness the complete transformation of the Sandwich Islands during the present century.

4. In the benevolent spirit induced by Christianity. Everywhere in Christian countries there is the almshouse, hospital, the infirmary, the institutions for the deaf mute, the blind, the insane. Here is one of the most obvious applications of our Lord's declaration. The age Isaiah foresaw, when the tongue of the dumb should sing, the lame men leap as the hart, the deaf ears be unstopped, stretches onward through all the progress of the new dispensation, from the hour when the author of Christianity commenced His sympathetic operations down to the age when it became impossible that any sufferer would be neglected. In the aid afforded to the suffering thousands, in the instruction imparted to those whose faculties are sealed by nature, read a fresh commentary on the truth of the text. Christian philanthropy repeats the miracles of Jesus in every generation, and multiplies them a thousand-fold.

5. Consecrated Education. We have not got to go far out of our way to find another application of the text. The most beneficent influence exercised in connection with Christianity has resulted from the labors of the sons of its great public schools. The universities of the old world are notoriously the offspring of Christianity. The colleges of the new are not less so. Turn to your encyclopædia and you will find that Oxford, Edinburgh, St. Andrew's, Harvard, Yale, and Brown were founded by the gifts of Christ's servants, on specifically Christian principles. From these lamps of learning has radiated much of the light which has illumined the English speaking part of the two continents. While there are works the world could well afford to lose, which have been written by men from these schools, how can we estimate the debt owed by all Christian teachers to the ripe scholarships of Oxford, &c., &c. They find their ablest coadjutors in Bishops Butler and Ellicott, Conybeare and Howson, Deans Liddell and Scott, on the other side of the water, and in Jonathan Edwards, Hodge, Shedd, Hackett and Schaff in America. Not to lengthen the list by the names of those in less noted institutions who have contributed their quota to the defences of Christianity, its histories, its exegesis or to its practical application, we but stop to point out the moral rising far before us that the literary labors of Christ's servants must be reckoned among the "greater works" contemplated by the Saviour. It is not too much to affirm that the vast works of Christian scholars, requiring each many years of constant labor, the products of the poet, the historian, the translator, the interpreter, and the preacher, overreach in merit and in importance the ephemeral manifestations of "signs" or "miracles" wherewith the Messiah was wont to attest and illustrate His mission. The lasting benefit conferred upon the world by the men who have been reared at these universities in translating the Scriptures, the Bible given to the English by Wycliff, the same Book translated into the German vernacular by Luther, into Hindostani by Carey, and into Burmese by Judson, are perhaps the best attestation of the meaning of our blessed Lord. If the words which He spake are "spirit and life," if "man is not to live by bread alone, but by every word proceeding out of the mouth of God," then we lay claim to this illustration also. It is a greater thing to translate and to multiply and to circulate the word of life, than to perform the most astounding miracles. Wherever the Bible goes there appear the perpetual wonders of the new dispensation, the blind receive their sight, and the tongue of the dumb breaks forth into jubilant notes, "Come all ye that fear God and I will tell you what He hath done for my soul."

6. But it is in the ordinary workings of Christianity that we have the clearest exhibition of the truth here embodied. (1). The preaching of the gospel, when in demonstration of the spirit, and the ever increasing multitudes by this agency gathered into the fold of Christ, compare with the few in His own day, or with the little band who assembled in that upper chamber. Paul indeed tells of five hundred brethren; but let us for a moment think of the tens of thousands gathered in throughout the world during the last

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11. The SAVIOUR'S WARRANT FOR SO REMARKABLE A STATEMENT. One reason is because of the new powers which the Christ should exert by virtue of His atoning sacrifice, "because I go to the Father."

It is not, then, owing primarily to the advance in knowledge of His servants, or to their experience; not to the fresh appliances which the church should discern and utilize from age to age, for example, the printing press, and the common school, factors powerful, but not sufficient to account for the "greater things" of John's gospel. The reason for the splendid successes of the first ministers of our Lord in converting the world is to be found in the power communicated to them by the living Christ. "Because I live ye shall live also," are His words on this same occasion. It is, then, because He is there that we can do these works here. It is because of Jesus permitting and aiding that we can do greater things than He did. Our power is simply spiritual force as given us by Him. Even what it is we know not. More subtle than the electric fluid we cannot reckon on it, nor understand it. We simply appropriate it by placing ourselves in a receiving attitude. He bestows like a God, largely, freely, but the law of His kingdom is, "Ask, and it shall be given you." It must be used only in His service for the help of men, and not for own aggrandizement, or for our own glory. He is evermore saying to us: "Do as I did. Work for men and I will clothe you with power from on high. Fear not their faces, pay no heed to their hard sayings. I will bring them to myself, I will cause them to be obedient to the faith. I will glorify the Father by subduing the greatest enemies I have. 'Go ye into all the world, and lo, I am with you.'"

One or two words of application.

1. We Christians must do the greater works. We ought not to be content with the commonplace forms of Christian life, nor to be satisfied with our usual humdrum ways. Jesus spake these words, not only of apostles, but of all those who should believe in Him. It is, therefore, incumbent on every believer to consider this whole matter. Thus only do we prove ourselves to be His disciples, when we are willing to carry out the intimations of His Word. It is wholly in vain for us to insist that we are New Testament Christians, to affirm that Baptists are nearer the truth than others. All such talk is the merest denominational braggadocio if we do not exceed other bodies in good works. The Master gives us His command: "Do the works! Convert men! Snatch them out of the fire! Exercise the faith that will remove mountains." We talk a good deal about John the Baptist. Let us remember that "from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom

of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." I do not see why our Methodist brethren should have a monopoly of that text. It belongs of right to us. Let us be importunate; let us arise and do greater things!

2. Every true servant of God will take the course of action that will result in greater works. Paramount to your own business you will put first the kingdom of God, and labor for its welfare. You are as much bound to do this as your minister is. It is for this you have been brought into the kingdom. I am afraid some of us are quieting our consciences with doing exceedingly little things, not one millionth part of what the Master did, and yet we are to do greater! Are we prepared to accept this idea? If so, how far will it carry us? You will labor. You will make sacrifices. You will give dollars where you now are content to give cents, tens and hundreds where you now give one. There would then be no languishing treasures in our Boards. I desire to see my brethren and sisters rising up to the full measure of this high standard. We ought to make enlarged donations to our denominational societies. The College should now receive ample funds with which to pay off its indebtedness. The mission treasures, Home and Foreign, stand in sore need just now. Our aged ministers, laid by from service, should receive more help from those to whom they have dispensed the word of life. In short, we should imitate the wise men who brought to the infant Jesus the most costly offerings, "gold and frankincense and myrrh." Thus shall we show forth the doctrine laid down in these words.

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of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." I do not see why our Methodist brethren should have a monopoly of that text. It belongs of right to us. Let us be importunate; let us arise and do greater things!

2. Every true servant of God will take the course of action that will result in greater works. Paramount to your own business you will put first the kingdom of God, and labor for its welfare. You are as much bound to do this as your minister is. It is for this you have been brought into the kingdom. I am afraid some of us are quieting our consciences with doing exceedingly little things, not one millionth part of what the Master did, and yet we are to do greater! Are we prepared to accept this idea? If so, how far will it carry us? You will labor. You will make sacrifices. You will give dollars where you now are content to give cents, tens and hundreds where you now give one. There would then be no languishing treasures in our Boards. I desire to see my brethren and sisters rising up to the full measure of this high standard. We ought to make enlarged donations to our denominational societies. The College should now receive ample funds with which to pay off its indebtedness. The mission treasures, Home and Foreign, stand in sore need just now. Our aged ministers, laid by from service, should receive more help from those to whom they have dispensed the word of life. In short, we should imitate the wise men who brought to the infant Jesus the most costly offerings, "gold and frankincense and myrrh." Thus shall we show forth the doctrine laid down in these words.

3. The SAVIOUR'S WARRANT FOR SO REMARKABLE A STATEMENT. One reason is because of the new powers which the Christ should exert by virtue of His atoning sacrifice, "because I go to the Father."

It is not, then, owing primarily to the advance in knowledge of His servants, or to their experience; not to the fresh appliances which the church should discern and utilize from age to age, for example, the printing press, and the common school, factors powerful, but not sufficient to account for the "greater things" of John's gospel. The reason for the splendid successes of the first ministers of our Lord in converting the world is to be found in the power communicated to them by the living Christ. "Because I live ye shall live also," are His words on this same occasion. It is, then, because He is there that we can do these works here. It is because of Jesus permitting and aiding that we can do greater things than He did. Our power is simply spiritual force as given us by Him. Even what it is we know not. More subtle than the electric fluid we cannot reckon on it, nor understand it. We simply appropriate it by placing ourselves in a receiving attitude. He bestows like a God, largely, freely, but the law of His kingdom is, "Ask, and it shall be given you." It must be used only in His service for the help of men, and not for own aggrandizement, or for our own glory. He is evermore saying to us: "Do as I did. Work for men and I will clothe you with power from on high. Fear not their faces, pay no heed to their hard sayings. I will bring them to myself, I will cause them to be obedient to the faith. I will glorify the Father by subduing the greatest enemies I have. 'Go ye into all the world, and lo, I am with you.'"

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