

Crossing The Bar.

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me,
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea.

But such a tide as moving seems asleep—
Too full for sound or foam—
When that which drew from out the bound-
less deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark,
And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I embark—
For though from out our bourne of time
and place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to meet my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.

—Tennyson.

Fifty Years in the Ministry.

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

This is the golden Sabbath of the year. To-day the Christian sanctuaries are fragrant with vernal flowers, and vocal with jubilant songs of praise. The Easter carols, circling with the sun and "keeping company with the hours" belt the round globe with unceasing Hallelujahs to our risen Lord: "Hail day of days! In psalms of praise Throughout all ages owned, When Christ our God death's empire trod And high o'er heaven was throned!"

To me, my dear friends, this is peculiarly a golden day. For it completes a happy half century in the ministry of the glorious Gospel of salvation. And before I announce my Easter text suffer me to allude briefly to some salient points in my life work; and nowhere can I do it more freely than in this dear old pulpit which was so long to me a watch-tower over the best and kindest of flocks.

Fifty years ago, during the first week of April, 1846, I was licensed to preach by the Second Presbyterian of Philadelphia; it met in the old stone church that stands on the historic battle-ground of Germantown. Four weeks afterwards, with the diploma of Princeton Theological Seminary in my trunk, and a considerable supply of sound Princetonian theology in my head, I started, at four o'clock in the morning, for Wyoming Valley in Northern Pennsylvania. For a few months I preached in that beautiful and classic valley while the pastor of the Kingston church went away to recruit his shattered health. My audience was made up of intelligent, God-fearing farmers—men whose talk was not "of bullocks" but of the Bible. The sweet fragrance of the clover fields reigned on my parochial rides through the verdant valley.

By October I received a call from the little Presbyterian church of Burlington, N. J.—the church founded and built by that princely man Dr. Cortland Van Rensselaer, a son of the Albany Patron. My congregation was small, and mainly composed of shoemakers, coachmen, gardeners and plain folk—just the best sort of material for a young beginner. In the front pew were the family of Dr. Van Rensselaer, and near them sat a very distinguished Philadelphia lawyer who was in Burlington for four or five months of each year. I aimed my sermons at the coachmen and gardeners, and by that style of gunnery reached the whole of my little congregation. One thing I soon discovered, and that was that the half-dozen highly cultured families in the parish relished simple, spiritual and earnest sermons quite as much as the gardeners and the shoemakers. The Gospel of Christianity is not a delicate dainty for the fastidious few, or a difficult enigma for acute intellects alone to solve; it is God's simple bread of life for the hungry masses of humanity. There is no greater delusion than the idea that highly educated parishioners hanker after severely intellectual or abstruse preaching. My eminent Philadelphia lawyer once said to me: "I don't come to church to have my brains taxed; I come to have my heart and life made better. The two prime essentials to me are simplicity in presenting the Gospel and downright blood earnestness." That sentiment from so high an authority gave me a world of encouragement. Simple Bible truth made red hot with love is what this sin-plagued world needs. "Preach up to this age" is a thin pretext to cover a vast deal of arid philosophizing in the pulpit. My first year's work was very disheartening as to results, and I was foolish enough to think about "fleeing away to Tarshish." My Master mercifully headed me off by a powerful revival which began suddenly in a little prayer-meeting; and such a wonderful descent of the Holy Spirit I have never seen surpassed in all my half century ministry. I learned more practical

La Grippe weakens digestion use K. D. C.

theology during those six weeks than I had learned during any six months in the seminary.

My next call was to become the first pastor of the newly organized Third Presbyterian Church of Trenton, N. J. The walls of that sanctuary that I helped to rear stand to-day "four square to all the winds that blow" the church within them lives with undiminished vigor, altho I have outlived every elder, deacon and trustee who were my working staff during that pleasant pastorate. A sweet halo of romance still lingers over that Trenton ministry; for on a certain Sabbath morning there appeared in my congregation one whom a kind Providence had predestinated to be the joy and pride of my heart and home, and the clear-eyed, sagacious and unselfish counselor in every emergency of my life. I need not say that I have believed in the doctrine of Predestination ever since.

From Trenton that same Providential hand led me to the next stage of my life-work in the good old Reformed Dutch Church in Market Street, New York. As a descendant from a Holland ancestry, I am glad to have spent seven happy years in a church that bore the ancient motto of William the Silent's commonwealth on its escutcheon; and I seldom cross yonder bridge without a grateful look at the short, stumpy tower of the venerable edifice. What swarms of young men filled those galleries on Sunday evenings—many of whom have since filled high positions in the commercial and religious history of New York! The glorious revival of 1858—in which I labored daily for six months—made those old walls ring with resounding praise.

It was a short journey, but a most eventful one, that brought me across the river in April, 1860, to become the first installed pastor of this beloved church. I need not occupy one precious moment now in recounting the story of my thirty years' pastorate here, that story has been told here more than once, and has been preserved in two printed volumes that you have kindly issued. As I look now into your faces I can say, as the old pastor of Ephesus said to his flock; "I take you to record this day that I shunned not to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

What has been the net outcome of my fifty years' ministry—even with all its imperfections on my head? As far as I can tabulate them in cold figures, the record is as follows: I have preached about five thousand sermons, and made pastoral visits innumerable. I have delivered a vast number of public addresses in behalf of missions and Sunday-schools and Young Men's Christian Associations, and Emancipation and total abstinence and the suppression of the iniquitous drink traffic, and various other moral reforms. During the forty-three years spent in the pastorate, I received two thousand, four hundred and twenty persons into church membership on confession of their faith in Christ. Seventy-four tracts from my pen have been issued by the American Tract Society, the National Temperance Society and other publication societies. I have written fifteen books, of which six are translated into the Swedish and two into the Dutch language. As far as spiritual results are concerned, I reckon my widest work has been the publication of about four thousand articles for the religious newspapers which have taken the wings of the morning, and flown to the uttermost parts of the earth. It would be within bounds to say that these articles have reached a circulation of over two hundred millions of copies. By careful husbandry of such physical strength as God has given me, I have never spent one of these more than twenty-five hundred Sabbaths on a bed of sickness! And as the great clock of Time booms out to day the last note of fifty years, I am not too deaf to hear the solemn and the not unwelcome sound.

I have now given you briefly the condensed record of the ministry which I must soon carry up and lay at my blessed Master's feet. Fervently do I thank my God for that faithful widowed mother who dedicated me to this ministry in my cradle, and who was more than pastor or church or Sabbath-school to me in my childhood. Fervently do I thank God for having been rooted and grounded in the sound theology formulated in the Westminster Confession; that anchor has never "dragged." Fervently do I thank God for giving me such a sublimely glorious Gospel to preach—such an all-sufficient doctrine of atoning blood to proclaim—such precious promises of his Spirit's presence—and such verifications of this self-evidencing Book. No gales of the so-called "higher criticism" have ever blown high enough to ruffle a single feather of my faith in the

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perfect inspiration, the perfect infallibility and perfect authority of the only Bible which Almighty God has given to his children. Devout scholarship, however searching and fearless, from Martin Luther to Maclaren and Lightfoot, has never dislodged a single stone in the massive and magnificent bulwark which Moses began to build, and which the seer of Patmos completed. As for the arrogant, irreverent and bitterly hostile criticism which has taken on such airs, much of it is sheer conjecture, much of it is self-contradictory, much of it is refuted hypothesis; and when all these have been subtracted, there is not enough left to stop the hole which a mouse nibbles in your waistcoat. I have aimed to make my preaching thoroughly biblical, and to keep abreast with the majestic marchings of God's providence toward the full redemption of the human race. Fervently, also, do I thank my Master for the privilege of having comforted some sorrowing hearts, and cheered some shadowed homes, and helped some burdened ones to carry their heavy loads, and guided some children and young men and maidens into the only path that leads Heavenward. Above all, I rejoice to have led some immortal souls to the cross of the crucified Son of God. My humble testimony is that the highest glory of the pulpit is to exalt the Cross of Calvary; and the highest joy of life is to sweeten and strengthen the lives, and to save the souls of our fellow-creatures. And now unto Him who loves us, and who delivers us from sin by his precious blood, be all the thanks and praise and dominion and glory forever more! To serve Him gives such delight that today I would not stoop to pick up a monarch's crown.

Purpose.

Two things are absolutely essential to a very true life: one is to have an aim and the other is to have a high aim. Some purposes, some aim usually fixes itself in a child's heart early in life. This aim may often be only a childish fancy which may again and again be changed and replaced; but whenever a worthy and high purpose fixes itself in the mind of a boy or a girl, when that purpose is cherished and followed, it almost invariably leads on to a high and useful career. Too many boys and young men look out into life with no aim or with a low and unworthy aim.

It is said that Saint Simon, the great social reformer, who did so much for the laboring classes in France, gave his valet orders to awake him every morning with the words, "Remember, monsieur le comte, that you have great things to do."

Remember, my young friend, that you have great things to do. Great things will certainly be done in the next fifty years; why should you not have the honor of doing some of them? To be great and to do great things will require, first, a high aim, and then diligence, earnestness, hard work, definite and unremitting toil; but you can do what others have done and are doing, and win the prize which is waiting for some one to come and take it.

It is said that Cicero's life maxim was, "Strive always to excel; be ever foremost in the race." What a splendid motto for everybody is this saying of the famous philosopher! Not that we should seek in a selfish way to outstrip others, but that we should never be satisfied to put into that which we do anything but the very best effort of which we are capable.

Do not ask, How can I make my life good, but how can I make it best? Do not ask, Will this profession or this work make me useful to my fellow men, but will this course make me most useful to my fellow men? Do not ask, Is this a high aim, is this a great thing to do, but is this the highest aim, is this the best, the very best thing on earth that it is possible for me to do?

No course in life will ever prove satisfactory either to ourselves or to God save that only which follows the loftiest ideals, and which induces us to throw into the attainment of those ideals our whole selves, the very best and truest powers of our whole being. Anything short of this will end only in the more or less complete failure which waits always upon half-heartedness.—Chris. Work.

How To Be Free.

The best lesson I ever had come to me when my father said, one day, "My son, you are getting too large to be whipped, and now there are two ways in which boys cease to be governed. If they are determined to do wrong, the father must try to restrain them as long as he can, and keep them back from evil by every means in his power, until at last they are strong enough to

K. D. C. imparts strength to the whole system.

break away. The other way is for the son to learn self-government and the love of right, while the bands of authority gradually slip off, because they are not needed, and neither father nor son knows exactly when government ceases. Which way will my son choose?"

I never forgot that conversation. And yet I did not then understand that a boy who breaks away from his father does not thereby become free, because he is the slave of his own sins. One who does not love to do right is no more free than an engine when it has run off the track, or a fish when it has jumped from the lake upon the hot, dry sand.

When I was chaplain in the State prison, a man was called, one day, into the guard-room and handed a pardon from the Governor. What a shout he gave! "I am free! I am free! Let me out of here quick!"

As soon as his prison garments could be exchanged for others, he hurried away, that he might hear the turnkey's "halt" and "wheel" no more, but might go where he pleased. Yet I felt sure that he was not free. He was the slave of degrading appetites, and no one who knew him was surprised when, in a few months, he came back to his place behind the bars.

At another time, a poor sick man was called down from the hospital to bid farewell to his wife and mother. It was a sorrowful sight to witness the tears those women shed, because he could never go out of prison alive. The man, however, was calm and almost cheerful. He had learned to trust his God, had repented of his sins, and was going in a few days to be a free man in the New Jerusalem. Only those who love to do right are free. That is the kind of liberty young people should long for, and when it comes, parents and children rejoice together.—J. M. STURTEVANT, D. D.

John Watson's First Sermon.

In that exquisite collection of sketches by Ian Maclaren, "Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush," occurs that pathetic bit of a story "His Mother's Sermon." In it is illustrated the mental and moral transformation of a young Scottish minister, fresh from the theological seminary, who is to preach his first sermon in a country kirk. In his pride of opinion and ambition for success the pastor-elect decides that his first discourse must be an illuminating and electrifying effort which shall air different phases of modern thought, and set the people right on a hundred mooted points at once. But before he quite completes his preparation the pathetic memory of his dead mother, reinforced as it is by the tender reminder of his aunt, prevail upon him to burn the scholastic sermon up, and preach instead a simple earnest gospel sermon. What he recalls of his old mother's counsel is her word and wish spoken pleadingly, with failing voice, to her boy, just before her eyes closed in death: "I canna see ye noo, John, but I know yir there, and I've just one other wish. If God calls ye to the ministry, ye'll no refuse, an' the first day ye preach in yir ain kirk, to speak a gude word for Jesus Christ, an' John, I'll hear ye that day, though ye'll no see me, and I'll be satisfied." And so when the young minister rose in the pulpit that day the people who crowded the kirk heard nothing as to Semitic environment or new theories of the Pentateuch authorship, but they gained a vision of Jesus Christ such as stayed glowingly and helpfully with them to their dying day.

To "speak a gude word for Jesus Christ," by glowing testimony of the lips or patient fidelities of the life, is to make such a use of the opportunities of earthly existence, whether these come to preacher or layman, as will lead angels to linger lovingly over the record while the uncounted ages of the great future roll ceaselessly by.

The Discipline of Trial.

Through trial and chastisement are among the bitter experiences we would all like to escape, they are a correction and tonic for the inner man, quite indispensable to moral health and vigor. "Trouble," says Hawthorne, "is the next best thing to enjoyment, and there is no fate in this world so horrible as to have no share in its joys and sorrows. The bitterness in due time gives place to an intense relief for what is really best—for the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Though trial comes steadiness and self-control—qualities indispensable to the best type of character. In periods of sunshine and prosperity we have a loose hold upon ourselves. We are too often moved by impulse, and are too susceptible to the influences about us, which prevent our pressing direct to the mark. The touch of trial obliges us to gather up our resources. It

K. D. C. Pills tone and regulate the bowels.

drives us back upon our base. In the great fight of life there must be no straggling; the forces must be well in hand; and this moral girding comes through our adverse and darker experiences. The mariner on the sea of probation learns to reef sail as the gale approaches.

From the sadder experiences of life come the increment of strength and consolidation of character. The wrestle with what is against us gives muscle. We not only gain wisdom but strength by the things we suffer and learn to master. Above all, the discipline of trial brings us into sympathy with the humanity about us. Our kinship with the race we feel never so fully as when touched by the breath of sorrow.—Zion's Herald.

Not Wasteful.

It is wonderful how contracted some minds are in regard to Foreign Missions. We are told that they are too costly, that we are spending too much money abroad in this sort of work; yet such persons have nothing to say about the enormous sums spent in personal luxury or in various kinds of amusement. It seems to them a wasteful expenditure to contribute millions for the spread of the Gospel, yet all that is given to this purpose is a mere pittance compared to what is lavished upon even one item of worldly gratification. Statistics show that all the Protestant churches of the United States give annually to Foreign Missions \$11,250,000. How large the sum and how creditable to the Church! say some. What a tremendous waste! say others. But, on the other hand, note how paltry this sum appears alongside of what is "paid every year by the American people for their theatrical entertainment!" Dion Boucicault said that it amounts to \$200,000,000. Think of it and make the application! Eighteen dollars annually is given to maintain the theater, whose influence is demoralizing and which the country could dispense with to its moral advantage, for each dollar yearly contributed to extend the Gospel to the nations of the earth, or to multiply an agency which carries Christian enlightenment and redeems humanity.—Presbyterian.

Only God and the good angels know how much the cause of our Lord owes to little girls; but it was not so very long ago we heard a useful minister of Christ's Church say in the pulpit that it was the secret prayer of his little daughter, discovered by happy accident, which saved him from a life of devotion to worldly gain, and transformed him into a messenger of the Word. One of the most eloquent preachers that the great city of New York knows to-day owes more to his dead child than to any living instructor. So does the simple piety of childhood sweetly creep into the hearts and the lives of the grown-ups.—

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