

The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness.

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness—Isa. 35-8.

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PLACING THE BLAME.

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Art Thou He that Troubleth Israel?—1st Kings XVII. :17.

Carnal nature ever seeks to escape the condemnation of its wrong-doing by bringing accusation against the one who reveals its duplicity. Thus did the wicked Ahab, under the domination of his most wicked wife, hurl into the face of the holy prophet the accusation of being a troubler in Israel. It was no lack of meekness on the part of the prophet that impelled him to deny the charge, and give the guilty King a little of his personal history. He placed the blame where it belonged—upon Ahab and his house.

So long as evil-doers are permitted to pursue their evil works undisturbed by protest or opposition, their wrong-doing does not seem very bad, because no higher moral standard is lifted up for the people. Wrong seems to have in it the nature of right because public opinion does not protest; but let a higher moral standard be held up to them there is trouble; trouble not only for the wrong-doer because of awakened conscience, but trouble also for the preacher of righteousness who has turned on the light. He who would see sin exposed and destroyed must have the moral courage to go into the battle. He must be willing to be called a troubler in society.

But Elijah was called a troubler in Israel; a troubler amongst God's people; a troubler in the church.

Let us remember that in all ages he who has loved the praise of God more than the praise of men has been a troubler in Israel. Often Israel was cursed with false prophets who acquiesced to sinful conditions, prophesied smooth things, and received material remuneration for betraying the cause of God. These men were the popular preachers of their day, while God's faithful prophets who told the truth and condemned Kings for their apostasy and reproved the people for their sins were regarded with scorn. Jeremiah was not the only one of God's servants who had to suffer for his fidelity to the truth.

When we come to the new dispensation the same antagonism of the carnal mind to the truth is seen. The notable and aggressive ministry of John the Baptist was cut short by the malignity of Herod whom he had troubled by his strong words of censure: "It is not lawful for thee to have

her." Jesus was a great trouble maker for the proud pharisees whose traditions he despised and whose hypocrisy he uncovered. They dogged his footsteps and sought by all means to find some flaw in his life and teaching. When Jesus on one occasion asked them why they sought to kill him, they replied, "For a good work we stone thee not, but because thou blasphemeth."

They as much said, "We don't hate you for your holiness; nobody dislikes holiness. If you had real holiness no one would be repelled. Everybody loves a good man. But we hate your offensive methods. You make trouble wherever you go. You think yourself so good. You make yourself so superior."

They said this in substance and it is just what opposers of holiness say today, "We don't mind real holiness; live all the holiness you want to live and nobody will find fault, but we hate your profession and your methods."

Jesus said, "I came not to bring peace but a sword." The malignity of the holiness hating church reached its climax when it nailed Jesus to the cross. And Jesus said if they have hated me they will also hate you." Every one of the apostles excepting John suffered a violent death. The charge against these apostolic preachers was, "They who turn the world upside down are come hither also." Why was it? Simply because the fight was on between truth and righteousness. The ecclesiastics charged Peter and John with being the cause of all the disturbance at Jerusalem when they stood up as witnesses to a risen and glorified Christ.

Never in the history of the church has the cause of Christ been revived and the Church purified without a battle. The compromisers and worldlings have been willing to say "peace, peace, when there was no peace."

Martin Luther was a great troubler in Israel when he nailed his Theses to the door of the church at Wittenburg and challenged the position of apostate preachers. His name is anathematized to the present day by a church whose corruption he exposed, and whose sham and hypocrisy he denounced. Martin Luther made trouble for the poor, time-serving, self-indulgent, money-loving ecclesiastics whose whole purpose was to keep the people in darkness. But the preaching of the truth brought peace to many a darkened soul. He kindled the fires of the Reforma-

tion but he had to suffer for the truth. And was not John Wesley a troubler? A little rhyme they used to quote was this:

"Mr. Wesley's come to town
To try and pull the churches down."

The self-satisfied and easy going religiosity of England was greatly disturbed by the spirit filled Methodists. The ordinary church member hated a Methodist far more than he hated a low drunkard. The spirit of carnality that nailed Jesus to the cross hated this same Jesus in the hearts of his children.

And we might speak of the Salvation Army in the days when it was an army of blood and fire. They made trouble for the city authorities and for the churches. They also made great trouble for the sinners, many of whom became convicted and sought and found salvation.

And so we find the holiness movement that goes in for the New Testament standard of experience makes trouble. We will make all allowance for some hot-headed fanatics who have misinterpreted the truth, and for inconsistent professors who have perverted the truth, yet the genuine work of God has gone forward and can go forward only in the face of severe opposition due to the carnal mind.

Often that carnal mind is very strong in those who are religious leaders, and regarded as men of culture, morality and piety. These men will invariably say, "We believe in holiness, no one can be too holy. But if you ever become holy you will never speak about it."

Now holiness means healthiness of soul, inwrought by the great physician. It is the great and glorious work of God, who calls us his witnesses. Will a person who has had their physical health restored by a physician keep still about it? No, they will tell it abroad to the praise of the doctor.

One thing that becomes evident about carnality is its instability. An unsanctified preacher in a company of holiness people feels the spirit and receives blessing and seems in perfect sympathy, but he goes out to meet opposers and will rise up to condemn the very people he commended. We have learned to take the words of such people at a great discount. I have had presiding elders praise the works of my charge to me in very strong terms afterwards express their regret to other

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