

I WROTE MY OWN NAME IN THE PROMISE.

By Rev. Daniel Steele, D. D.

At my conversion, more than fifty years ago, through weakness of faith, the seal of my justification was impressed so slightly, that the word Abba, my Father, was scarcely legible; yet in answer to my mother's prayers, in my infancy, consecrating, with conscious acceptance, her son to the Christian ministry, I was called to preach, but called with a "woe unto me," instead of an "anointing with the oil of gladness."

I will not dwell upon the unpleasant theme of a ministry of twenty years almost fruitless in conversions, through a lack of an unction from the Holy One. My great error was in depending on the truth alone to break stony hearts. The Holy Spirit, though formally acknowledged and invoked, was practically ignored. My personal experience during much of this time consisted in

"Sorrows and sins, and doubts and fears,
A howling wilderness."

But an evangelist, with moderate pulpit talent (but extraordinary power to awaken slumbering professors and to bring sinners to the foot of the cross, came across my path. I sought to find the hidings of his power, and discovered that it was the fullness of the Holy Spirit enjoyed as an abiding blessing, styled by him "Rest in Jesus." I was convicted. I sought earnestly the same great gift, but could not exercise faith till I made a public confession of my sin in preaching self more than Christ, and in being satisfied with the applause of the Church above the approval of her Divine Head. I immediately began to feel a strange freedom daily increasing, the cause of which I did not distinctly apprehend. I was then led to seek the conscious and joyful presence of the Comforter in my heart.

Having settled the question that this was not merely an Apostolic blessing, but for all ages—"He shall abide with you forever," I took the promise, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you." The "verily" had to me all the strength of an oath. Out of the "whatsoever" I took all temporal blessings, not because I did not believe them to be included, but because I was not then seeking them. I then wrote my own name in the promise, not to exclude others, but to be sure that I included myself. Then writing underneath these words, "Today is the day of salvation," I found that my faith had three points to master—the Comforter, for me, now. Upon the promise I ventured with an act of appropriating faith, claiming the Comforter as my right in the name of Jesus. For several hours I clung by native faith, praying and repeating Charles Wesley's hymn—

"Jesus, Thine all-victorious love
Shed in my heart abroad."

I then ran over in my mind the great facts in Christ's life, especially dwelling upon Gethsemane and Calvary, His ascension, priesthood, and all-atoning sacrifice.

Suddenly I became conscious of a mysterious power exerting itself upon my sensibilities. My physical sensations, though not of a nervous temperament, in good health, alone, and calm, were like those of electric sparks passing through my bosom with slight but painless shocks, melting my hard heart into a fiery stream of love.

Christ became so unspeakably precious, that I instantly dropped all earthly good, reputation, property, friends, family, everything, in the twinkling of an eye. My soul crying out,

"None but Christ to me be given,

None but Christ in earth or heaven."

He stood forth as my Saviour, all radiant in His loveliness, "the chief among ten thousand." Yet there was no phantasm, or image or uttered word, apprehended by my intellect. The affections were the sphere of this wonderful phenomenon, best described as "the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost." It seemed as if the attraction of Jesus, the loadstone of my soul, was so strong that it would be drawn out of my body and through the college window by which I was sitting, and upward into the sky. O how vivid and real was all this to me! I was more certain that Christ loved me than I was of the existence of the solid earth and the shining sun. I intuitively apprehended Christ.

My college class was just then discussing the subject of the intuitive cognitions. I began to apply Sir Wm. Hamilton's tests of these, namely, that they are simple, incomprehensible, necessary, and universal. The last adjective, of course, could not apply to the intuitive belief of one individual. But my consciousness testified that my certainty of Christ's love had the three first-named characteristics, that it was to me even a necessary truth, the contrary of which was as unthinkable as the annihilation of space. The last remarkable peculiarity remained more than forty days, after which I had hours in which I could conceive the contrary of the proposition, "Christ loves me." On such occasions my firm conviction of His love was not an intuition, but an inference from my past experience, together with the absence of any feeling of condemnation.

I no longer doubt Wesley's doctrine of the direct witness of the Spirit, as distinct from the testimony of my spirit discerning the fruits of the Spirit and inferring His presence and work. I cannot to this day read the promises without feeling a sudden but delightful shock of an invisible power, sweetly applying them to my heart.

Thus much I think is due to those who would study this manifestation of the Spirit from the standpoint of theology and mental philosophy, a point of view from which I myself have often wished that remarkable experiences could be seen. But language is wholly inadequate to express a manifestation of Christ which did not formulate itself in words, but in the mighty, overwhelming pulsations of love. The joy for weeks was unspeakable. The impulse was irresistible to speak of it to everybody, saint or sinner, Protestant or Papist, in public and in private.

At the time of writing, the ecstasy has

subsided into a delicious and unruffled peace, rising into ecstasy only in acts of especial devotion. I find no fear of man nor of death. I can no longer accuse myself of unbelief, the root of all sin.

If I have any advice to give to Christians, it is to cease to discuss the subtleties and endless questions arising from entire sanctification or Christian perfection, and all cry mightily to God for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is certainly promised to all believers in Jesus.

Oh that every minister and layman would inquire the way to the upper room in Jerusalem, and there abide till tongues of fire flame from their heads!

QUARTERLY MEETING.

The next Quarterly Meeting of District No. 1 will convene with the church in Woodstock on Thursday evening, March 7th, at 7.30 p. m., and will continue over Sunday, 19th. Each church in the District is expected to send delegates or a letter or both.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE AND BEER RATIONS.

A Complicated Problem.

The London Times of January 4th gives the following item:

Mr. Lloyd George has written the following letter to Mr. Robert Harcourt, M. P. for Montrose Burghs, who recently forwarded to him copies of resolutions regarding the liquor traffic passed at public meetings in the constituency:

When you advocate temperance to me you are, as you are doubtless aware, dealing with one who has fought many battles on temperance platforms. I need not, however, remind you that the Government must, as far as possible, act by consent and must carry public opinion with it. We have reduced drinking to an extent that would have seemed incredible before the war. Not only have the hours been most severely curtailed, but the actual amount of alcohol has been enormously reduced. Take merely what has been done this year (1917). The output of beer, which had been reduced by the late Government to 26,000,000 barrels, was cut down by this Government to something like 14,000,000 barrels per annum. Simultaneously the withdrawal of spirits from bond was cut down by half. The manufacture of whiskey and other potable spirits has been stopped entirely.

The proposal for rationing sections of the people has been frequently considered, but it is more complicated in execution than the small amount of beer saved could justify. I can assure you that the whole problem has been constantly before us and is periodically resurveyed, and that the Government would not hesitate to take any action if it were materially to assist in the successful prosecution of the war.

The best way is to let God have His own way. The best time is God's time. The best place is God's place. The soul that patiently waits, that fully trusts, that leaves time and place and method all to God, will not be disappointed. The promise will not fail. It never has failed. It cannot fail, for God is faithful.—W. F. Mallalieu.