

Love Uncreated, Eternal, and Unchangeable.

It is a common remark among the philosophers that truth is eternal. The most approved among them, looking at things as they are and as they must be, do not hesitate to add, that the same thing may be said also of rectitude and of beauty. They assure us, for reasons which seem to them satisfactory, that truth, virtue, and beauty, exist without beginning to exist, and that they can never die. But it is not so often said, nor so generally understood, that there is also an eternity of Love. If it were possible for truth to perish, as it is not, if it were possible to designate a beginning or a termination to truth and beauty, it would still be true, that love existing without beginning, will live for ever.

In the first place, love is *uncreated*. It is so, because it is a necessary and constituent part of the uncreated life of God. If it could be said of love, that it exists by creation and not by nature, then it would follow, as no other supposition could easily be made, that God created it. If God created it, then there was a time when he himself was without it. But a God without love is no God. A God without love is not only no God in the true sense of the terms, but is a being at the furthest possible remove from the true God, and is infinitely unlovely. If, therefore, there is a God being, there is a Love being. God and Love are one. Love is not something *accessory*, which has been brought into union with God in time, but is an original and constituent element of God, antecedent to time. It is not only necessary, like the attributes of omniscience and omnipresence, but it is *constitutive*; it is that which, more than anything else, constitutes or makes God. So that if life, *without creation*, can be predicated of God, it can also be predicated of love. It lives without beginning; it has life itself.

2. It may properly be remarked, further, that love is not only uncreated, but *eternal*. Having its foundation not by creation in time, but in the original constitution of things, and being not a mere accessory, but a primitive necessary, and constitutive element of the divine nature, its duration is measured by nothing less than that of God himself. If be something, as it obviously is, without which the divine nature would cease to be a divine nature, how can it be less eternal than God is? The eternity of the one involves the eternity of the other. When God perishes, love will perish; as long as God lives love will live. "God is love."

3. Being uncreated and eternal, true love never changes. There are two reasons for this, besides what might be inferred from its uncreated nature. One is, that it is a part of God, and God never changes. The other is that the relation between itself and its object is fixed and immutable. So long as love bears the true stamp, and has its life from itself and not from outward and accessory circumstances, there is no reason why it should change, provided its object remains the same. The object of pure or perfect love is *being*; mere percipient and sentient *being*; *being*, without any expectations of reward for the love bestowed upon it, and also without respect to character, although character may greatly increase love; *being*, without anything accessory to its own permanent and essential nature; and, therefore, if love loves existence at all, on the mere ground of its being existence, it must love it forever.

4. The doctrine of the uncreated nature and the unchangeable eternity of love is full of consolation. True or pure love, existing as it does as a constituent part of the divine nature, is only another name for the divine goodness. If we could conceive it possible for God's love to change, if we could admit the idea of the annihilation of the divine goodness, it would at once cause the greatest sorrow, and even despair. The views which have been presented, shows us that such a change in the divine character can never take place. In God, who is the great fountain of true benevolent feeling, love will remain what it always has been; beyond imperfection as it is beyond change, never less radiant, never less diffusive than it was at the beginning. A thought which cannot fail to bring the highest consolation to all holy minds.

5. Let it be particularly remembered, that God does not love simply because he chooses or wills it, but because love is his *nature*. He must necessarily have something which we may properly call his nature, and it is difficult

to conceive of his having any other. Certain it is, that he either naturally loves appropriate objects of his love, or is naturally indifferent to them, or naturally hates them. There is no other possible supposition. What value, what interest, what honour, can attach to a Being who is indifferent by his very nature to the happiness of other beings? Could he ever justly claim, or ever actually receive anything more than indifference in return? If he were indifferent, would it be possible for him to create and beautify existences, and subsequently to extend to them his support and protection? On the contrary, he would remain without any principle of movement, with no companion but an everlasting solitude. Such a being would not be God. And still less would he be so, if the leading attribute of his mind were hatred.

6. God not only loves, irrespective of character, but he sometimes loves, notwithstanding the hatefulness of character, in the objects of his love. It was thus that he loved man in his fallen state. He never loved man's sins; he never loved him in the *character of a sinner*; but he loves him, always has loved him, and always will love him as a sentient and moral being, susceptible, of a renovated life of purity. This love never changes, never can change. It was under the impulse of this divine love, that his great heart of benevolence conceived and carried into effect the plan of redemption. It was this love, stronger than temptation, mightier than suffering, which flowed from the great fountain in the heart of God into the heart of the Saviour, it flows into all sanctified hearts. May it be our prayer, that we too, delivered from the thralldom of self, may be formed in the image of this divine love; and thus, raised above the things of time and sense, enter in some degree into the participation of the eternal and unchangeable.—*Alliance & Visitor*.

"They were offended at Him."

It is a strange thing that men should be offended at Christ. But there are two reasons for this, which we do well to consider.

1. *The first is found in the condition of his followers.*

Many are the poor of this world, who have neither education nor property to give them influence. With the forms and manners of fashionable life they are not familiar. To have religious influence with such, would mortify the pride of the high born, the educated, and the wealthy. The distinctions in society are carried into religion, and thus multitudes clothed with the robe of religion, are offended at Christ, through his poor and despised people. "In as much as we have done it unto them, ye have done it unto me."

2. *The second reason grows out of the doctrines and precepts of Christ.*

Do the scriptures say that God hath chosen his people to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth? They are offended, and deny that any such choice constitutes men the favorites of God, unless it be a choice founded upon the real merit of the person chosen.

Does the New Testament teach that Jesus Christ is God? They are offended, and contend that he is a mere man, or at most, a created being of high order.

Do the Scriptures teach that men are saved by grace through faith; and that, not of themselves, it is the gift of God? They are offended, and claim to rest their acceptance with God on the ground of their own obedience.

The Bible requires self-denial. Men must forsake evil company, live soberly, righteously, and godly, deny themselves, and take up the cross. But they are offended. They love their amusements and their sins. The word of God declares that the wicked shall be banished from his presence, and from the glory of his power forever. Wicked men take offence, and reject the doctrine as unworthy the character of God.

Thus men become offended at Christ through his followers, his doctrines, and his precepts. Nothing, however, can be more unreasonable than this offence. If the Lord says he hath chosen his people in Christ, what right have I to object? If the Governor of a State can pardon whom he will, shall I deny the Sovereign of the universe this right; and especially when it is admitted that all deserve to perish? Every objection is based upon the assumption of its impossibility. But this is preposterous. It is assuming equality with the Deity.

If the Scriptures teach that Jesus Christ is divine what right have I to object? Because it is impossible. Do I know all things possible to God? Because it is improbable? What do I know of probability or improbability in the existence of the Divine Spirit? Because I cannot understand it? And what do I understand? Do I know how a blade of grass grows? How soul and body unite? How planets keep in their orbits?

Do the Scriptures teach that I am justified by faith alone? What right have I to object? It is an evil heart of unbelief that is not willing to receive in simplicity what God teaches.

Some persons suppose that it is no consequence what they believe, if they act right. It is true, that if doctrines are not plainly revealed—if they are doctrines of men, which have no bearing on our spiritual interests, they are not essential to be believed. But if plainly revealed—if doctrines of the Bible, having relation to our spiritual interests, they are essential to be believed. And, in this view, no man can act right who does not believe right. The spirit of implicit faith is the spirit of piety, and, therefore, without it, it is impossible to please God.—*Western Watchman*.

Opium Drunkenness.

The opium smoker in his heaven is a fearful and sad sight, although perhaps not so degrading to the eye as the drunkard from spirits, lowered to the level of the brute, and wallowing in his filth. The idiot-smile and death like stupor of the opium debauchee has something far more awful to the gaze than the brutality of the latter. Pity, if possible, takes the place of other feelings, to behold the faded cheek and haggard look of the being abandoned to the power of the drug; whilst disgust is uppermost at the sight of the human creature levelled to the beast by intoxication.

One of the streets in the centre of Singapore, East Indies, is wholly devoted to shops for the sale of this poison; and here, in the evening may be seen after the labors of the day is over, crowds of Chinese who seek these places to satisfy their depraved appetites.

The rooms where they sit and smoke are surrounded by wooden couches, with places for the head to rest upon, and generally a small room is devoted to gambling. The pipe is a reed of about an inch in diameter, and the aperture in the bowl for the admission of opium is not larger than a pin's head. The drug is prepared with some kind of incense, and a very small portion is sufficient to charge it, one or two whiffs being the utmost that can be inhaled from a single pipe; and the smoke is taken into the lungs, as from the hooka in India. On a beginner, one or two pipes will have an effect, but an old stager will continue smoking for hours. At the head of each couch is placed a small lamp, as fire must be applied to the drug during the process of inhaling; and from the difficulty of filling and properly lighting the pipes, there is generally a person who waits upon the smoker to perform the office. A few days, says Lord Jocelyn, of this fearful luxury, when taken to excess, will impart a pallid and haggard look to the features, and a few months, or even weeks, will change the strong and healthy man into little better than an idiot skeleton. The pain they suffer when deprived of the drug, no language can explain; and it is only a certain degree under its influence that their faculties are alive. In the hours devoted to their ruin, these infatuated people may be seen, at nine o'clock in the evening, in all the different stages. Some entering, half distracted, to feed the craving appetite they have been obliged to subdue during the day; others laughing and talking under the influence of the pipe; while the couches around are filled with their different occupants, who lie languid, with an idiot smile upon their countenance, too completely under the influence of the drug, to regard passing events, and fast merging into the wished for consummation. The last scene in this tragic play is generally a room in the rear of the building, a species of *morgue*, or dead house, where lie those who have passed into the state of bliss an opium smoker madly seeks—an emblem of the long sleep to which he is blindly hurrying.

Odd Moments.

It is a good rule for those who would "redeem the time," to have on their hands some pursuit or employment, or subject of investigation, which can be easily taken up and pursued in intervals of time when no other occupation presents itself. He only who has tried this economy of moments, can estimate the advantages which may be thus secured by a systematic "gathering of fragments." It is related by some author of distinction, that one of the works

by which he was best known, was written at the daily intervals, when he was obliged to wait by the want of punctuality on the part of those with whom he was connected; and if we all were thus prudent in our employment of "the stuff life is made of," as "Poor Richard" calls it, the lives of men would leave better records, and more enduring memorials.

The Christian has a better opportunity than any other man to husband the estate which God has given him in the precious gift of years and moments. Years are made up of days and hours, and he who improves the currency of moments as they pass him, will have a good account to render in a life well and diligently spent. Diligence in well doing alone can answer the requirements of our duty; though many seem to fancy that refraining from overt acts of evil is all that a Christian life demands. And many wonder at their own lethargy, and complain of their deadness and indifference, when the true cause is their idleness, in that they do not "redeem the time." Keep some object or objects continually in hand, to which the thoughts may revert, and about which the mind may be employed. There is abundance to do; for "the harvest truly is plenteous," and he who has the cause of his Master, and the good of his fellow creatures at heart, has, as we have already remarked, no excuse or occasion for a single listless moment.—*Episcopal Recorder*.

The Symptoms of Backsliding.

If decay of love to Christ be our disease, it will have such symptoms as these:—

1. Christ will be less in our hearts and mouths than formerly.
2. We will be more slack in our obedience, and have less delight in duty than before.
3. It is a sign of decaying love, when we lose our tenderness of conscience, and our wonted abhorrence of sin, Christ's enemy.
4. When we are more easy under Christ's absence and withdrawals, and less anxious for his presence.
5. When we lose our wonted appetites for our spiritual food and nourishment from Christ, in the ordinances.
6. When we lose our public spiritedness and concern for the interest of Christ's kingdom and glory.
7. When we are little concerned to have heart holiness, which is Christ's image, drawn upon the soul.
8. When we have little desire for Christ's second coming, or for the enjoyment of him in heaven.
9. When earthly-mindedness and love to the world is on the growing hand.—*Wilson of Dundee*.

The Fate of the Indian.

The most casual observer cannot fail to discover, in the rapid developments of Providence, that the fate of the aborigines of our country is speedily approaching a crisis. Astonishing as it may be considered, it is nevertheless a fact, proved by long observation, that the white man's presence exerts a most deteriorating influence on the Indian race. As an additional proof of the fact, however, the following article is copied from the St. Louis Reveille.

Degeneracy among the Indians.

A correspondent, speaking of the Winnebagoes, says: "As an example of the progress of degeneracy in this tribe, brought about by their contact with the whites, I may cite a few facts stated to me by an old trader. Twenty years ago they were a temperate people, and traded from \$18,000 to \$20,00 worth of furs per annum at Prairie du Chien. Last year their stock of furs amounted to \$2600 worth. Twenty years ago, there was but one woman known as a harlot and her they drove out from among their women. Now, there is not one virtuous female in the whole tribe. Disease and intemperance, the evils which civilization entails upon the red man, are here most sorrowfully manifest."

With the above statement before us, who can contemplate the rapid settlement of Oregon and California, and not feel convinced that the crisis of the red man's fate is at hand? But the most painful circumstance connected with this sad picture of human suffering is the perfect indifference with which it is contemplated by the Christian population of the United States. It is a part of the religion we profess, to befriend the distressed and suffering; and certainly there is no class of human beings on the earth who present a more appalling picture of human wretchedness than the Western Indians.

But in urging their claims upon benevolence, in common with all subjects of distress, they have additional and weighty reasons, growing out of their proximity to us, and especially from the fact that we have dispossessed them of their early