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ST. JOHN N. B.

The Transfiguration—Some Hints Concerning the Blessed Dead.

BY WAYLAND HOYT, D.D.

1. *A Hint of Contrast.* Do you remember Raphael's picture of the Transfiguration? He has told us of the scene in form and figure as the Scripture has in words. There on the top of the mount there is the glory, the companionship of Moses and Elias, the burning of the heavenly brightness; all the darkness which makes our earth gloomy is swept away. But down there at the foot of the mount is a scene of human trial and helpless struggle with suffering. There a father has brought a son possessed of an evil spirit. The son, every now and then, is thrown into terrible convulsions. He is cast upon the ground. He is seized with the rigidity and helplessness of epilepsy. He lies there on the ground and wallows foaming. Is there no help for him? The father has brought him to the disciples. They have attempted a cure, but the demon is too strong for them. The boy must go on tormented—falling now into the fire, now into the water. The father must go on, helping the poor boy as best he can, but crushed under his child's sufferings—himself impotent towards his cure.

Do you not see the contrast? Above, the brightness—beneath, the gloom. Above, the joy—beneath, the sorrow. Above, the victory—beneath, the defeat.

Is there not here furnished us a most precious hint of contrast? Heaven is not like earth. In the glory in which Christ now dwells, suffering is not, disease is not, the sovereignty of evil is not, impotence toward the help of others is not, a burdened heart is not. Heighten the contrast by some such blessed words as these from other Scriptures: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." "And there shall be no night there,"—all tears of any sort, of disappointed hopes, of unmet longings, of wearied hearts, of loneliness, of consciousness of failure; all nights of any sort, of temptation, of black doubt, of poverty, of helplessness to succour, of death—they are here but they are not there. That glory streaming out of Christ, there on the mountains, brightens and blesses Peter and James and John, and Moses and Elias. In that glory into which Christ has now arisen and of which this upon the mount was but a specimen and foregleaming, in that glory where he now dwelleth and to which he is bringing his redeemed, there are no shadows. Above pain into peace, above darkness into light, above defeat into victory. The glory on the summit, the sorrow and the struggle at the mountain's base; the difference between these is the difference between the earth and that heaven into which our loved ones have gone.

2. *A Hint of Consciousness.* Is the immediate future state but a huge dormitory of souls waiting the awakening of the resurrection, as some affirm? No! we

can not believe this when we gaze into this brightness of the transfiguration. Fifteen hundred years before upon the top of Pisgah Moses had died. Whether any change analogous to that of death had passed upon Elijah we cannot say, for he was caught heavenward in a chariot of flame. But we are distinctly told that Moses died and was buried. Yet now! See! he comes with the freshness of eternal youth upon him to talk with Jesus in the mount. He certainly is not slumbering. There is no look of a dreary unconsciousness about him. He is clothed with heaven's brightness. He is the same Moses who had died fifteen hundred years before. His personality is intact. His identity is preserved. We can learn no lesson of unconsciousness after death while we tarry with him upon the mount.

No, the soul is, in all its parts and powers, alive, alert in the future state. Death, which does dissolve the body cannot touch the soul. There is no horrible abyss of vacancy. The mastery of death, though so mighty and majestic, fails in the presence of my soul. He cannot condemn my soul even to slumber.

3. *A Hint of Recognition.*

Two little waxen hands,
Folded soft and silently;
Two little curtained eyes,
Looking out no more for me;
Two little snowy cheeks,
Dimpled, dimpled never more;
Two little trodden shoes,
That will never touch the floor.
Shoulder-ribbons softly twisted,
Garments folded, clean and white;
These are left us—and these only
Of the childish presence bright.

Can we sing no better song than that? Does death rob us so wholly? Is that all we may have left? Only the memories of the past? Only the flowers faded so quickly, laid upon the coffin? Only the little shoes pressed into such dainty shape? Only the playthings consecrated by that touch? Is the future altogether vacant? Are there no dear places of sweet home privacy beyond? Are the many mansions but one vast gathering place common alike to all, special to none? When the heavenly is put on does all that is human drop away? Are the ties of familyhood forever sundered when death cuts them? Does friend know no longer the face of friend? Yonder, does the parent forget the child and the child the parent? Shall we know each other there? Shall my babe, fled away so long ago, meet me, and shall I know her to be my babe? Look into the brightness of the mount. See there, Jesus, Moses, Elias, they talk together, they are recognised of each other. There is surely recognition. The glory in that mount is a foregleam and specimen of heaven's glory. We shall know each other there.

4. *A Hint of the Interest of Heaven in Earth.* Once I stood upon a vessel's deck. There was only the infinite sea beneath, and the infinite sky above. "Do you see that sail yonder in the offing?" asked the captain. I looked in the direction toward which he pointed, but could discover nothing. "No," said I, "there is no sail there." "But there is," said he. And the ship was there. The difficulty was in me. My vision was not trained as was the captain's. If my sight had been as sensitive and quick as his, I should have found the ship. But my inability to see it did not destroy it. There it was. So are there more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy. Because with our gross senses we cannot cognize them, there is no reason for disbelieving that all the air around us may not be thronged with angels and broken into waves of melody by their praise.

Moses and Elias came down to speak to the man Christ Jesus about the decease which he is to accomplish at Jerusalem! What Christ was to do on earth thrilled heaven with interest. Christ is the elder brother. If angels came to minister to our brother is it unreasonable to hope that they may also come to minister to the brethren? Are they not all ministering spirits sent to minister to them that are heirs of salvation? Yes. Love is mightier than death. The memory of earth is not burned away amid the glories of the upper sanctuary. Celestial presences attend us. Perchance

the babe to whom we ministered, now beyond the necessity of ours, is charged with a heavenly service toward ourselves. There is interest in heaven in what is going on in earth. Heaven is not so distant from the world.

So much light then does the scene of the transfiguration yield us concerning our believing dead. They are in a better place, as much better as was the summit of that mountain agleam with glory, than was its base, crowded with its suffering and impotence and sorrow. They do not sleep. They are alive, alert. We shall know them and they us, when we shall stand upon the thither shore. Even now they think of us. Heaven is interested in earth.

The late William Wallace.

LAWRENCE, KAN., Aug 9th, 1879.

REV. ISAIAH WALLACE,

DEAR SIR: It is my painful duty to inform you that your brother, William Wallace, died at my house, in this city, on Friday night at 12 o'clock. He had resided in Kansas over 8 years, whither he had come for the benefit of his health. His complaint seemed to be pulmonary. His physicians advised him to try this Western air, and for a time he seemed benefited by it. But for a year past he has been perceptibly failing. Some 3 months ago, he thought a higher latitude and an out-door life might benefit him, and he started for Denver, by mule-team overland. He failed rapidly. Yesterday week he said to his wife, that if it were possible he would like to get back to New Brunswick to die—but that being impossible he would like to get as far as Lawrence, and die among his friends there. Mrs. Wallace sent me a telegram on Monday last, asking me to meet them at the depot here the next day. I did so, and found the poor fellow a sadder spectacle than I expected to see—so emaciated and so helpless. We had him removed to my house, and we made him as comfortable as we could, and he often expressed himself as glad that he had got back to Lawrence. His sickness was marked by great resignation, great hope and certainty beyond the grave. He said he had made his peace with God—and he was anxious to go.

He had endeared himself to me and my family by a frank warm hearted friendship which had sprung up between us soon after his arrival in Lawrence.

His wife, who has been a truly noble woman, all through his travels and troubles, and whom to the last he appears to have loved with very sincere affection, will probably remain at my house for some time.

Yours very respectfully,

GEO. W. BOWEN.

DEAR EDITOR: As I presume many of your readers will read with mournful interest the Communication in reference to the death of my only brother in the flesh. You will oblige me by giving it a place in your next issue. My brother served efficiently for a number of years as a Deacon of one of our churches in this Province, and all through his Christian career, in a good degree exemplified the principles of true piety. Many hearts are saddened by his death, but we are cheered by the assurance that for him to die was gain.

Yours truly,

ISA. WALLACE.

St. John, Oct. 17th, 1879.

President Edwards' Description of Heaven.

All the truly great and good, all the pure, and holy, and excellent, from this world, and it may be from every part of the universe, are constantly tending toward heaven. As the streams tend to the ocean, so all these are tending to the great ocean of infinite purity and bliss. The progress of time does but bear them on to its blessedness; and as, if we are holy, to be united with them there. Every gem which death rudely tears away from us here, is a glorious jewel forever shining there; every Christian friend that goes before us from this world, is a ransomed spirit waiting to welcome us in heaven. There will be the infant of days that we have lost below, through grace to be found above; there

the Christian Father and mother and wife and child and friend, with whom we shall renew the holy fellowship of the saints, which was interrupted by death here, but shall be commenced again in the upper sanctuary, and then shall never end. There we shall have company with the patriarchs and fathers and saints, of the Old and New Testaments, and those of whom the world was not worthy, with whom on earth we were only conversant by faith. And there, above all, we shall enjoy and dwell with God the Father, whom we had loved with all our hearts on earth, and with Jesus Christ our beloved Saviour, who has always been to us the chief among ten thousands and altogether lovely, and with the Holy Ghost our Sanctifier and guide and comforter; and shall be filled with all the fullness of the Godhead forever!

No Time.

"I have no time to devote to my children," says the business man, with a sigh; for he really feels the privation of their society keenly. But the excuse is an insufficient one; he should make time—let other duties go, for no duty is more important than that he owes his offspring. Parents should never fail to give such sympathy in its little matters of life as will produce in its confiding mind that trust and faith which is a necessary element in paternal influence. Filial affection is a great safeguard against evil influences, as well as a great civilizer to its possessor. Do not forget, too, that the childish mind, in process of development, absolutely needs the cheerful and happy influences which are produced by amusements, as sure as the plant needs sun and light for its proper growth.

And who can be better persons to afford recreation than both parents? Too frequently does the stately father, filled with the cares and responsibilities of life, forget that his little one is yearning for that familiar love which induces a game or a romp between them. The father's entrance after a day's labor should be a cause for rejoicing, and the signal for a merry game which would benefit him as much as the little ones.

Acadia College Circular.

MR. EDITOR: Lest there arise some misgiving in the minds of the members of our churches as to the unity of the financial scheme adopted by Convention, and now fully laid before them by the committee, on account of the circular sent out by the Secretary of Convention, calling for a sum equal to 10 cents per member for Acadia College, I think it right to state that the Finance committee were instructed by Convention to regard all payments on this account as part of the dollar scheme, and to duly credit the churches so paying with the same. This is not stated in Bro Keirstead's circular, but is clearly understood by those who were at Convention, where the order was passed.

J. MARCH,

Fin. Com. for N. B.

St. John, Oct 21st, 1879.

Items of Interest.

Mr. Holloway of London, England, who has made his money by making pills, has bought ninety-five acres of land at Egham, and has contracted for the building of his college for women; for \$1,200,000. While no denominational theology is to be taught, the domestic life of the college is to be that of an "orderly Christian household," with a daily simple service. The principal of the college must be a woman. An endowment fund of \$500,000 is also given by Mr. Holloway. The college is established at the request of his deceased wife.

—In London, since 1851, while the Methodists of all kinds have increased 104 per cent., Presbyterians and the Episcopal church 42 per cent. each, Congregationalists 30, and Roman Catholics 98 per cent., Baptists have grown at the rate of 115 per cent.

Dr. Nathan Brown writes to Rev. F. S. Dobbins, under date of Yokohama, Aug. 12:

By to-day's steamer I send you Romans and

Corinthians, completing the first edition of the New Testament in Japanese. I have had an attack of sciatica, which has kept me in-doors for a fortnight. Cholera is raging fearfully this season. Gen. Grant's roads for visiting are blocked up with the yellow flag.

We rejoice that our honored brother has been spared to the age of 72, and has been permitted, in accordance with his earnest desire and fervent prayer, to see the completion of this great work, which gives the New Testament to a nation of thirty-five millions. He is now at work on the Old Testament, in which he has made fragmentary translations in Genesis and the Messianic Psalms. He has also completed a hymn-book, many of the hymns being translated and composed by himself.—*National Baptist.*

The largest church in the United States is the First African Baptist church, of Richmond, Va. It has 3,000 members. On one Sunday its pastor baptized 598 persons, and added nearly 900 to the church.

A slip from a paper containing the statement that no Chinaman will ever renounce his ancestral faith and become a Christian was sent to Rev. F. F. Ellinwood, D.D., Secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions; He replies:

There are two or three hundred missionaries in China. They have learned the language, which not one of a thousand of other residents ever does. They give their whole time and attention to missionary work. Now these missionaries representing over twenty different boards and societies of America, Great Britain, Switzerland and Germany, tells us that there are about 14,000 native church members in China, 200 ordained ministers, several of whom are wholly supported by their flocks; that many chapels have been built by the people without aid; that almost all who have professed faith in Christ have done so in the face of bitter persecution, and have undergone other tests which our Christian profession in this country knows nothing of. The missionaries attest these statements by the practical proof of devoting the remainder of their lives to a work which they have found to be so full of encouragement. It is left to be decided by the Christian public whether the united testimony of two or three hundred such men and women shall be set aside by the occasional outside observation and criticism of some one who has lived only a short time in China.

The late accounts of a Chinese idol temple being presented to the "Jesus Church" is in the same line of encouragement.

SERVICES preliminary to the departure of fifteen missionaries to India, sent out by the American Baptist Missionary Union, were held Friday, October 10th, at the Central Baptist Church in Forty-second Street. The exercises were conducted by the Rev. Dr. J. D. Herr, pastor of the Central Church. There were short addresses by several of the Missionaries. Two of the number, Miss E. E. Mitchell and Miss A. M. Barkley, are going to open a hospital in the town of Maulmain. This is a "new departure" for the Union, but it was necessary to open the way for spiritual work. Dr. Murdoch said, by taking care of the body, and by breaking up the superstitions connected with the science of medicine in heathen countries. The Rev. J. A. Spurgeon said that they should always have the greatest hope of winning those who offered the greatest resistance at first. The man who said yes to everything never could be reached; but the man who swore at you showed he had heart enough to get angry.

Mr. Spurgeon's two colored missionaries who went out to Africa from his Tabernacle some months ago, have sent back cheering news of themselves. In the middle of May they had got settled at their new stations, Bakundu, Victoria, Cameroons, and had begun work under the auspices of the village chief, who had much assisted the mission. In his will, recently made at a time of serious illness, the chief commended his youngest son to the care of the missionaries, and commanded his subjects to obey and protect the preachers and their wives.