

SAVIOUR, LEAD ME.

BY REV. OLIVER CRANE, D. D.

Saviour, make my pathway plain,
For it leads through many a tangle;
Off I seem to toil in vain,
Turning many a crook and angle,
Till my worn feet ache with pain.
Let me lean upon Thine arm,
For my limbs are weak and weary;
Saviour, keep me safe from harm,
For the night is dark and dreary,
And I tremble with alarm.
Clouds hang heavy o'er my way,
Shadows, spectre-like flit by me;
Saviour, leave me not their prey,
Let me feel thy presence nigh me,
Lest I wildered go astray.
Let me not, amid the gloom,
Roam at random as a stranger,
But beside me watch and assume,
Leading me through every danger,
To my home beyond the tomb.
Let the symbol of thy might,
Light through all my journey yield me,
Let it be my guide by night,
And from noonday terrors shield me,
Putting all my foes to flight.
What my future lot may be
Ask I not to have unfolded;
Saviour, 'tis enough for me,
If by thee my life is moulded,
And I may but walk with thee.
Though I cannot comprehend
All the reasons of thy leadings,
Yet on thee will I depend,
Satisfied with thy proceedings,
Till my pilgrimage shall end.
Though my faith be often tried—
For thou seemest oft to hide thee?
Still in thee do I confide;
Whom have I in heaven beside thee
Whom have I on earth beside?
Saviour, when at length I tread
On the margin of the Jordan,
Let me still by thee be led:
For thou art my spirit's warden,
Thou alone canst banish dread.
When I, on its billows tossed
Feel its cold waves dash about me,
Take my hand till I have crossed;
Saviour, thou canst do without me,
But without thee I am lost.

Visitor Pulpit.

THE GLORIOUS COMPANY OF THE APOSTLES.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED AT QUEBEC, BY REV. DAVID MARSH.

1 "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life."
2 "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us."
3 "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."
4 "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."—1 John 1: 1-4.

The apostles of the Lord were indeed a "glorious company." A band of men not only highly distinguished but unique. They had no equals. The chosen friends and companions of the Divine Redeemer. They were selected by himself; divinely qualified and ordained. Distinguished from all others while they lived, and when they died they left no successors. Among them there were no degrees of rank. Jesus checked the first buddings of such a thought, and rebuked it severely. Mark 9: 33-35: "Ye shall not be so; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief as he that doth serve." Luke 22: 24-30; appealing to his own example, he says, "I am among you as he that doth serve." Greatness and dignity reign supreme in that divine simplicity. And very remarkable is the fact that in all the religious communities which boast the authority of an apostolic succession, this divine law, is trodden under foot; and great swelling words of vanity, pompous titles, and names of rank, and dignity, are multiplied and abound. And, moreover, all these ranks, and dignities, are distinguished and adorned by robes, decorations, and insignia of varied style and costliness, proportioned to the apostolic dignity claimed by each. The striking contrast, between the true and the false, which is forced upon us when we look on this picture, and on that, cannot but awaken serious thought. There were however, among the apostles of our Lord, great and characteristic diversities of mind and talent, which strike us as we read the sacred narrative. Diversities too, which the Lord himself was not slow to mark and to utilize, and even to designate by special surnames. The number of the apostles was twelve. A circumstance not without its significance. "Have not I chosen you twelve?" Perhaps we see here the number of completeness, as corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel. To which he alludes, Matt. 19: 28; "verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel;" and in John's apocalyptic vision of the new Jerusalem, the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb were severally seen in the foundation stones, of which the complete number was also twelve. These twelve apostles, however, were not the only persons who were appointed by Jesus to preach, and to teach, and to work miracles in his name. We read of other seventy also, whom he sent

forth at an early period of his ministry, and impowered to heal the sick, and to call out demons; but they never took rank with, nor were incorporated into the number of the apostles. These still remained "the twelve." One important distinction seems to have consisted in their personal intimacy with the Saviour from the commencement of his ministry; and their consequent ability to testify of what they had seen of Jesus, as none others could. This personal testimony as eye-witnesses, is expressly distinguished by the Lord himself, from the objective testimony of the Holy Ghost. John 15: 26, 27; "But when the comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me; and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." This Divine Spirit the Comforter, whilst he did indeed dwell in the apostles, could also bear witness through other organs; yet there was one department of the Spirit's work peculiar to the apostles, even "the remembrance," as we read John 14: 26; "But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Hence, when Judas fell, the other apostles deemed it necessary to replace him; but only by one who had accompanied with them from the beginning. It is to be feared, that the abuses and confusion which have resulted from the doctrine and claims of the so-called apostolic succession, have tended, if not to lessen our regard for the apostles themselves, at least to dim our perceptions of their true dignity and relationship to the Saviour and of the grand privilege which is ours, of holding immediate fellowship with them through their writings.

The words selected as the basis of this discourse place the subject in a very clear light. John in the commencement of his epistle, speaking in the plural number as a member of "the company of the apostles," says, "that which we have seen and heard," etc. In order rightly to receive their testimony we need to recognize and bear in mind the relationship in which they stood to the Lord Jesus himself. How intimately they were acquainted with Him, with His personal history, and all the circumstances which marked his ministry from beginning to end. They continued with him in all his temptations. They were in an especial manner his confidants and friends. John, 15: 15—"Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." They, with him, formed one family or community. They had one purse, they fared alike. If he had not where to lay his head, they shared his poverty and reproach. When others went back and walked no more with him, they stood firm. It was only when under the last fierce temptation, that their faith failed them. A discipline, which, with its results was probably needful as part of their training, and in the midst of which they never lost their deep, underlying love and regard for the Master. They were still the witnesses of all his sufferings; of his mental agony; of the protracted ignominy and insult which he endured in the halls and places of judgment, the heartless cruelty of the crucifixion, the last long agony of dying. They saw his lifeless body deposited in the tomb; and that it was kept there sealed and under military guard, Early on the resurrection morn they were on the spot and saw the tomb open and empty, and the vision of angels who said that he was alive. And more than all they saw himself, and that so frequently, and with attendant circumstances which they so well and so minutely describe, as enables us to have fellowship with them in all their strange impressions, and emotions, their mental conflicts, and slowness of heart to believe, by which they were the better qualified to be witnesses of his resurrection. And above all, they, more than any others, were with him during the forty days when he shewed himself alive after his passion, and spake to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. They also heard his latest utterances, when he was taken up from them; and a bright cloud received him out of their sight. Thus they became, after his resurrection, and ascension the special representatives of an absent Lord, and in a most important sense the depositaries of his truth and power; all which was wonderfully confirmed by the events of the day of Pentecost, which were such as to render the apostolic name and office, yet more exalted in the eyes of the multitude, so that of the rest durst no man join himself unto them. This history of the apostles as furnished in the gospels, though brief, is full and complete, especially as regards their call at the commencement of our Lord's ministry; their solemn consecration, after a night of prayer; and we may add the very remarkable words of Jesus after his resurrection, John 20: 21-23; emphatically declaring that as he himself was the Father's apostle, so were they his apostles. The sublime intercessory prayer of the Redeemer contained in the 17th chapter of St. John's gospel, especially from the 8th to the 18th verse, is worthy of our careful study, as bearing on the view we are now taking, of the apostolic name and office. From which, we are led to the conclusion, that the apostles could not, consistently with their great commission, assume the episcopate or pastoral office in any single or local church. Their field was the world. Their authority was equal everywhere. It included the work of the evangelist, the bishop, and deacon, wherever they might be, even as our blessed Lord

became servant of all, furnishing an example to them in all possible circumstances. Consequently the traditions of apostolic sees, or places where apostles filled the office of bishop, are doubtful in the extreme, and among them the so-called episcopate of Peter at Rome. Even on historic grounds, it is questionable whether Peter ever saw Rome. Certainly there is nothing in the New Testament which favors such an idea, but the reverse. Much more is it doubtful whether as an apostle he could become bishop of Rome without proving unfaithful to his apostolic commission. While the apostles remained at Jerusalem, they were not bishops, they were distinct from the Elders. James was evidently the president, though he was not an apostle. Paul was for three years at Ephesus, as we learn from his address to the elders of the place, Acts 20: 28; but he was not there as a bishop but as an apostle.

Having thus noticed the peculiar qualifications of the apostles for their office, and their relationship to their divine pastor, we proceed in the second place to direct our attention to the exclusive subject of their testimony, "The Word of Life." Some may suppose that this expression is equivalent to "the doctrine of life and salvation." But while the doctrine of life, and of the way of salvation are unquestionably included; it is he himself who is primarily intended, who is "The Life," and in whom as its source and true foundation it permanently dwells, John 1: 4; "In him was Life; and the Life was the Light of men." Dr. Goadby has said with great force and beauty, "that Christianity did not enter the world in the form of a creed or catechism; it did not come as a ready-made standard, or system of faith; it did not come as a dogma thinkable or unthinkable; it came as a man; it came in the power and might of a personal life and history (and to some extent it retains them still,) objective to human thought and perception. It brought down the divine and eternal within the limits of human experience, human fellowship, and human life." Thus conceiving rightly of the apostolic character, and of the place which the apostles occupy in the economy of human salvation, we are enabled to comprehend the place and nature of the testimony which they bear, while they declare again and again, "these things write we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us." Thus we see that the testimony of the apostles must be borne to Jesus Christ exclusively, as the grand source from which all saving truth and knowledge must be developed. Not to a creed or system of doctrines, so much as to a divine person whose history is the gospel, whose life is the light of men. Hence we hear Paul saying, "brethren when I came to you, I came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God: for I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." The apostolic testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ, however, is a wide subject. "Great is the mystery of Godliness." God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up "into glory." The pre-existence of the Redeemer in the glory which he had with the Father before the world was; the miraculous and intensely interesting history of his incarnation, occupying for ages the prophetic mind, and attracting the intelligences of heaven and of earth—the not less wonderful records of his life and ministry; the wisdom of his teaching, and the grace and glory of his mighty works; the putting away of sin by the sacrifice of himself, and the establishing of his kingdom by his resurrection and ascension to the Father, and all this as blending and reconciling, harmonizing and fulfilling, all things which God had spoken; "for to him give all the prophets witness;" all things centre in Christ. The story of Christ crucified, as the apostles told it, is no meagre affair. Well might Paul exclaim, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." This apostolic testimony is as fresh to-day as when they first invited men to their fellowship; and as amply and gloriously meets the needs of a perishing world; holding open the door of faith to the gentiles, and blessing the souls of God's children. And thus believing have fellowship with the apostles, and thus their joy is complete or full. This is the place which the apostles occupy; this is the great end of their calling, and for this their training and the qualifications imparted by their divine Master, admirably fitted them.

We go on to observe in the third place that our fellowship with the apostles is not only in their objective testimony concerning truths and facts which they knew so well, but also in the nature and form of their testimony. "That," say they, "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life declare we unto you." They thus lend us their ears, so that we may hear him for ourselves, as they heard him. They lend us their eyes. They bring us to their own standpoint, so that in a certain and important sense, we stand where they stood, and see what they saw, and look with prolonged gaze upon the pictured scene, until the miracle of healing, or the address, or the conversation, or whatever may have been the event which they are describing is finished, and we have seen it ourselves. And more than this they lay open to us with transparent simplicity, their very experiences, so that whilst beholding we are enabled to ascertain with considerable certainty, what were their own impressions, their difficulties, their convictions, and their feelings of various kinds. We have thus

fellowship with them in their very handling and tasting of the Word of Life; and thus we share in their divinely wrought apprehension, of the Father and the Son. The vraisemblance and minuteness of their descriptive details place before our mental vision, living pictures of surpassing beauty and power, which we know to be faithful as photographs. We have sometimes looked on the religious paintings, (so called) of the great masters, and have admired beautiful faces and figures, magnificent coloring and drapery, finely expressed sentiments of grief, or joy, or devotion, in the countenance of men and women and angels; but we knew all the while that these are only the creations of the painters' fancy; they appeal to the senses, and excite the passions, in various measure or degree, according to the artistic or superstitious susceptibilities of the admirer, but lead no nearer to the truth. Nay, often truth and history are sacrificed and violated. If there is any fellowship produced it is with the painters and not with the apostles. It is far otherwise when we look on scenes made real and vivid by the faithful word painting of these living witnesses. Take for instance, the ordinance of baptism as described by an apostolic eye witness, and we see, not as in an ancient painting by one of the Great Masters, a man standing with his head on one side, who looks as if he might be receiving a drop of water out of a clam shell in the hand of another man, who of course is the baptizer; but we see the whole veritable transaction, the going down into the water, the immersion, and the coming up out of the water; and in the case of our Lord's baptism we hear the voice from heaven saying, "this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." Thus it is also with other scenes at Bethany, or Gethsemane, or Calvary, or in the upper room where on the same night in which he was betrayed, our Lord instituted the ordinance of the supper. And besides historical narratives and descriptive records, when the apostles came to expositions, or revelations of divine truth or predictions of future events, we know that the Holy Spirit is speaking to us through his own divinely chosen and qualified organs; and that while we have fellowship with them, their fellowship is with the Father and with his Son. Moreover when we read their recorded sermons and addresses we feel that it is the "apostles" we are listening to.

The exegesis and expositions of the great truths of the gospel, are those of the apostles. The reasonings are their reasonings; the illustrations, and applications of truth are theirs. We drink at the fountain head of truth. We are brought by the apostles to the "pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, and the Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." 4th. If these views are correct, they furnish the most conclusive argument against what is called "tradition." The apostles as such had no successors. They could not possibly have any such. Their divine appointment and qualifications render it impossible; and their life-work and writings render it unnecessary. They, like their great Master, had a work assigned them, which no others could perform, and they did it well. They finished their testimony. They declared and recorded "all the words of this life," so that we are enabled to affirm, that the events of Christ's life are some of the best authenticated facts in the history of the world. The objective reality of the Lord's life on earth as it appears in the gospels, confirmed by apostolic testimony, constitutes the broad foundation of Christian theology. For there is no doctrine, nor precept, nor ordinance which the apostles have not delivered to us; "according as his divine power hath given to us" all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." Thus the Christian and apostolic religion is scriptural to the exclusion of tradition. "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book; if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book," etc. As we have seen he who drinks of the living water, drinks at the fountain-head; not at a stream polluted by the centuries of corruption through which it has flowed; but pure, as the apostles drank of it themselves. They still invite us to have fellowship with them, that our joy may be full. Here in its fellowship with the apostles, is the church's grand safe-guard against heresy and declension from the truth. Not in the decreets of so called Ecumenical councils or assemblies, whether held at Rome or Geneva, or Westminster, or Plymouth. We appeal from them all, as our divinely given and inalienable right to the apostles themselves, who invite us to their fellowship. These pseudo apostolic claimants may tell us, that we are blind; and cannot have fellowship with the apostles, except through them; but we find ourselves cheated, when we listen to them for they lead us away from the apostles' testimony to their own traditions, and decrees, like those ancient tradition mongers, the scribes and pharisees of old, to whom the Saviour addressed the withering words "full well ye reject the commandments that ye may keep your own" traditions; and like those, of whom Paul says "they would exclude us that ye may affect them." Thus we see that in the wisdom of God, all the successive ages of the dispensation of the gospel, are brought into immediate intercourse, and a present fellowship with the apostles themselves, and

no room is left for tradition, of any kind or form. But though not, as authoritative, tradition, we have church history, and the history of Christian doctrine, which we value highly, as occupying an important place among our sources of information, and as simple history, being very valuable; in which we see the course of the gospel through successive ages, and among the different nations and tribes of men, and this history well repays our careful study. We see the conflicts of the gospel with the various forms of idolatry, and philosophy; and the results of these conflicts, neither few or small. We see also the political struggles into which the Christians were forced, with governments and kings, who sought to crush them, and to expiate their religion, until the time of Constantine. And we afterward see still fiercer, and more deadly struggles when princes and governments having professedly yielded to the power of Christianity and adopted the name, became its avowed allies, and then took it under their protection and authority. All this we learn from history, and also what resulted from such alliance. The page of history is strangely stained with blood, through succeeding records of Christian nations, with their armies and sanguinary conflicts, to this day. And Christian nations have standing armies and fearful military records. But in all this there is no fellowship with the apostles. We see also in the history of these past ages, the part which the gospel has taken in the progress of human civilization and improvement, and which is more, we have its marvellous adaptedness to all possible states and conditions of mankind. But in every age and amid all changes, the apostles and their testimony have remained the same. They sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Their boasted successors who say they are apostles and are not, but do lie, have done all in their power to exclude and silence the true apostles, and to degrade them from their seats of authority, in order that they may exalt themselves. Their leader is that man of sin, who seems now to be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, etc. etc.—2 Thess. 2: 3-4. The bitter hatred of divine truth and the fierce delight with which the testimony of these apostles is committed to the flames, even at this day by Romish priests is sad proof of this. The apostles are forbidden to speak, and men to listen. This surely is the master device of Satan, and the strength of a traditional system. "But all flesh is grass and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever." And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. "In the midst of all the still small voice is heard, "Have fellowship with us." Not only is fellowship with the apostles the grand safeguard of the church against all heresy and defection from the truth, but when such predicted falling away from the truth had taken place in consequence of forsaking the fellowship of the apostles, the only means of recovery and reformation have been found in a simple return to the first principles of the oracles of God. Every true revival of religion has had the Bible as its foundation and its chief instrument, and doubtless it will be so to the end. The histories of Wickliffe and Luther, and their times, are striking illustrations of this. The Reformation did great work in this department of Bible translation. The revival of the missionary spirit during the last century and its wonderful progress during the present century has resulted in the translation of the Scriptures into, it is not easy to say how many languages, but each blessed and faithful effort of the kind, brought multitudes of our fellowmen into the happy position in which they can hear the apostles say, have fellowship with us. It will be seen then that the passage which we are discussing bears directly on the subject of Bible translation. While the apostles lived, the miraculous gift of tongues greatly facilitated the work of making known the gospel of Christ. And at an early period in the history of Christianity, the work of Bible translation was commenced. For it was felt to be of great importance that every man should read in his own tongue the words of this life. Even as the pious Jews, during the dispersion, felt in regard to the sacred books of the Old Testament which they valued so highly. Several of their versions into different Semitic languages in part remain, and especially the Greek version, called the Septuagint, remains an incalculable blessing to the church, facilitating our acquaintance with the word of God, and our knowledge of the language in which the ancient books were written. The work of Bible translation is a most remarkable feature of the present age. Its importance is growingly felt, as the fellowship of the apostles is desired, and found to be possible. And in order to do this the translation must be faithful and entire. Every word or sentence translated must express and convey to the readers mind the precise idea or thought which was in the mind of the writer. This is the principle on which the translator works, to bring together the author and the reader, so that there may be a perfect understanding between them. Consequently the practice of transferring words on controverted subjects, is unfaithful to the apostles and to the truth. This discussion of our text has also a bearing on that branch of critical learning which is called Biblical or Scriptural. Biblical criticism has been of great use to the Christian church (under the blessing of God), but in so far only as its labors serve