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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—THE PREACHER IN DAILY LIFE.

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JUDAS ISCARIOT may have been very popular as a preacher, when sent out with the Twelve, but he was Judas Iscariot notwithstanding. The most dignified robes in the pulpit may only, like the shining vestment of Herod Agrippa at Cesarea, hide the worm gnawing, unseen, beneath them. To preach well is much, but to live a godly life is much more. Without the foil of a good name behind it, the brightest pulpit light shines with little effect. Character is the preacher's capital; his words, the paper money to which confidence in that character gives its value. For any one to "Presume to lay his hand upon the ark, Of the magnificent and awful cause" of Christ's service, the first requirement must be, that he be full of Christ's spirit. No one save the Master Himself was ever a *perfect* Christian, but the ideal character of His servants must, at all times, be their closer or fainter imitation of His example.

The supreme passion revealed in our Lord's ministry was, as the gospels abundantly show, a divine enthusiasm for humanity. Man, as man, was sacred in His eyes, as the living temple of God in the new dispensation. Neither Jerusalem nor Gerizim was to be the presence-chamber of the Almighty: the Shekinah was henceforth to dwell in the bosom of regenerated man. The Eternal Father, now, at least, looks with equal eye on all nations and tribes, and people, and tongues. Christianity, the new kingdom of God, knows, over the earth, only one great family: the sons and daughters of a loving Creator, longing to welcome all who come to their right mind, and turn penitently back to their Father's house. The fatted calf, and the feast, and festal robes and rejoicings over the lost one now found, and the dead

NOTE.—This periodical adopts the Orthography of the following Rule, recommended by the joint action of the American Philological Association and the Philological Society of England:—Change *d* or *ed* final to *t* when so pronounced, except when the *e* affects a preceding sound.—PUBLISHERS.

tion for preaching and evangelistic work. You have given to it the name of Whitefield, see that by the power of God you give to it also his devoted and inspired spirit. Let there be no irony in the use of the name of Whitefield. Whitefield's Tabernacle without Whitefield's passionate consecration would be a lie written in stone. To have the word Fire written on your portals, and the word Ice written on your pulpit, would be an intolerable affront to the spirit of history and to the genius of harmony. If I thought that any Gospel other than what is known as the grand Evangelistic testimony should ever be preached in the City Temple, I should mourn the woful day in which I had a hand in rearing that structure. I say the same thing about the Tabernacle which you are now erecting. We are the unconscious servants of the devil in building these walls if ever within them should be preached other than the Deity of Jesus Christ, the completeness and infinite sufficiency of His Atonement, and the absolute need of the Holy Spirit in the enlightenment and culture of redeemed souls. The Cross should be the one all-impressive sign in every consecrated temple: not visible to the eye of the body—that may or may not be—but visible to the eyes of the soul when it comes to find the answer of God to the sin of man. Do not preach about the Gospel, but preach the Gospel itself. Do not make occasional references to the Gospel as if it were something merely incidental and illustrative; expound it, declare its meaning, embody its glorious purpose, and make it the standard by which all character is tested.

If this is your determination a glorious future is assured. Do not imagine that merely to repeat the name of Jesus again and again in the course of a sermon is really to preach His grace and His love. See to it that every sermon is so full of Christ's spirit and purpose that the sermon would have no existence if that divine feature of it were withdrawn. As a preacher who has

been standing in the city of London for thirty years, I gladly avow that whatever good success has attended my ministry, that success is due entirely to the fact that my one desire has been that the ministry should be penetrated by the very pathos and passion of the Cross. I do not want every man to preach in the same way, but I want every man to preach the same Gospel. Believe me, nothing but the Gospel will stand the wear and tear of experience and evolution and rivalry. The Gospel is best when most is expected of it. Omniscience can not be overstrained, the ocean can not be exhausted. Nor can the Cross of Christ give way under assault or under any pressure. Ministers of London! be faithful to your Savior, and He will be faithful to you! Invent some superficial gospel of your own, and your efforts will end in disappointments and mockery. Preach the Gospel of the Son of God, and you will find that it is the power of God unto salvation. In the name of God I would tenderly bless you all, and in return I would ask you to remember my poor life and work when you are most intimate with the King. Thus completing one another, and encouraging one another, and sheltering one another, we shall together see great results, and gladly and rapturously join our voices in a final

SONG OF HARVEST.

THAT ABOMINABLE THING.

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Oh! do not that abominable thing which I hate.—Jer. xlv. 4.

I ONCE asked the Rev. Richard Q. Way, a returned missionary, some time since gone to his reward, if he and his co-laborers had found it necessary to resort frequently to church discipline with their Chinese converts. His reply

was, "Not oftener than in churches at home." But then he went on to observe, that one thing in connection with these converts from paganism had surprised, and for a time puzzled and disturbed, the missionaries no little, viz. : the absence of pungent and alarming convictions of sin. In the experience of men who had been opium-eaters, thieves, liars, impure, they expected a sense of sin like that of Bunyan's pilgrim. But when they came to reflect they remembered not only that these converts had as yet but an imperfect conception of the law of God, the standard of right and wrong, but, what was more to the point, that they were, as measured by their previous knowledge, less culpable than was supposed. A position sustained by that Scripture, "That servant that knew his master's will and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes; but that servant which knew not the master's will, but did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." The pungent convictions and fright of poor Christian in the City of Destruction not only ought not to have been expected, but would have been out of proportion to actual guilt.

This lack of light will not account for or excuse what is alleged to be a spiritual phenomenon of the times, an increasing insensibility to the evil and enormity of sin. Our religious press has been discussing the decadence of the sense of sin, and a distinguished minister of the Northern Presbyterian Church has contributed to a Southern periodical two articles on the subject which have attracted wide attention. Establishing the fact, he proceeds to develop with ability what he regards as the prominent causes, such as follows: The evolutionary theory of creation, making sin only a defect of the beastly organization, and sloughed off by natural law; Christian Science, falsely so-called, as it is neither scientific nor Christian, denying the very existence of sin; the Ritschlian theology, making love instead of holiness the de-

terminative attribute of Deity, and sin only an irregularity which rectitude under the guidance and control of benevolence is reducing to order; and the holiness fad in its imaginary attainment of perfection, exhibiting ignorance as to the nature of sin and unconsciousness of remaining corruption.

Other reasons may be assigned in addition, which will be past in rapid review. Unquestionably a potent factor in the production of this result is the familiarity with crime, the result of the universal reading of the secular newspaper. The daily, the tri-weekly, and the weekly, gathering the news by telegraph from the four corners of the earth, every day and week flutter over the land like the falling leaves of autumnal forests, and young and old read. Now it is not only true of "Yellow Journalism" which publishes everything, true or false—a murder with all its hideous particulars, a divorce suit with all its nasty details, a theft of mighty proportions, etc.—but even the decent press contributes its quota of hardening effect by the daily recital of crime simply as news! All remember the couplet, "Vice is a monster," etc. The public may not take all the steps described by the poet, but it does the first—it "endures." We are coming to lose our keen sense of the wickedness of such misdeeds. Then, again, the light way in which the press trifles with crime and its punishment adds to this deadening effect upon conscience. If Dr. South, the inventor of the phrase about to be quoted, were alive, he would find daily illustration in our American press of "the fatal imposture of words." The dailies rarely call a spade a spade. Sometimes they do. A wretch who picks my pocket, or steals overcoat and hat from my house, is "a sneak thief," and if caught, justly goes to jail and serves out his term; but your respectable society man who wrecks a bank and makes away with the hard earnings of multitudes better than himself is simply "a defaulter,"

and if by chance he is sentenced to the penitentiary, he is, through political or social influences, pardoned out before punishment has well begun. A clerk robs his trusting employer, hiding it for a time by false entries, and he has simply "gone crooked." Adultery, involving as it does perjury, dissolving the sacred marriage bond, and thus striking at the very roots of society, is made the butt of newspaper wit. A murderer, through "the law's delay" long cheating the gallows, is at last hung, and the dish of horrors is warmed over and served fresh, and the brutal face receives the same honor with a Dewey's, and the stolid insensibility with which he meets his just doom is magnified as nerve, the same in kind with that of the soldier who for love of country presses through shot and shell, undismayed by the falling of comrades to the right and left of him. The effect of this constant contact with crime, and the minifying or misrepresenting comments thereon, must be debauching to public conscience, and must lead to a general insensibility to the evil of sin; for what is vice by human statute is sin by Divine law.

It is to be feared that the Christian pulpit, using the term in a large sense, is measurably responsible for this state of things. Unquestionably some of the unauthorized evangelists, wandering at will over the land, are chargeable with some of this baneful influence. The love of God is their one theme, to the neglect of His truth, holiness, and justice. Heaven is painted in all its attractiveness, and hell left out of the account; in a word, the Gospel is divorced from the law, and sinners are wooed entirely by the soft voice of mercy, and never frightened by the stern menace of justice. Is the regular ministry wholly blameless? It is not, if the contentions of some Unitarian and Universalist organs be correct, that wrath, judgment, and hell are rarely mentioned in even professedly orthodox pulpits in some quar-

ters of our land. Then in some places there is a humanitarianism preached, displacing eternal verities. In the reaction against what is branded as unprofitable doctrinal sermonizing, to what is called practical or applied Christianity or Christian sociology, man instead of God becomes the center of thought; David's aberration is a social crime, and not a sin against God as he understood and confest it. Do all ministers remember always as they should the solemn charge to a preacher prophet, "When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die, if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked man from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thy hand"? Read Edwards on "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," from the text, "Their feet shall slide in due time," when strong men seized the posts of the building to keep from slipping into the bottomless pit; or Samuel Davies on "The Universal Judgment"; or the long discourses of the Puritan divines, with their multitudinous divisions,—and we fear modern sermons in the matter of faithfulness to truth and fidelity to souls will suffer in the comparison. It is proposed that this pulpit to-day echo with sufficient plainness the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, upon the tremendous topic of sin. I invite your attention therefore to

The Lord's Opinion of Sin.

It will be admitted, that if any one knows its nature, it is the Omniscient, and that He will not, because as the God of truth He can not, deceive on the subject. Whatever He pronounces it in any way to be, that without doubt it is. What the Lord thinks of sin may be learned from two things: what He has said of it in His Book, and what that Book represents Him as doing in regard to it.

I. First, then, His words about sin.

The text is a saying in point: "Oh, do not that abominable thing which I

hate." It is true, that the specific sin mentioned in the context is idolatry; but then the same term is used of other sins and of sin in general. "The abominable, unclean things" depict the ceremonial uncleanness which are shadows of sin's pollutions. The vices of the aborigines of Canaan, expelled by Israel, are represented as sickening the very land itself: "That the land spue you out not also when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you." Man in general is declared to be abominable because of his native depravity. "How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh in iniquity like water." The acts of the unbeliever who is practically an atheist, living without God in the world, are so called: "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God. Corrupt are they; they have done abominable works." Indeed, in its last analysis, what is all sin but a species of idolatry, a setting of some thing or some being in the place of God? That which God regards as abominable, and warns us against, must be intrinsically hateful.

What God thinks of sin may be learned from another striking passage of Scripture, often quoted in public prayer, and almost as often misquoted, thus: "Lord, thou canst not look upon sin with allowance." Habakkuk has it: "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity." The imagery seems to be of one passing an object known to be horribly disgusting and lying by the wayside, resolutely turning his eyes away from it. Sin is so loathsome to the Lord that He refuses, as it were, to contemplate it, or, if He catches a glimpse of it, straightway turns from it to some more agreeable object.

What God thinks of sin may again be learned from His threats leveled against it.

"In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." "The wages of sin is death"—the connection shows, "eternal death." "Cursed is every one that

continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." In numerous places he threatens it with His displeasure here and wrath hereafter. The wrath of God "abides" on the unbelieving sinner, and hell awaits him beyond the grave, described as the "bottomless pit." And no lips ever spoke more awful words of its everlasting and unendurable suffering than the lips of Incarnate Love. He it is who tells of undying worm, of unquenchable fire, of the poor alleviation of one drop of water denied the tongue scorcht in the flame. And He Himself for our warning pronounces in advance the final sentence of doom, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Oh! that must be inexpressibly filthy and abominable that a God of love menaces with such unappeasable wrath, and which is such that when it shall have proved finally incurable, He will shut up all hopelessly infected with it in the eternal lazaretto of the universe!

But what He has done more vividly demonstrates God's sentiments toward sin than what He has said about it.

What has He done to sinners because of it? Listen! Man is created the favorite of heaven, placed in a garden of delights, and enjoys open-faced communion with his Maker. He sins, and banishment immediately follows, and the cherubic flaming sword guards approach to its forfeited joys. A wanderer, he finds the earth everywhere curst for his sin, volunteering only weeds and thorns, and yielding good fruitage only to sweating toil; and when God calls, he flees to hide from his King. The race sins, and an entire generation are swept from the earth by a flood. Cities sin, and are destroyed by rain of fire and brimstone out of heaven. His chosen people sin, and to-day they are a "nation scattered and peeled." Herod apes the Divine, and is smitten with mortal disease and eaten of worms. Ananias and Saphira dissemble, and share the same awful

doom. As has been well said, God does not destroy every wicked generation, nation, city, individual, but in the destruction of one of each gives awful warning what He means to do at the final winding up of His affairs.

But the crowning demonstration of God's hatred of sin is the cross.

Here I can not do better than to quote from John Owen a passage of rare beauty and force :

"Some tell us that one drop of the blood of Christ was abundantly enough to redeem all the world; but they err, not knowing the desert of sin or the severity of God's justice. If one drop less than was shed, one pang less than was laid on, would have done it, those other drops had not been shed, those other pangs laid on. . . . It pleased God to bruise Him, to put Him to grief, to make His soul an offering for sin, to pour out His soul unto death. He hid Himself from Him, was far from the voice of His crying until He exclaimed, 'My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?' He made Him a sin and a curse for us, executed the sentence of the law, brought Him into an agony, wherein He sweat thick drops of blood, was grievously troubled, and His soul was heavy unto death. He that was the power of God and the wisdom of God went stooping under the burden, and the whole frame of nature seemed astonished at it."

Would we know sin in its true nature—

"Then let us gather round the cross
That knowledge to obtain."

I present two thoughts in conclusion :

1. Among the unconverted before me I fail to discover one small sinner. There are degrees in sin, some more heinous and hateful and provoking than others, but there is no such thing, among young or old, amiable or the reverse, as a small sinner. In a herd of elephants there are larger and smaller, but all elephants. For observe, not one of you can plead ignorance of either law or Gospel. "Thou knowest the commandments," and "the old, old story of the cross" has been familiar from childhood. If, then, you are to-day unsaved, you have not only been trampling upon God's authority, but His grace. You have a thousand times been guilty of that abominable thing which the God that made you hates

with all the energy of an infinite nature. Oh, that the Spirit may now show you how great a sinner you are, that you may fly without delay to the open refuge set before you in the Gospel of the Crucified! Says Owen, "A sense of want is the spring of desire"; and the familiar hymn says :

"All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him,"

2. There is not among the faults of any Christian before me such a thing as a small sin. Think not, believer, that pardon alters the essential character of sin. In none is it more detestable to God than in the children of His love; were it not for His sovereign grace, the remains of it would destroy you yet. Sin in you takes on a darker hue as committed against greater illumination and privilege and greater dissuasives to the contrary. May God give all His people a conscience that, like the test of the chemist, will betray even "a trace" of sin! Under the sought illumination of the Spirit of truth, study sin, your sin, at the foot of the Cross; and you will turn away from it with infinite fear and loathing, and it will fortify you against the temptation which comes like a cyclone, as well as against the little foxes which spoil the vines. For, remember, the text was originally address to the Hebrew people simply as God's chosen, and is therefore His present word to His own. Oh, the strength and the pathos of it! "Oh, do not that abominable thing which I hate!"

And the Pharisees went forth and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.—Mark iii. 6.

This verse shows the working of three determined and most mischievous powers: (1) The power of prejudice, as against Christ; (2) The power of technicality, as opposed to humanity; (3) The power of ignorance, as forgetful of the fact that in morals as in physics the greater includes the less. Sabbath-keeping is less than man-healing.—*Joseph Parker.*