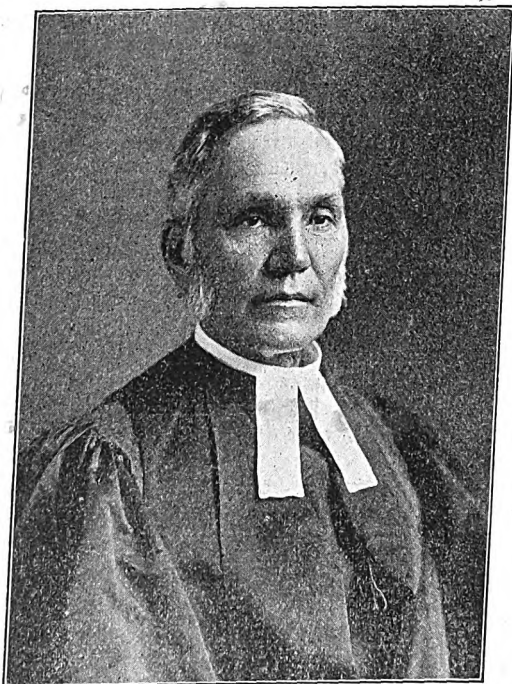


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A Thoughtful Faith

There is reason in the demand, now pressed so urgently, for a faith that proves itself by works. Genuine love to God must make itself manifest in such love for one's fellow men as will be spent in self-sacrificing toil for their welfare. The treasure entrusted to Christ's people is not for their own consumption, but for careful and conscientious administration for the benefit of their brethren. We are surely debtors to our neighbor. That is, we owe him all that we can give, not only of the word of spiritual life, but of practical help for the bettering of his condition. Practical Christianity is a demonstration of vital Christianity.

But practical Christianity without root in the depths of spiritual life is like the seed sown on rocky soil. It springs up quickly, and quickly withers, because it has no deepness of earth. Activity in self-sacrificing service is good and Christlike. But it needs to be sustained by a thoughtful understanding of the reason for it, and steadied by such conviction as comes only from thorough consideration. It is not uncommon to see enthusiastic lovers of their fellow men begin with great cheerfulness praiseworthy enterprises of practical Christianity, even going so far as to criticize sharply those who do not ally themselves with their particular undertaking; but afterward they fall by the way. They have not thought very much. Difficulties, or new and more attractive enterprise, hinder their running well. They fall into the company of the man who began, and was not able to finish.

It is true, on the other hand, that the contemplative spirit is in danger of so enwrapping itself in its contemplations as to neglect the practical deeds in which Christian love is manifested. That is the charge now pressed against the theologian and the theological training-school, by the larger practitioner of Christian social ethics. It is declared that much study is not only a weariness to the flesh, but that, in effect, it takes the student out of the realities of that for which he is supposed to live.

Between these extremes of thoughtless practicality and unpractical thoughtfulness is the true ground for a thoughtful faith. The Master's own word would set us on that ground. His commandment was that we shall love God with mind as well as heart, soul as well as strength. Our thinking powers are given us, not to be permitted to die out, of disuse, while we spend ourselves on zealous activity, but to be exercised to the utmost in the thought of God and his way. It would work a great transformation in the character

of Christian life, if Christians would take the trouble and the time to think.

It is in this matter of meditation, thoughtfulness, contemplation, that our brethren of the Friends have both touched and missed the truth. Their urging of the value of meditation as over against elaborate expression, is well worth heeding. Their mistaken depreciation of all expression does not lessen the value of their testimony for thoughtfulness. It is quite true that the voice of the Spirit will be heard in the soul that listens in quietness, and in contemplation of the thoughts of God. It is the one to whom those thoughts are precious who will say, "How great is the sum of them!"

There is need among us to-day, in the midst of our excessive devotion to the things to be done, for calmer, quieter attention to the things to be thought, felt, believed. A thoughtful faith will try out and dismiss the blatant errors of mistaken faith or no-faith. A deep conviction of the truth revealed to the thoughtful seeker will make him the most active Christian and the most effective helper of his fellow-men.

The Union Seminary Students

We have delayed commenting upon the licensure of three students of Union Theological Seminary by the Presbytery of New York until we should have a clear understanding of the facts. We have also been at some pains to obtain a statement of the facts as they appeared to those who voted with the large majority of Presbytery to license the young men. Those to whom we have applied, however, have either declined to make any statement, or have made it clear that the statements made by our correspondents in New York, and published some weeks ago, were substantially correct. Such criticisms of these statements as have been given us have referred rather to personalities rather than to the statements themselves.

We take it for granted, then, that as reported in many newspapers, and by our correspondents, the facts were that the three students appeared before the Presbytery, in the usual manner, to be examined for licensure, that upon examination it appeared that they were not properly instructed in some of the subjects upon which they were examined, and that their belief upon important articles of faith, as stated by them, was not satisfactory to a considerable majority of the Presbytery. The Presbytery refused to license the students, and appointed a committee to confer with

Religious Earnestness: A Sermon Against Spiritual Herodism

BY REV. HENRY CHRISTOPHER MCCOOK, D.D.

Luke 23: 8, 9.—“And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous of seeing him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him, and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.”

FOR the first and last time the man Christ Jesus stood face to face with his legal sovereign. The text plainly intimates that these two persons had never met before. Strange, too; for our Lord's own city—Capernaum—lay at the opposite end of the fertile plain of Genesareth, but a few miles north of Tiberias, the new and beautiful capital of Herod Antipas. Many of the inferior towns of Galilee were associated with the memory of Jesus Christ. Capernaum, Chorazin, Bethsaida, Nazareth, Cana, Nain—in all these he wrought and taught. But Tiberias he never entered. There was an atmosphere there that apparently repelled his presence and offered no promise to his labors.

It was a new town, built probably upon the remains of an old Jewish village, Romanized, heathenized, “modernized,” perhaps, the Herodian courtiers said. The stadium, the circus, the palaces adorned with that class of carved work and images that the Jew abhorred and his law denounced, were of far more interest there than the synagogue of the devout Israelite.

This is a remarkable fact in the life of our Lord. He compassed that town of Tiberias about, hedging it round with works of grace and power, yet he entered it not. He treated Herod's capital city as he treated Herod himself—with silence. Perhaps for the same reason! What that reason was shall be the central point of our thoughts. That we may follow intelligently, let us glance at the history and character of this sovereign of Galilee and Perea.

Herod Antipas was the son of that Herod (the Great) who sought to kill Jesus in his infancy. He had passed most of his early life in Italy, where he had acquired the taste for pagan amusements which became with him such a ruling passion. The gospel references to the character of this prince fully confirm the accounts of contemporary history. We find him (Mark 6: 20), according to Mark, reverencing the just and holy character of John Baptist, and for a time listened to him gladly, and reformed his life in some things. Yet he unlawfully took his brother's wife, and when rebuked for the incestuous act, imprisoned John, whom he afterwards was weak and wicked enough to slay out of a superstitious and criminal regard for a foolish oath. Shortly after, on hearing the works of Jesus (Mark 6: 14, 16), he was conscience-smitten, and supposed that John had risen from the dead. Under the epithet, “that fox,” our Lord speaks of his low cunning. He had such regard for the rites of religion that he was now in Jerusalem to observe the passover. In short, he was frivolous, fickle, superstitious, sensual, weak, cunning and cruel. He was dethroned and

banished A. D. 30, and died in exile, a stroke of divine justice which the careful and devout reader of history often notes as smiting upon men and affairs. It is to the frivolity of this prince that I am chiefly to direct your thoughts; his utter lack of religious earnestness, of seriousness in dealing with Jesus, and the eternal truth which Jesus taught.

I. Consider Herod's ATTITUDE TOWARD CHRIST. “When he saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad.” Here came to him a brother man, bound and bearing the marks of abuse. What impression did the pitiful sight make upon his human sympathy? Was he glad that Providence had thus given him an opportunity to do an act of justice and mercy? No. He was glad because now he should have a chance to see some miracle done! Humanity indeed! What was that to one whose heart was fixed on seeing a grand show!

Here came to him a subject in distress, imprisoned and bound by a foreign ruler. Did the sight awaken his princely concern for a maltreated subject? That is a strong feeling in every ruler's breast. It awakens our approbation as we read in current history the fixed policy of Great Britain toward her citizens. Touch with violence the humblest Briton in the remotest part of the earth, and you assail the Government itself! And there swiftly follow inquiry, remonstrance, demand for requital, or punishment! This characteristic of the British people is well understood and thoroughly respected. And it adds greatly to the standing of Great Britain among the nations. Some such spirit of national brotherhood is essential to the unity and strength, the permanence and prosperity of any people. Did Herod possess any measure of this spirit? Was the man glad of this opportunity to vindicate the honor and liberty of a citizen of his own province? Not he! All such sentiment was swallowed up in the desire to see some sign or wonder!

Then there came to him one whom he held to be a Prophet of God. Did the fact awaken in him religious zeal, or any kind of religious emotion? No. He was not ignorant of the pure character, and exalted deeds of Jesus, yet he would have used him as a wonder-worker simply, some higher order of juggler, with whom he might pass an excited hour of entertainment. He wished to be startled, amazed, agitated by this mighty worker of miracles; but to be taught concerning right and wrong, of the duties of time and the realities of eternity, he had no thought at all!

Such was Herod Antipas, the prince in whose dominions our Lord spent his days. He slew John Baptist, the greatest of all prophets, through his double passion for wine and the Roman ballet. He gave back the Messiah of God to bonds and death through disappointment of the depraved appetite for theatrical spectacles and startling exhibitions! He is a fitting type, an exaggerated one, if you please, but a fitting one, of those in every age, whose characters are lacking in religious earnestness; in whom frivolity has

smothered seriousness; who count the mere tinsel of the world as the pure gold of life, and who are never in serious earnest save when pursuing its exciting shows.

1. Let me speak first of the manifestations of this spirit outside of the Church. In one form or another, it controls or influences the life of irreligious and non-religious people. They refuse to view the great themes of eternity with becoming seriousness. They have no earnestness in their questionings of Christ. Earnestness enough they may have in their pursuit of other things, pleasure, gain, position, but in this one thing, in which of all others the soul should be most in earnest, they show an amazing levity. Like Herod and his men of war, they "set Christ at naught," they count him as naught, nothing—a cypher. He, the Son of the God of eternity, who filleth immensity with his presence, whose power circumscribes the world, the solar system, the universe; within whose circling providence all men stand, although unconscious, with every act and influence of their lives directed by the hidden forces that lie in his hand. Him, the Adorable, the Infinite, they count as a naught!

That may seem a small sin to some. But is it so? To put one's self in this attitude towards God and eternity? To be a trifler as concerns the most real, the vastest matters that can come before human thought? To be a non-entity Heavenward! To have no character on that side of one's life that has the noblest, the fullest outlook? That no sin? Far be it from us to tolerate such a thought!

Beloved friends, look around you! With the divine Christ in the form of oppressed and suffering humanity, and suppressed or distorted Truth, staring one in the face at every step through the world;—to sit down and deliberately plan out the chief end of our earthly being, to be amused with puffs and ruffles; with plays and parties, with bonds and stocks, with bridge and poker, or with anything else perishing! Is that a worthy aim for this marvelous, divine gift of life? Is your aim such?

Ah, it is pitiful to see that in an immortal! Ah, that is fatal to be in an immortal.

Well, then, you may say, is life to be overcast with gloom? Shall we quench joy and good cheer? Suppress amusement and laughter? By no means! I would encourage all that if I thought it were in much danger of being neglected in this generation!

But that must be the surface play of life, not its inner depths; like the smiles on the face of Nature. The brook that goes laughing along the meadow and down the mountain, has a solid channel of rock beneath it. Under the play and sparkle of the sea waves lie the still untroubled deeps of ocean. So let the joys of earth be built upon, and spring up out of the Rock of Ages! Let the mirth and rejoicings of life be the surface play of the soul that has eternity's great depths of peace to rest upon. Whatever of babbling life may allow, let it be the dash of its currents upon channels that are worn in the solid substratum of earnest duty. "Rejoice in the Lord!" is a Scriptural injunction. It is rejoicing out of the Lord, —that is, in un-Christian, unhallowed, unworthy things,

that mars the true end of man, and makes his life a waste.

2. Let us now look inside of the Church. We shall find a decided vein of Herodism there also; a Herodism in the pew that looks for, demands, encourages, relishes, something exciting or amusing from the teachers of the gospel, and in the services of the Church. There are those who seem to go to church simply to witness imposing renderings of spectacular symbolisms not to worship God in spirit and in truth; to be entertained by the preacher or choir, not to be enlightened by the Word, and led in the spiritual praises of Jehovah. Too often the least and last of all considerations with such persons is to learn how to be better men and women, to know what to do to be saved!

We must, of course, discriminate here. It is not sensationalism to seek to awake holy thought and sensation, and to stimulate zeal in holy living and doing, for the glory of God and the weal of souls. But to preach and pray, and sing, to chant and intone, to robe and genuflect solely to attract the crowd, and stir up sensation, that is Herodism pure and simple. To make a show of one's self, a sign and a wonder, for the purpose of eliciting the applause, or exciting the pleasurable emotions of gazers and hearers, that surely is Herodism, sensationalism! And to encourage such demonstrations by one's presence, to run after them, to gape and wonder, and admire and be admired with the rest, that is it which gives this quackery of religious service its vitality; that is Herodism in the pew!

What we require is to keep before us always the true end of these heavenly ordinances! Here you come to speak to God, and to have God speak to you. Here you assemble, not to please the minister, or your friends, or yourselves; not to be pleased by oratory, rhetoric, display or song,—but to be profited in spiritual things, to render unto God, in a solemn spirit and appropriate form, the public recognition and worship which is due to him from every intelligent creature. And to help your fellow men by associated activity to be better and happier; to save them, to save your household, to save yourself! Depend upon it you will not go far wrong if in this spirit you worship God.

3. Once more, as with our worship so also with our work. The use that men have for Christ is something higher than to be made the center and subject of a mighty and wonderful deed, that shall set both themselves and all the world in amazement. As a Church, we would be glad to have Christ present in great power among us. But what for? To set all men admiring and envying us? Surely not! Let us beware! The great need that men have for the Christ within them is to develop into higher beauty and force their own spiritual life, that they may be more like Christ in their inner being, and more like him in their outer doing.

If one have this spirit, he may be glad with a true joy over the presence of Jesus, even though the world may not gape and applaud. The English professor's

(Continued on Page 23)

and to realize that never has the co-operation of the Board been more greatly needed or thoroughly appreciated, but it is amazed at the magnitude of the proof of this as indicated in the demands upon it during the four months since the new year began. Since April 1, the number of applications and the total amount desired have been practically double what all previous records would have indicated are to be expected.

Mark these facts. To the General Fund, from which, in accordance with the original charter of the Board, grants are made to young and feeble churches, there have come, up to August 1, ninety-two applications asking for \$86,542, as against last year's figures of fifty-one, and \$39,588.

What this means it is hardly necessary to say: surely a great advance in church growth; but, one which if continued in any like degree during the remaining eight months of the year, must be sorely hindered if this Board's resources are not largely and speedily increased. For this increase, it must depend upon the offerings of the churches.

If, in grateful acknowledgement of God's blessing upon our Church, as indicated in this proof of advance, our congregations shall respond cheerfully and promptly, disaster will be averted; but such response must be far beyond the average of late years, or the Board before long must inevitably face the sore alternative, either to refuse aid, however great the need, or to acknowledge the bankruptcy implied in making promises it cannot fulfil.

In the name, therefore, of hundreds of our young and promising churches, often the only centers of light in new communities, churches straining every nerve to provide themselves with the spiritual homes upon which often their very existence depends, the Board of Church Erection appeals to-day to the ten thousand congregations of our Church to come to the aid of their representative, and forbid it to turn away unaided any worthy applicant, and thus leave a waiting church unsheltered.

David Magie, President.

Erskine N. White, Secretary.

Adam Campbell, Treasurer.

New York, August 2, 1909.

RELIGIOUS EARNESTNESS, A SERMON AGAINST SPIRITUAL HERODISM

(Continued from page 7)

(Tyndall's) saying has often been quoted, "There is as much electricity latent in a rain drop as might produce when emitted a thunder discharge." Perhaps that is also of souls whom we know! Many a man and woman sinks mildly into the earth's currents, unheard, unnoticed, like the raindrop, who has latent thunder enough in him to shake the ground. And the chief aim of some men seems to be to get out that latent thunder simply to astonish society! But let us query, is one's power for good thereby any greater? Are we not following false estimates of moral forces? Are not gentleness, repose, mightier powers than bluster, noise? Are not quietness, dignity, steady earnestness a profounder mover of men than sensationalism, religious

thunder with its most approved appendages?

Our Saviour startled men indeed. No man ever more so. Of his disciples it was said, "They that have turned the world upside down." "I came to bring a sword," said Jesus; that is the combative, the divisive power of truth; a separation from evil. But all this came by the simple, earnest preaching of the truth!

The Herodians and Pharisees cried: "Give us a sign in the heavens!" The Devil said: "Cast thyself down." Jesus refused, and went earnestly forward to do his Father's will, in his own steady, dignified way.

Note finally the attitude of Jesus toward Herod—unbroken silence!

The utter absence of seriousness and respectful consideration of our Lord's high character and office, the complete frivolity of the man, sufficiently account for this silence. This incident is one of the most impressive in the Passion history. The murderer of John Baptist stands face to face with him of whom that prophet of repentance had said: "Behold the Lamb of God!" Doubtless, the thought of that bloody deed was not then absent from the mind of Jesus. But had there been any element of earnestness in that exceeding gladness of Herod; in that long-continued desire to see him; in those eager and multiplied questionings, we can hardly believe that they would have failed to receive some response from the merciful Saviour. He had given answer to his High Priest Annas, he had spoken at the appeal of Caiaphas and the Sanhedrim; those priests and elders, bigoted and cruel as they were, were deeply in earnest on questions of religion. He had freely responded to Pilate. Pagan, skeptic and time-server though the Roman was, yet he had shown some true appreciation of Christ's character, and had treated him with a measure of becoming dignity. But before Herod the lips of Jesus were sealed! Not one word of any kind, at any time, did he utter in the presence of this trifler with eternal things, who would have dealt with the Prophet and Messiah of God as with a juggler or a clown.

It was the silence of a Divine Contempt! There is nothing more striking, more awful, to think of or to receive! It was the penalty of princely frivolity—the attitude of Christ toward a prince without lofty purpose, fixed and strong to live a noble life!

And if you are as Herod, may this not be Christ's attitude toward you?

Seven Pounds Per Sermon

From merchant princes of London many splendid schemes for the benefit of their fellow citizens have emanated. Among these, one of the most notable is certainly that which originated in the will of William Jones, a liveryman of the Haberdashers' Company, who died nearly three hundred years ago. In the Haberdashers' Hall hangs Jones's portrait, with an inscription to the effect that he was a "merchant adventurer free of the Company of Haberdashers. Gave eighteen thousand pounds for charitable uses, most of which he committed to the care of this Company."

Among the special benefactions, however, which Jones mentioned in his will, dated December 16, 1614, was that he gave his house, which cost him over £1,000, as well as £600 in money, "to some learned and faithful preacher as the Honourable Company of Haberdashers shall appoint from time to time. Is in all £1,600." It was thus that what is known as the "Golden Lecture-ship" came to be founded. Up to date, the number of lectures delivered numbers 14,500, and these have been shared among about twenty-five lecturers, some of whom held the position for forty years.

The first lecturer was John Downname, Bachelor of Divinity, who was appointed on February 1, 1615. He retired on a pension of £80 a year. Others who held the office were Canon Melville, Rev. Daniel Moore and Canon Fleming. Under a new scheme, only twelve lectures a year are now required, six during the period of Advent and six during Lent.

As the years progressed, the income from the foundation increased greatly. For preaching one sermon a week, the lecturer fifty or more years ago received over £350 a year.

Apart from this remarkable lecture foundation, there are quite half-a-dozen other William Jones charities, including a grammar school, a girls' school, an elementary school, an almshouse and a charity for "poore preachers" within five miles of London.—Tit-Bits.

STICK TO IT

Until Coffee Hits You Hard

It is about as well to advise people to stick to coffee until they get hit hard enough, so that they will never forget their experience, although it is rather unpleasant to have to look back to a half dozen years of invalidism, money and opportunity thrown away, which is really the terrible price paid for the weakest kind of a "mess of pottage."

A woman writes and her letter is condensed to give the facts in a short space:

"I was a coffee slave and stuck to it like a toper to his 'cups,' notwithstanding I had headaches every day, and frequently severe attacks of sick headaches, then I used more coffee to relieve the headaches, and this was well enough until the coffee effect wore off, then I would have sick spells.

"Finally my digestion was ruined, severe attacks of rheumatism began to appear, and ultimately the whole nervous system began to break down and I was fast becoming a wreck.

"After a time I was induced to quit coffee and take up Postum. This was half a year ago. The result has been most satisfactory.

"The rheumatism is gone entirely, blood is pure, nerves practically well and steady, digestion almost perfect, never have any more sick headaches and am gaining steadily in weight and strength."

"There's a Reason."

Read "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs.

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.