

THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—THE APOSTLE PAUL AS PREACHER.

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AMONG the preachers of the Christian past, later than Jesus, one figure stands out to the historical eye, salient, unique, incomparable. That figure is the apostle Paul. Concerning no other preacher of any age can it be said, as it can be said concerning him, not only that he left behind him an impression of himself and of his work deep enough and clear enough to make his preaching a subject of study perennially promising to be fruitful, but that he also drew after him a sequel of inexhaustible living influence on the world, such as, from the very first, destined him to become in effect a kind of contemporary to each succeeding generation of his fellow men to the end of time—a personal force continually born again with every age to an ever-new lease of life and power. The purpose of the present paper is to make a study, somewhat in the spirit of our own day, of this illustrious preacher of apostolic times.

In entering on this task, we are undoubtedly first struck, and most strongly struck, with the puissant and pungent personality of the man with whom we have to deal. If we recall Phillips Brooks's formula to express the value of the individual preacher, "Truth plus personality," we feel at once that in the case of Paul, however great might be the truth entrusted to the man to deliver, the man himself that delivered the truth would inevitably be a force, a moment, demanding to be taken very seriously into account. Beyond question, such a man as he was would have made himself profoundly felt, whatever might have been the cause that he espoused. Indeed Paul did make himself thus felt, first on one side, and then on the other, of the same cause. The demonstration therefore is perfect that his final enormous influence, both living and posthumous, is due to something besides the mere fact that he had the good fortune to choose the winning side in a

sence of the Levites due to jealousy and heart-burnings? Is history to repeat itself? We are about to enter upon a united evangelistic campaign. Will the sons of Levi be absent? Shall we stand aloof because we fear our church or party will not gain the largest number of accessions, or because we ourselves have not been assigned the prominence that we would have desired? Shall we not rather sink all differences, and, shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart, push the battle to the gate?

As the result of Ezra's tarrying at Ahava, reinforcements came. How did Ezra gain them? He sent out messengers who appealed to them on behalf of God's cause. The Church of Christ needs all its members for the coming campaign. For once let the unconverted of Philadelphia behold a united church earnestly working for their conversion. We follow Ezra's example and appeal to every Christian in the City of Brotherly Love to come and help us. If in the past you have been an idler in the vineyard, consider how unjustifiable is your position. Your inactivity excites suspicion as to the genuineness of your conversion, frustrates one important design of your conversion, and imperils immortal souls.

Two lessons from this olden chronicle. The church does not need a revival—beginning with a great many eminent people. From the days of the Apostles the most important religious movements have been inaugurated among the rank and file. Witness the Reformation in Scotland and the revival under Whitefield and the Wesleys. The church does need a few earnest seekers after God's presence. On Monday afternoon, October 5, the first muster will be held. How many will be present? Will the sons of Levi be absent?

WHILE love of the world and fear of the cross induce most men to neglect the salvation of the Gospel, they who obey the gracious call stand recorded in the Book of Life, and will be honored by God Himself.—*Thomas Scott.*

THE FIRST APOSTASY.

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And in process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord, etc.—Genesis iv. 3-17.

THE first apostasy found its origin in Cain. Before God came Cain with an eucharistic offering, in accordance with Cain's idea of what was the proper sacrifice to make to Jehovah, in that recognizing God as the Lord of Providence but not of grace. The sacrifice was not accepted, while that of his brother Abel found favor in the eyes of God, and thus the first apostasy found its rise in the irreligion of Cain. He refused to recognize himself a sinner and sought to make offering in accordance with his own dictates. After Cain became a fratricide and was banished, he fled, taking his wife with him, to the land of Nod.

1. The first fact is evidenced that there was not a solitary indication of homage paid to God by Cain. The offering he made was not intended to be acceptable for his sins. In the whole line of descent of this man there is not found the history of any religion at all, and this descent passed through six generations.

The first recognition of God's demands for the salvation of mankind and the acknowledgment of religion came through Seth. He was the third born of the first woman, and she, the first sinner, ever mindful of the promise made by Jehovah in the garden, that a son should be born to woman who would crush the serpent's head, called him Seth, which means "appointed," "placed." She expected a deliverance according to the promise. And Seth, grown to man's estate and wifed, named his first-born Enos, symbolic of sin, signifying by that that he was sinful, as well as that born of him. Following that it has been established

that men began to call upon God, and then the first intimation is given of the worship of God. In the line of Cain there is not the first intimation that there was any inclination to bestow worship upon the Creator.

As against the irreligion of the Cain line there has been set up the religion of the Seth line, the same as the church line is set up against the world line, the one offering redemption and the other damnation.

2. Cain, going apart from his parents, sets up a town, meaning to hold his posterity together, and live a nomadic existence. And thus it has been shown for six generations that his descent, instead of spreading out, held together and aided and abetted one another in the sin of holding aloof from God.

Out of this evil had come, and here it has been established that polygamy had its source. Lamech assumed the responsibility of two wives, and herein this community disregarded the injunction put upon man and woman and annulled the sacrament of marriage. And not only that, but it made the woman an object of carnal desire. One of these wives was called Ada, meaning an ornament. The second wife, was called Zillah, implying a shadow, suggesting that her place was only secondary, and following after the first wife, a shadow.

You will note that all names given to the children were significant, so that when the sons of Lamech were named the occupations they followed were exemplified.

3. Out of this generation there grew inventions, abundance, and power, and then came what is considered civilization, the civilization that thought of the body and neglected the soul.

There never was a godless civilization that was not plunged into chaos, ruin, and desolation. As the iron Roman race gave law to all mankind, to the human race, so did Rome fall in her ascendancy in the flood of corruption encouraged by the rise. Wherever men rise in civilization they create new

wants and beget sensualities, unless there is infused into that civilization the true religion.

By reason of the crime committed by Lamech, and the power given by that sin, the community fell to rapine and to other crimes, and out of it had to come the end, the end that came with the flood.

THE CHURCH SICKLE.

BY REV. H. R. MURPHY [FREE BAPTIST], LINCOLN, NEBR.

Put ye in the sickle.—Joel iii. 13.

THE self-binder is the sickle of to-day. In order to be efficient and reliable it must be—

I. Made of good material :

1. Tempered steel. So Christians often purified and made strong by fire.
2. Seasoned wood. So church-members made durable by experience.

II. Well balanced. Some machines are too heavy in front and gall the horses' necks ; others are too light and " fly up " whenever a rough place is encountered. Some church-members are despondent, others spasmodic.

III. Free from side draft. The machine must thrust its sickle out into the field and yet not be drawn toward it. The Church is in the world but must not be occupied by it.

IV. Readily adjusted to gather down grain, short grain, or heavy grain. A church should be able to reach and save all classes. Where the Spirit is there is liberty.

V. Well oiled. A dry machine grinds, squeaks, pounds, and runs hard. The Holy Spirit will take all grumbling, whining, and quarreling out of churches and individuals and make the work easy and joyous.

THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN.

BY REV. G. F. LOVE, NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J.

And when he came to himself, etc.—Luke xv. 17-24.

1. THE Prodigal's review.
2. The Prodigal's regret.
3. The Prodigal's resolve.
4. The Prodigal's return.
5. The Prodigal's reception.
6. The Prodigal's restoration.