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~~~~~ Sermons ~~~~~

A PRESENT INCARNATION.

BY J. H. VINCENT, D.D. (METHODIST EPISCOPAL), NEW YORK.

Christ liveth in me.—GAL. ii., 20.

GOD deals with man as the wise teacher with his pupils. The teacher constantly asks: How may I reveal enough truth to excite the eager desire of the pupil to know; and how so limit the revelation that the pupil's own powers of investigation may be employed?

It is this very problem that the teacher of man as a spiritual being—belonging to an invisible world—must solve. How bring spiritual things into the limitations of the material, that men with eyes may see just enough to incite them to examine with closed eyes the deeper verities of religion? How reveal enough truth to the senses to awaken man's interior powers to behold the unseen, feel the intangible, and to know the world forever to mere sense unknowable.

That man Jesus, the great teacher, the divine teacher, was, in His incarnate life, a manifestation, an epiphany of God, and of the elements in man which make it possible for him to be God-like and subject to the divine. Jesus Christ came into the flesh to call attention of men in the flesh to that vast world outside of the world of vision and touch and taste; a world of invisible energies; a world that was before the world of sense; a world deeper, vaster, worthier than the world of sense; a world with wider outlooks, more comprehensive wisdoms, mightier potencies, and more resplendent glories than the world of sense; a world that, as it was before, will be after

be done, forbidding what shall not be done, permitting what may be done; how the creature shall act and how he shall not act.

So descending from the government of the universe to that of States, there is also residing somewhere this essential law of right, the right to govern. If this be true the mandatory, the prohibitory, is necessary. States cannot govern without these laws to say how man shall act, what and how he shall do, and what he shall not do. The restraints of the law are just as beneficent as the mandates.

Universal liberty cannot be found in God's universe. The universality of the law is everywhere apparent; atoms or mountains; gas, liquids or solids; flowers or animals; men, devils or angels—everything is subject to law. Then coincident with this fact comes the other, that the limitations of the law have this great truth: that worlds can only rule so far as the truth is secured.

Save for the law of limitation the world around us would go to pieces; if the excessive rapidity of motion were not counteracted by an opposite force—or, in other words, if the centripetal force should be overcome by the centrifugal—the result would be destruction.

Therefore the law of limitation is our law. There is no reason why a man should not grow on higher and higher, and outstep the common conditions of our being; but if he did the law of limitation shows his head would be among the stars.

This law of limitation is coeval and co-existent with the law itself. Whether ministers, or lawyers, or physicians, or laymen, bring an argument against prohibition, because self-government is better, they are wrong, for prohibition is the fundamental principle of the law.

The question of limitation is indispensable to government; there cannot exist a nation without it, and what is true of the nation is true of the individual; and for the individual we consider in the first place total abstinence as fundamental, total prohibition as fundamental, and the influence of the Church as fundamental.

The Press Reporting the Pulpit.

By T. DEWITT TALMAGE, D.D.

Reporters keep ministers from being dull. If on Sunday a man gives his congregation uninteresting sermons, on Monday the papers make him take his own medicine.

Preachers may complain that the reporters do not do them justice, but the probability is that if they, with their acutely trained senses, do not pick up anything worth reporting, it is not there to pick up. If they cannot see the point, how can preachers expect an untrained eye to see it?

The race is hungering for the bread of life, and I don't care how the slices are cut if they only get the bread.

In country villages there may be only one church, and in that church the preacher may satisfy the soul hunger of but few. Here comes your Monday paper and gives you choice of twenty sermons. You turn to one and it does not fit your need, and look at another, and go on until you come to one that gives you help. Unless you are an infidel, you will here find something for spiritual food.

Then such publication give a right and symmetrical proportion of truth. One man's sermon is all heart and another one all backbone. Put them together and you will have a healthy organization. Morality is all one man preaches, faith is all another man preaches; put them side by side, and you will have the whole truth. Now let us be frank in the Church of God and acknowledge that the printing press is a mighty auxiliary to the pulpit. Who cares how the people get the Gospel if they only get it! It is the herald sometimes of Christianity and sometimes of sin, yet God be praised the Gospel is to carry every week on the wings of the press its defense of the truth and its counterbalancing influence against the swarming evils of the day.

Let us not slander the printing press and the papers. Let the compositor set up his copy; and the press work off the fifteen thousand impressions an hour. Place them in circulation, and out on the lines of God's providence against ignorance and sin.