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THE COLLEGE OF APOSTLES

A STUDY OF THE TWELVE

By
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TO MY
FATHER AND
MOTHER WHOSE
EARNEST PIETY, CONSISTENT
CHRISTIAN LIVING, AND FAITHFUL
INSTRUCTION HAVE EVER BEEN TO ME
TEACHER, TEXT-BOOK, AND SCHOOL IN THE
KNOWLEDGE OF HIM WHOM THE APOSTLES
PREACHED AND TAUGHT, THIS VOL-
UME IS MOST AFFECTIONATELY
AND GRATEFULLY
DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

It may seem to some that there is not enough of "holy awe" in the treatment of these men on the pages that follow. It may seem to others that the material from which the dominant characteristics of some of the apostles have been determined is too meagre, and the interpretations of Scripture, at times, fanciful.

In reply to the first objection, it is to be remembered that while due reverence should always be had for any man divinely called and helped to do a great work, nevertheless, his service, let it be ever so inspired, does not graduate him out of the human family. He is still a man—no more. The Church has canonized the apostles, but Scripture has not. They are of precisely the same race, whence come the Christian workers of to-day, and the "holy awe" which would deify these men or lift them to an altitude where they cannot be imitated and must not be criticized, is fault rather than virtue.

With regard to the objection that the materials are sometimes meagre and the interpretations fanciful, it must be borne in mind that

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these men do actually live on the pages of the Bible. They are there brought before the eye of the Church in every age. For what? Are we to try to know them, or is the name there merely as the landmark of a dead age? We may take it for granted that God would have us know the people of the Bible not less than its dates and doctrines. Because He has not revealed more, we must not conclude that what He has revealed is either worthless or inadequate. Some men need only a word to disclose their personality.

Who was Zebedee? The father of his sons, is all the Scripture reveals;¹ but is not that enough to discover Zebedee's personality? Would it not seem to indicate that he was merely a figurehead that added nothing but a name to the household?

All we know of Timothy's father is that he was "a Greek,"² but that is enough to discover the man. He was the pagan head of a family that gave the Church one of its most illustrious sons. Timothy came to Christ with his mind and heart already stored with religious truth. However, it was not the father that trained the lad for God. Lois and Eunice did that; the "father was a Greek."

The Bible can portray human character in a word, and does. That we are not to estimate the people of the Bible by what they say and

¹ Matt. 4:21. ² Acts 16:1.

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do, is to deny that we are to estimate them at all. To refuse to estimate them as real people is to question the wisdom which has made so large a portion of sacred Scripture, a portraiture of character.

For the thought that Christ sent the disciples forth "two and two" to *supplement* as well as sympathize with each other, I am indebted to an address by Prof. R. E. Thompson, heard several years ago at Mr. Moody's Northfield Summer Conference for College Students.

It was this which first suggested "The College of Apostles" to the writer, who will be more than repaid if he shall be permitted in the pages that follow to lead his readers into some definite conception of the apostles, so that when the name of Peter, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, appears, it will at once call up vividly before their minds the personality of a real man, who entered Christ's service as he was, consecrated what he had, and left behind him the story of what he did, for the profit of us who come after.

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The College of Apostles.

CHAPTER I.

THE TWELVE BY TWOS.

*"He chose twelve, whom also he named Apostles."—
Luke.*

Could there be better company than the goodly company of apostles? In the pages that follow we are to associate with the twelve men who stood closest to Christ, while He was here upon earth, and who, after His departure into heaven, launched upon the great tide of human life the momentous movement represented in the Christian Church.

Never were men called from lowlier stations to a more glorious mission. Never were men dowered with richer opportunity nor burdened with more transcendent obligation. It is not strange that the church has lifted them into sainthood and crowned them with an almost idolatrous reverence.

Who were they? What were they? At the

distance of nearly two millenniums, it is not always easy to dispel the glamour with which time has surrounded great heroic and historic characters, and discover the reality. The "Twelve Apostles" known to the most of Christendom to-day are those that look down from the pictures which decorate the walls of great cathedrals; those whose beatific faces, circled with a halo of holy light, are glorified by the sunshine that shimmers through the stained glass windows of our churches; those whose crumbling bones and mouldered dust are sacredly guarded in consecrated crypt, or beneath altar stairs. Are these the men whom Jesus called from fishing smacks and tax-gatherers' chairs to be the first preachers of Christianity? Were they not rather men of like passions with ourselves; not impossible saints who had been "molded out of humanity's faults," but frail, fallible, blundering mortals, whose very weaknesses Christ hallowed with his consecrating touch, and glorified?

Let us learn to know these men as they were when they sailed Galilee and entered Capernaum and visited Jerusalem with the man Jesus. Let us make the effort to go back, past all sacred art, to the reality; past pictures of the saints and apostolic statuary, past bones and tombs

and sacred dust, past legend and tradition, to the portraits of these men as they look out from the pages of the Bible, before ever the canons of the Church had tried to deify them or the brush of a too superstitious reverence had touched and toned down the striking, rugged and entirely human personalities of "The Twelve."

We shall find the "College of Apostles" to be a picture gallery of character. These twelve men are twelve great types. These types have perpetuated and reproduced themselves in Christ's followers of every age and land; so that in the Twelve, we have a miniature of Christendom.

As a starting point for our study it will be well for us to go back to that hour, when for the first time Christ commissioned the Twelve and sent them out. The names of these apostles are given in Mk. 3: 13, 14; their commission is announced in Luke 9:1; but in Matt. 10:1-4, both names and commission are given, and we may accept the order and details of the account given by this first gospeller, as that most exact because the fullest.

Matthew says: "And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to

heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphæus, and Lebbæus, whose surname was Thaddæus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him." In Mk. 6:7, it is stated that Christ sent these men forth "by two and two." He divided the college of apostles into six groups, and for the reason already given, the grouping of Matthew's gospel is most probably that which was actually observed.

Why send them out "by two and two"? Every man, in that day of few preachers needed to be in as many places as possible, and to have a thousand tongues. Our Lord must have had some good reason for thus minimizing the geographical possibilities of that first missionary tour. Was it a sacrifice of quantity in the interest of quality?

Perhaps these twelve men were sent out in groups of two, to encourage each other with the cheer of human sympathy. They were on a perilous mission. The world neither loved nor knew their Master. They would be lonely.

Amid the persecutions and almost insuperable difficulties that awaited them, their hearts would well-nigh die. Then would be needed the face of a brother, the hand-clasp of a comrade, the cheer and confidence and inspiring sympathy of a kindred soul. So Jesus did not leave them to fight single-handed. When Peter grew despondent, Andrew would say "Cheer up." When James would grow pessimistic, John would repeat some word that had fallen from the Master's lips, or with, kindling enthusiasm, recount some triumphant scene in the wonder-working ministry of the Christ. With this would come fresh hope, new courage. Thus each was a helpmate to the other.

Is that all? Was there not more in Christ's purpose when He sent forth the Twelve by twos? They were not merely mated; they were matched. Christ was after a more perfect apostleship, and He made six whole men out of the twelve. Each man was the complement of his apostolic comrade. Each magnified the other's virtues, minimized the other's faults. This is the key to the inner life and character of these men, and as we use it, we shall find ourselves coming more and more into a realistic and sympathetic acquaintance with the men who first proclaimed to the world, Him who is its fadeless and eternal light.

According to this divine arrangement of the "twelve by twos," Peter the extremist went forth with Andrew the conservative; James the elder with John the youth; Philip the dullard with Bartholomew the sage; Thomas the man of doubts with Matthew the man of strong convictions; James the champion of duty with Jude the champion of doctrine; Simon the zealot with Judas the traitor.

Thus all temperaments, all ages, all degrees of mentality, all stages of spiritual experience, all types of religious life, even our very frailties are called, consecrated, transformed, utilized in the ministry of that Church whose Great Head lays the universe under tribute for His glory.

CHAPTER II.

PETER AND ANDREW OR THE EXTREMIST AND THE CONSERVATIVE.

"The extremists in both parts of this country are violent."
—D. Webster.

"Men are all conservatives; everything new is impious, till we get accustomed to it."—Kingsley.

Peter and Andrew constitute the first group of apostolic preachers. They were blood brothers but two brothers were never more unlike. In temperament, in constitution, in service they were antipodal. Blood will explain some things but not all. Good men are not bred as horses. Character is not a matter of pedigree. Distinguished ancestral lines do not necessarily precipitate either greatness or goodness. Blood runs down, grace runs up. Occasionally you will find a scoundrel and a saint with the same forbears.

The same blood flowed in their veins, but on the night of Christ's arrest Peter could deny his Lord, with oaths and curses, while Andrew was away somewhere, puzzling his brain, perhaps to understand why Christ had per-

mitted Himself to be captured by the hostile mob.

I.

Simon Peter was a typical extremist. He was bold, intrepid, radical, ever attempting the impossible and achieving the marvelous. He stands out as a born leader of men, the spokesman of the apostles, and the head and front of every movement that enlisted his hand and heart.

On the mount of Transfiguration, when the rapturous vision of the celestial world had been granted that inner circle of three favored disciples, James and John, awe-struck in the presence of that sheen of glory that had fallen from out the spirit world, are reverentially silent; but not so Simon Peter. With characteristic impetuosity, and a thoughtlessness close akin to daring, he breaks in upon that holy of holies, with the commonplace remark: "Lord it is good for us to be here."¹

His born leadership appears again and again. After Christ's ascension, it is Peter who comes to the front, and reminding his fellow apostles of the vacant place in their ranks caused by the apostacy of Judas Iscariot, summons them to

¹ Matt. 17; 4.

the first official act in the history of the organized Church.¹ Again, after their tarrying at Jerusalem has been rewarded with the Pentecostal baptism, and that little company of believers is aflame with Holy Ghost power, it is this same extremist who steps to the front and preaches the great sermon that brings 3000 converts to the foot of the cross.²

Peter's boldness and intrepidity are strikingly displayed in that famous night scene on the sea of Galilee, when he walked on the water to go to Jesus.³ The disciples had been caught in a storm. They had been nine hours coming three and one-half miles, and at the fourth watch of the night (six o'clock in the morning) as they peer forth through the twilight gloom that precedes the slowly breaking day, they seem to see a spectral figure, wrapped round in mists, walking yonder upon the sea. Directly, above the shout of the storm and the roar of the wind-swept sea, they hear a voice which says "Be of good cheer; it is I: be not afraid." Frightened faces questioningly look forth from the little boat and hearts stand still with a great fear in the presence of this ghostly apparition.

¹ Acts 1: 15. ² Acts 2: 14. ³ Matt. 14: 22-33.

With one disciple it was different. In his heart leaped a great resolution, in his face gleamed a mighty purpose, and Simon Peter coming to the boatside, shouted to the spectral figure on the sea: "Lord if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." "And he said, Come." Then Simon Peter climbed down the side of that fishing smack, put his foot on the unstable sea, and actually walked on the water to go to Jesus. Perhaps the other disciples tried to dissuade him. They said: "Peter, it is a wild and unheard of thing you attempt. It has never been done before You are daft. You will be drowned." They were conservatives. Peter was an extremist, and with a faith whose daring amazes us, he attempts and for a while actually achieves the impossible.

Peter's virtues exaggerated, become his faults. Sometimes his courage degenerates into rashness, as on the night when he whipped out his sword and smote off the ear of Malchus, the high-priest's servant.

Again his devotion degenerates into self-confidence, as on the occasion when Christ mournfully predicts His desertion by His disciples. Then it is that this fervid, impulsive extremist speaks out and declares: "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I not be

offended."¹ Yet no disciple, Iscariot alone excepted, more shamefully deserted Christ than this braggart.

Again his self-confidence sweeps him into an ill-advised conceit. On the mount of Transfiguration, it is Simon who would improve upon the beatific splendor of that occasion, with a suggestion which he is sure has not presented itself to Christ, but which he is none the less sure will add very much to the enjoyment of all present. After condescending to remark: "Lord it is good for us to be here," he adds: "Let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias."² What presumption!

At times, Peter takes to himself the roll of critic, and becomes mildly censorious, even of his Master. Christ has just showed His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed. The other disciples are silent, may be broken-hearted, over such a disclosure; but Peter will straighten things out. He seems to think that Christ is unnecessarily melancholy, and that His view of the future is entirely too pessimistic; so going to Him, he actually dares

¹ Matt. 26: 83. ² Matt. 17: 4.

to rebuke Jesus, saying: "Be it far from thee Lord; this shall not be unto thee."¹

Despite all this, no disciple was more devoted to Christ than this same, blundering, self-confident, censorious Peter. Down beneath all his vascillations, his imprudent words and thoughtless deeds, beat a heart loyal to Christ.

On the night of the betrayal, when all the disciples forsook Christ and fled, one "followed him afar off."² It was Peter. He was dazed by the awful events of that tragic night, but as he goes plunging into the darkness, he seems to pull himself together with the thought: "The Master is alone with His enemies. I promised but awhile ago that though all men should forsake Him, yet never would I leave Him. I must follow Him now." And so skulking into the hall, cowardly trying to hide his identity from the soldiers and servants, but with heart all but breaking in its agony of despair over the insults that were being heaped upon his Master yonder, Peter stands not far away, as the shadows fall and deepen around the Savior.

Jesus knew this disciple. His sure eye pierced through the blunders of His friend to the true heart that beat beneath; and Jesus was only

¹ Matt. 16: 22. ² Matt. 26: 58.

calling to lip what He knew was abundant in heart and life, when that last morning on the Galilean beach, in the presence of other of the apostles, He thrice asked: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?"—and thrice heard: "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee."¹

Such is the man whom Christ placed at the head of the apostolic college, and whose leadership He Himself recognized in many ways;² a hot-headed and impulsive disciple, sometimes rushing headlong into sin, but repenting deeply, and at heart loyal and devoted.

He was full of human nature. We are ever reading ourselves over in the story of his life. No man more human than he. In this he comes near to us and cheers us. His very frailties are great encouragements to all who fall. He was the epitome of our weaknesses, our aspirations, our falls, our hopes, our loves.

He was a man of boundless energy, kicked difficulties out of the way as easily as snow-flakes, led forlorn hopes, preached great sermons, and denied the Lord. Sometimes he was as tender as a woman, and again he snorts like a runaway locomotive and leaves ruin in his track.

Such a man is invaluable to a movement beset

¹ Jno. 21:15. ² Matt. 17:24.

with difficulties. He will sound a trumpet blast of hope when all else despair. His touch will stir life beneath the ribs of death. His very shadow will make disease loosen its grip and skulk into hiding.¹ Everywhere his influence is potential, and so when Peter is imprisoned, no wonder God sends his angel to unjail the great apostle.²

St. Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland, but St. Patrick was not one of the Twelve. If we were to select a patron saint, from the college of apostles, for the children of the Emerald Isle, our choice would fall on Peter. None could more appropriately portray the hot impulsive temperament of that fervid race than he. Their history has been in a large way the career of Peter repeated; brilliant but not always well balanced, intensely patriotic but blundering through very warmth of heart, into mistakes that greater coolness of head might have avoided.

Let us rejoice that there is a place in Christ's church for the extremist; a place for one whose falls are as deep and damnable as Peter's; a place for one whose zeal too often runs into fanaticism. The extremist is ever the man to raise the cry of reform and lead the world to better

¹ Acts 5: 15. ² Acts 12: 8.

things. He strikes off the shackles of effete custom. He is the sworn foe of old-fogyism. He may enrage us, but he gets the world out of its wretched ruts, and fires ambition with new and loftier ideals.

Nevertheless the extremist is dangerous. He must have a balance wheel. His energy is a blessing if it can be controlled; his mighty faith glorious if it grips the truth. The extremist must not go out alone, and so Christ sends Andrew as Peter's companion.

II.

Andrew is the typical conservative. He is careful, reserved, contemplative, undemonstrative; never the man to be swept from his feet by a fervid impulse nor have his judgment submerged by a tidal wave of emotion.

He has all the judiciousness of the conservative, combined with characteristic prudence and forethought. When Christ would feed the hungry multitudes on the seashore, it is Andrew who has first thought of the matter, and who has discovered that the only food in that great multitude is the lad's loaves and fishes. As he announces this, he judiciously observes: "But what are these among so many?"

He would do nothing rashly, and so when

Christ predicts the destruction of the temple and declares that there shall not be left one stone upon another, Andrew is disturbed. Such language may be misunderstood. The priests and Pharisees may regard it as anarchistic, and so, with Peter, James, and John, Andrew goes to Christ for a private interview on the subject.¹

Andrew is clannish. When he has found the Messiah, his first thought is of his own blood, and he runs to tell Peter, his brother, the good news.²

Like most conservatives, Andrew was sought for counsel. The Greeks who wanted to see Jesus went first to see Philip. Philip seems to have been perplexed over their request, and in his extremity went to Andrew for advice, who took all to Jesus.³

Andrew is always self-poised and self-contained. After a certain striking manifestation of Christ's miraculous power, Peter fell at His feet exclaiming, with a sudden wealth of humility: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord,"⁴ but we have no record of any such emotional abandonment on the part of Andrew.

He was never excessive nor effusive. He asked the whys and wherefores and desired a prece-

¹Mk. 13: 3. ²Jno. 1: 40. ³Jno. 12: 22. ⁴Luke 5: 8.

dent for everything. He belonged to that class of men who are careful of constitutional rights, and who plead for decency and order. It was a conservative who in the person of a North Carolina elder, was inveighing, during a meeting of Presbytery against "evangelists," and who, when someone asked: "Are not these evangelists saving souls?" replied: "They may be saving souls, but for God's sake, brethren, let's save them according to the constitution."

The conservative is timid, distrustful, prone to look on the dark side of things, and ever ready to discourage new movements. He is never the man to inaugurate anything. He will do good service in perpetuating time honored institutions; but he lacks the nerve and force for a reformer. The old divine was a typical conservative who declared that if he had ever, under God, been instrumental in accomplishing any good, it was "by holding back." It was another ideal conservative who boastfully announced that he had not changed his "theological views one syllable in the last forty years."

Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland, and combines to a marked degree the keen acumen, the clannish loyalty, and the conservative caution of the cannie Scot.

A story is told of a visit once made by Dr.

Wilberforce to Taymouth castle, during the lifetime of the last Marquis of Breadalbane, who was a devoted adherent of the Free Church. He was taken by Lady Breadalbane to the cottage occupied by an old Highland woman—"true blue" Presbyterian—who was greatly delighted by the Bishop's friendly, open manner. A few days after this, Lady Breadalbane visited the old Scotch woman again when the following conversation took place:—"Do you know who it was Mary, that came to see you last week?" "No, my Lady," was the reply. "The famous Bishop of Oxford," said her ladyship. Upon which the good Scotch soul bluntly remarked: "A'weel, my lady, he's a rare fine mon; and a' I can say is, that I trust and pray he'll gang to heaven,—bishop though he be!"

Is it not humor very akin to this which sparkles in Andrew's words, when after viewing the lad's loaves and fishes and then the vast multitude of 5000 stretched along the seashore, he says with an apparent sigh: "But what are these among so many?"

Are not the qualities which have given to the Scotch race its wonderful staying powers, largely those embodied in the personality of this conservative apostle? Scotch-thrift, Scotch-prudence, Scotch-judgment, Scotch-shrewdness all

are there. It is not strange that Andrew is the patron saint of this glorious people.

There is a place in Christ's Church for the conservative. He is ballast for the old ship of Zion. We may call him an old fogey and lose patience with his reverence for relics, but he gives stability to our institutions, and preserves all things that are good. He is the ideal Protestant, the old guard of the church militant, and will count it a glory to go to the stake for his convictions.

III.

Still it will not do for the conservative to go out alone. No despotism is more tyrannical than the reign of the moss-back. Conservatism must be prodded, even as extremism must be checked. Therefore Christ links Peter and Andrew, extremist and conservative, the man of daring and the man of caution, and out of these twain makes one whole apostle.

The mutual advantage is evident. The extremist originates, the conservative perpetuates. We must have both. The world ever and anon needs a new movement, something entirely out of the ordinary and that will sweep it up to a summit from which it can get a richer vision than all that have gone before. Only the man of daring will answer for such an hour, but once

the summit has been reached, the man of caution must take the reins.

The extremist reforms, the conservative preserves. The extremist is all steam, the conservative is all brake. The extremist is all energy, the conservative is all judgment. The extremist is power, the conservative is control. The furnace fires in the great engine must be lighted and the steam must drive the piston rod, before the machinery in the great factory will move; but that this energy be controlled and safely used there must also be the mighty balance wheel.

The extremist is enthusiasm, the conservative discretion. The extremist looks forward, the conservative looks backward. The one sings of the future, the other glorifies the past. Both are needed. We must have prospect and retrospect. It will never do to sink down in despair and drone a dirge over vanished and bye-gone glories. All the good is not behind us. All greatness is not in the graveyard. Whoever would bless his age and people must have the uplook and the outlook. He must hope. Peter is the man for that. But who ever had a great hope of the future without a mighty reverence for the past? Our actual assets are in the past, our achievements, our unconquerable encourage-

ments. Whoever would save his age and people from wild extravagance and damning follies must worship at the shrine of the past. Andrew is the man for that.

The extremist is tempted to optimism, the conservative is tempted to pessimism. Christ unites the two and there is enough of hope to dare attempt all that is good, and enough of prudence cautiously to avoid all that is evil. Each conserves the other's virtues, neutralizes the other's faults, until a complete apostleship is the result. What God has joined together let not man put asunder.

The highest wisdom does not damn extremism on the one hand, nor ridicule conservatism on the other; but, blending the two, goes out potential for God and all that is good.

Peter is the patron saint of Ireland, Andrew the patron saint of Scotland. It happens that the characteristics of the two have blended into what is known as the "Scotch-Irish," a people whose plain living and high thinking have given to the world a peerless type of manhood and womanhood.

The Scotchman under the fervid sky of the Emerald Isle has had his blood quickened, his Scotch caution baptized with Irish impetuosity. The clannish, prudent, thrifty, judicious, con-

servative characteristics of the native Scot, have fused with the hot, impulsive, patriotic, zealous temperament of the son of Erin;¹ and the product has been a sturdy, aggressive, independent, God-fearing race, which has conquered the wilderness, built churches, founded schools, and played no small part in the heroic struggles for civil and religious liberty.

In America the deeds of the Scotch-Irish race are to the front, and their annals grow richer and fuller every year. To be sure the Scotch-Irish Congress, which meets annually, gives ample guarantee that the people whom it represents will neither be forgotten nor need to offer the petition of the old Scotchman who declared that for forty years he had been "praying the Lord to gee him a gude opeenion o' himself."

However the Scotch-Irish, for their works' sake, are entitled to a decent self-respect; and we will do well to emulate and perpetuate the splendid qualities of a people whose parental

¹The term "Scotch-Irish" does not designate a mixed race of Scotch and Irish, but the descendants of Scotchmen, who for various reasons settled in the north of Ireland. Many of the people of this sturdy stock emigrated to America, and took a noble and influential part in the early settlement of the country.

stock is as old as the hour when Christ calling to His side the extremist and the conservative, made Peter and Andrew twin apostles, and sent them forth to preach and serve, to originate and perpetuate, to reform and preserve, and thus to enrich the world with the ministry of a rounded apostleship.

CHAPTER III.

JAMES AND JOHN, OR OLD AGE AND YOUTH.

"The old age of a great leader gathers reverence as an oak gathers moss."—*Bulwer Lytton.*

"Strength, enthusiasm, hope, purity, love,—all these when combined and embodied in their most attractive forms, rise in our imaginations as youthful attributes."—*Holland.*

*"Might be taught by the wisdom of age,
And be cheered by the sallies of youth."*—*Cowper.*

James and John, two hardy Galilean fishermen constitute the second group in the apostolic family. They were the sons of Zebedee, and apparently comfortably off in this world's goods, for John had a house to which Mary, the mother of Jesus, went after the crucifixion.¹

Brothers in the second as in the first circle of the college of apostles, it looks as though Christ would honor the tie of blood whenever possible. What is more beautiful than two brothers facing the world side by side, bending beneath common burdens, sharing kindred joys and sor-

¹ John 19: 27.

rows, and impelled by joint interests to the execution of the same tasks? Nothing is uglier than family feuds when the blood leaps angrily to strike some member of its own household; and few things more grateful than ties of kinship suffused with the glow and beauty of abiding friendship.

James and John worked together in perfect harmony. We catch glimpses of them again and again, but never a ripple of disturbance mars the ideal comradeship of these brothers. Nor was this due to any lack of force in the characters of these two men. They were not weak and dreamy sentimentalists, but men whose hardy seafaring life demanded and developed robust and pronounced personalities. A name which was given them, and which no doubt was indicative of their temperaments, was "Boanerges," "sons of thunder." They were men of volcanic activities, of fiery, turbulent, passionate energies, but all of this had come beneath the sway of a master passion and was subdued to self-control.

Cradled in the arms of the same mother, sung to sleep with the same lullabies, taught from the same lips the same lessons of God and heaven and life, these two had crossed the same threshold of home to a common toil. When He

calls them from their boats and fishing nets to be "fishers of men," Christ does not break old ties. He preserves and sanctifies them. Nevertheless, that which made these men complementary in a joint apostleship was not the fact that they were brothers. What was the bond?

Their names are frequently mentioned together in the sacred narrative. In every instance, save one (Luke 9:28), the name of James precedes that of John. It is "James and John," often "Peter, James and John," in a solitary instance "Peter, John and James." Not only so, but John is called "the brother of James," never James, "the brother of John." This precedence of James over John surprises us. We would have mentioned John's name first. He fills by far the larger place in the history of the early Church. Indeed, the career of no other apostle covers so much that is vital to Christian faith as that of John. He wrote three epistles, the Apocalypse, and the gospel which bears his name; in all, one-sixth of the entire New Testament, and yet in the record his name stands after that of his brother who has contributed not a single line to the volume of sacred Scripture.

What is the explanation? It is that James was the elder brother of John. The Jews give

precedence to age. Above wealth, service, learning, they place birth and the honor that attaches to years. James was the senior of John, probably by many years. He is called "James the Great," which we would write "James, Senior." He survived the Lord but ten years, suffering martyrdom in the year A. D. 44, while John survived Christ's death at least seventy years, and probably lived over into the opening decade of the second century. This is the link which united these two men in the ministry of a joint apostleship. It was the combination of old age and youth.

I.

James stands for age in the college of apostles. He was, probably, the oldest of the Twelve. His character and career must be interpreted entirely from his *presence* on important occasions. He was one of that chosen inner circle of three that stood nearest to Christ. We can understand why Peter was there; he was the head of the apostolic college. We can understand why John was there; he was the disciple whom Jesus loved. But why James? The only explanation is that his age entitled him to such distinguished consideration. James' words are not preserved for us; neither are his deeds; we have only his presence.

He was present at the raising of Jairus' daughter. Is it not as if Christ would say that age must be honored? He was present on the mount of Transfiguration. Is it not as though Christ would declare age entitled to exceptional privileges? He was present at the agony in Gethsemane. Is it not as though Christ would teach that to age comes the deepest spiritual experience? The last scene in which James takes a notable part is in the prayer-meeting which succeeded Christ's ascension.¹ He was among the number of those who "persevered in prayer"—age leading us into the presence of the invisible world, age in benediction.

James was the apostle of contemplation. There is a place in the church for old age, a fact which needs somewhat to be emphasized in these days. Christ called a man to an apostleship who was only ten years from the dead line. Many a congregation would be slow to follow this example of the great Head of the church. The cry is for young blood. Old age is crowded to the rear. A church which had become vacant, began its quest for a pastor, by unanimously adopting a resolution to the effect that whoever was called must be under forty-five

¹ Acts 1:13.

years of age; thus drawing the dead line for the Gospel ministry at forty-five. It may be seriously questioned whether that act of ecclesiastical prudence was inspired by the Holy Ghost.

The Bible crowns age with reverence. The very rulers of the church are called "elders." However various denominations may interpret this office, all are agreed that it is descriptive of a class who are entitled to authority because of their age, or because they possess those qualities which come from ripened experience. The first commandment with promise is one that puts a premium on the reverence that honors age.

Old age has claims that may not be lightly set aside. We may denounce it as old fashioned, slow, behind the times; but the fact remains that these old men and women who abide in our churches and around our firesides are the soldiers who fought the battles of other days. They endured and achieved, and the rising generation enters into the rich heritage of their victories. They are veterans with shining annals. God puts old age on the pension list of profound reverence and considerate esteem. "The hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness." White hairs are flowers in the garden of God, blossoming for heaven.

Old age makes a distinct contribution to the

life of the church. It is calmness and serenity. It is dignity and repose. It is ripeness of experience and imperturbable peace. It is gentleness and contentment and hope. It is sanctified memory and beatific vision. Thank God for the kindly faces of our fathers and mothers, who linger for a moment in the subdued glow of life's sunset, leaning upon the top of their staff, their brows encircled with a halo of seraphic peace, and their eyes, deep with the vision of the soul, peering confidently into the gathering gloom that falls around the evening hour of life.

In a certain church in the Old Dominion there is a saintly man, who has passed his four-score years, who for forty years served the church as its beloved pastor, but who a few years ago laying down the burdensome duties of a heavy pastorate, worships now in the old church, simply as one of the congregation. His presence is like a bit of heaven let down into that church. Better than any sermon he ever preached from the pulpit, is the sermon he now preaches from the pew. Christian old age never lags superfluous. As long as one lives, God has work for him to do. God draws the dead line, not at forty-five, but at the grave.

Carter Glass, J. Ramsey MacDonald, Ghandi,

Tagore, Nansen, Lloyd George, Venizelos, Motta, Rathenau and Masaryk are only a few world figures in advancing years, who are doing effective service.

“For age is opportunity no less
Than youth itself, though in another dress,
And as the evening twilight fades away
The sky is filled with stars, invisible by day.”¹

Nevertheless it will not do to send old age out alone. Its judgment and experience must be supplemented by a vigor of energy and a tirelessness of activity that belong to earlier years. Hence Christ sends John with James.

II.

John represents youth in the college of apostles. He was probably the youngest of the Twelve, a mere lad when Christ called him, and surviving his Master's death by a long lifetime. He witnessed the opening of the second century of the Christian era. Think of all that was compassed by the career of this man. He was the constant and close companion of Christ during His earthly ministry; he witnessed the crucifixion, and shared in all the trials that followed; he was present at those crises of the first century; he witnessed the growth of the New

¹ Longfellow.

Testament and himself wrote the book that sealed the canon; he lived on and served and suffered for many years after martyrdom had put an end to the brilliant career of Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles; and catching the first premonitions of that tide of persecution which was soon to sweep over the early church, he lived long enough to steady, by his personal presence, the hearts of the disciples in the first breakings of storm.

John's life was so full and the materials so abundant, that we scarcely know which way to turn for that which will give the best insight into his character. He used his opportunities to the utmost.

With a complete and glad abandonment, he surrendered himself to every influence that went forth from the life and words of Christ. He was almost mystic, but with this was coupled a fervid imagination that kindled under the slightest touch of Jesus, until sometimes it glowed at white heat. With all this there was a calmness, a self-poise, a placid confidence that could only come from the most absolute faith in Jesus. Distance did not break the perfect fellowship that beat between John and his Lord. John was the first to discover the identity of Christ in the gray light of that never to be for-

gotten morning, by the lakeshore, and turning to Peter, he said, "It is the Lord." Peter, with an impatient devotion could not wait for the slowly moving boat to reach the land, but plunging into the sea, swam ashore. John remained in the boat, not because he loved Christ less, but more. His was a deeper love whose confidence and absolute repose neither distance nor change could shake. John's convictions were deep and intense. At times Peter was vacillating, but one always knows where to find John. None more loyal than he. True, while the other disciples had fled, Peter following afar off, had at last skulked into the servants' hall; and although he denied Christ, it was still some proof of his devotion that he would be thus near Him during the dark hours of His trial. But there was another who stood in the judgment hall itself, with no effort to deny his identity, and perhaps close enough to the patient sufferer, for Christ to touch him with His hand, certainly near enough for Jesus to see the wealth of undying affection and tenderest sympathy that, with the eloquence of love, uttered itself in the disciple's every glance and expression of countenance. That man was John.

¹ Jno. 21: 7.

John is often pictured as all but effeminate, He is called "gentle St. John" as though his character were lacking in force. Nothing could be more erroneous. He was not impetuous and headstrong to be sure; but it was only because the boisterous and noisy energy native to the "son of thunder," and especially characteristic of youth, had been subdued to the deep and steady momentum of a great purpose by his association with Jesus.

There was a thoughtful reverence in the disposition of John, that is none too common to youth. On the morning of the resurrection, at the announcement of Mary, Peter and John both speed to the tomb of Jesus. John, fleeter footed, is first to reach the mouth of the sepulchre, but with a holy awe for the sanctity of a spot consecrated as the resting place of the body of his Lord, he pauses for a moment. Peter, heedless and impetuous, rushes by his companion and is the first to enter the empty tomb. It was not that John was less keenly interested in the tremendous issue at stake, but that his reverence was more profound. Jesus trusted John implicitly. He was the "disciple whom Jesus loved."¹ At the last supper John leaned on his

¹John 21: 7.

Master's bosom; and in His dying hour Christ committed His mother to John's care.¹ No wonder Paul calls him a "chief pillar" of the church.²

There are two features in John's apostleship that are eminently characteristic. The first is that he gives us the loftiest conception of the Gospel. He goes higher than any other in his revelation of spiritual truth. It is John who narrates Christ's interview with Nicodemus, in which the mystery of the new birth is set forth. It is the same disciple who records Christ's intercessory prayer. It is John also who gives us the doctrine of the Comforter and of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life.

Matthew has written the life of Jesus, the king of the Jews; Mark has written the life of Jesus, the bearer of burdens, the servant of all; Luke has written the life of Jesus, the man; but John has written the life of Jesus, the God. "Jesus Christ, the Divine" is his theme. His is the eagle-Gospel that soars high above all summits, on tireless pinions; and, with unquailing eye, looks full upon the glory of the unclouded sun.

What is the secret of John's deep spiritual in-

¹Jno. 19: 26, 27. ²Gal. 2: 9.

sight into religious truth? Love. He is the apostle of love. That word is oftenest on his lips. It occurs no fewer than fifty times in the five brief chapters of his First Epistle. "Beloved" is his name for fellow Christians. John's eyes were blessed with the vision of love. In the gray light of an early morning, a stranger stood on the shore of the sea of Galilee and called to the disciples who were in a little boat not far from land. They knew not who it was. He calls to these disciples, who had toiled all night and caught nothing: "Cast the net on the right side of the ship and ye shall find." They obey and are not able to draw the net for the multitude of fishes. Who can this mysterious stranger be? In the dim light of the slowly breaking day, they strain their eyes to discover his identity, but then as always, vision of love was clearest, and John the beloved disciple, John the apostle of love, first to discover the glorious identity of the stranger on the beach, turning to Peter, the leader of that fishing party, said: "It is the Lord."¹ It was the Lord. John saw Christ clearest because he loved Him best. Faith, hope, love, but the greatest of these is love. Through

¹ Jno. 21: 7.

the greatest of all the graces, love, John leads us into the very holy of holies of the Christ-life.

Not only is John's conception of Christian truth the loftiest, but his experience of it is deepest. His is perhaps the most Christ-like life that comes before us on the pages of New Testament Scripture. He writes out of his own experience. Back of his books is the man. What is the secret of his wonderful growth into Christ-likeness of character? Is not the explanation to be found in the fact that John so early and so completely surrendered himself to Christ? In buoyant youth, when he was most impressible, the image of Christ was stamped upon his plastic heart. This, coupled with love, brought John to the best. He stands as a revelation of the glorious possibilities in Christ for him who early comes to Jesus. Some things are possible to him who becomes a Christian in old age; better things are possible to him who becomes a Christian in middle life, when the powers of mind and body are at maturity; but the best is possible only to him, who in fresh, potential, impressible youth, yields all to the sway of Christ's transforming presence.

In answer to a question from Peter about John, Jesus, shortly before His ascension into

heaven, said: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"¹ From this has grown the myth of "the wandering Jew," the fancy of an old man, living through all generations, binding with his lifetime all centuries, tarrying till his strange mission shall somehow be fulfilled and fate end wandering with rest. It is only a myth to be sure, but this much of truth is in the fancy; that the type of Christian character which would best survive all shock and change, which Christ would have tarry on this earth and perpetuate itself in every generation and among the people of every land, is of all others, that which dwelt incarnate in John, the apostle of love.

Christ has built a place in His Church for youth. We are learning that more and more. There was a time when good people thought that glory and gloom were synonymous, and that the only product of grace was "seriousness." Such a relic of barbaric times may still be met with occasionally, as in the case of a pious old lady, whose principal theme was "trials and tribulations," occasionally varied with "tribulations and trials," and whose granddaughter it was the privilege of the writer to

¹Jno. 21: 22.

receive into the church. Shortly afterwards the old lady remarked with a sigh: "I am afraid Mabel has not experienced a change of heart." On being asked why, she replied: "I notice she is as much addicted to laughter as ever."

Thank God for smiles, and the Gospel of good cheer. Down forever with the heresy that He who made us is ever pleased with aught that makes life sad and cold. Christ was sad that all His followers might be glad. There is that in the Gospel to sweeten youthful joys and consecrate youthful endeavor. Instead of crowding youthful effort down into obscurity and branding its enthusiasm as syllabub, let us hail its advent with joy, and catch inspiration from its bounding zeal.

Christendom has nothing more cheering on its brightening sky than the movement Godward among the youth of our day and time, and which is represented by Christian Endeavor Societies, Epworth Leagues, Young Peoples' Unions, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Student's Volunteer Movement, and similar expressions of the dedication of the rich and resourceful energies of youth to Christ and the Church.

There never was a better time for youth to serve God than now. It stands dowered with

the achievements of all the years, confronting what is to be the golden era of human history.

John, in the college of apostles, is a call to youth to enter upon the service of Jesus of Nazareth, who at the early age of thirty-three finished His life work.

Two pictures come up before thoughtful age. As one waits beyond the summit of the hill, memory calls up the picture of childhood, and with it the picture of life which childhood saw as it looked into the future and dreamed.

"I talked with you to-day, all three—
Two of you lurked unseen—
Yourself, the boy you used to be,
And the man you might have been.
You said that hopes to dead leaves turned,
That love was but a gleam,
Ambition soon to ashes burned,
Joy was a fleeting dream.
You never knew that silently
They smiled at you unseen,
The ardent boy you used to be,
And the man you might have been."¹

How may one realize the glorious hopes and dreams of happy childhood? In Christ. He leads us on to the best. All hail to that doctrine of our faith which discovers the bow of

¹ Ethelwyn Wetherald.

God's covenant promise arching its beauty across the pathway of childhood and youth! Youth is cheer and song. It is buoyancy and hope. It is sunrise and morning. It is enthusiasm and gladness. The church would be bereft of its brightest pictures without the glad faces of children, whose smiles and song are Christ's best portrait of heaven.

III.

Nevertheless Jesus does not send youth forth alone. He unites James and John, the apostle of contemplation and the apostle of devotion. They are not faultless. Twice at least does the old nature assert itself in the joint ministry of these brothers.

Once, when the Samaritans refuse to receive Jesus, James and John hurry to Christ, hot with indignation, and ask: "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?"¹ Christ rebuked them. The request sounds as if prompted by the vindictiveness that sometimes characterizes old age, and we wonder if James was not the spokesman on this occasion.

Again these two disciples come to Christ with the request: "Grant unto us that we may

¹Luke 9:54.

sit, one on thy right hand and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.”¹ Christ rebuked them again. The request sounds as if prompted by that inordinate ambition which sometimes characterizes youth, and we wonder if John was not the spokesman on this occasion.

There are no perfect men in the Bible; but while Christ did not lift these brothers out of all human frailty by sending them forth together, He did check their evil tendencies and intensify their gifts.

Old age deals with principles, youth busies itself with details. Old age has settled convictions, youth revels in theory. Old age is tempted to be dogmatic, youth is tempted to be skeptical. Old age supplies reflection, youth supplies action. Old age is dignity, youth is vivacity. Old age is cautious, youth is rash. United, each corrects the other, until caution moves up to courage and rashness moves down to safety.

Old age is authority, youth is tutelage. Old age feels dependent, youth feels confident. Christ unites the two, and old age is more active, youth more trustful.

Old age links the world to those who have

¹ Mark 10: 37.

fought life's battles and crossed the mystic river; youth links the world to those who are donning the armor and marching forth to conflict.

Old age is sunset, youth is sunrise. Sunrise—sunset; and the sunset is gladder for the roseate hues of morning that gild it, and the sunrise is softer for the glow of the sunset that falls upon it; and all the day is richer because dawn and twilight, youth and old age, stretch out their hands toward each other, and clasping under noontide, lift living to its zenith.

Is it not a suggestion of something we shall find in heaven, as Christ sends James and John forth hand in hand? Heaven will not be all old age nor yet all youth, but old age and youth; age with the freshness of youth and youth with the benediction of age. Heaven will be, in some sense, the blending of James and John; and here, as we travel toward the golden gate that opens, at life's sunset, into that other world, Christ prefigures the life in that "land 'o the leal" as He lays the trembling hand of old age on the sturdy shoulder of youth and says: "Go down the pathway of life together."

"From the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth." Always growing old and yet ever young—years and youth,—forever!

CHAPTER IV.

PHILIP AND BARTHOLOMEW OR THE DULLARD AND THE SAGE.

"My dullard head!"—Bishop Hall.

"Too sagacious to be deceived by anyone, even by himself."

—Disraeli.

"He thought as a sage, but he felt as a man."—Beattie.

The third group which Christ sent forth, on that first great missionary itinerancy, "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," was composed of Philip and Bartholomew. They were Galilean peasants, old friends perhaps, but with their friendship deepened, cemented, and glorified by the incident through which the Gospel narrative introduces them to the Christian world. That incident is given in Jno. 1: 43-51, where it is told how Philip brought Bartholomew to Jesus and became the instrument of his conversion and call.

We never forget the occasion that placed our hand in Christ's. Who brought you to Jesus? What was the instrument of your conversion?

Was it some opportune sermon from the pastor? a message delivered by some flaming evangelist? the admonition of some friend so fitly spoken as to be "like apples of gold in baskets of silver"? Was it an old song? some kindly providence? a sore bereavement? Whatever it was, there is a leap in the heart at the thought of it, and memory crowns it with a halo of lovelight.

This was the blessed bond between Philip and Bartholomew; but this is not the reason Christ supplements each with the other and sends them out upon a joint apostleship. What was it that made these two men complementary? They were not united on the basis of their temperament, as was the case with Peter and Andrew; nor on the basis of their age, as was the case with James and John, but on the basis of their mentality. One was a dullard and the other a sage. Christ united them, and the product was a well-balanced intellect, with enough of common sense for life's realities and of mental vigor for the deep truths of religion.

I.

Philip was a typical dullard, a man of heavy, stupid, slowly moving brain, whose dull mind staggered and stumbled helplessly before whatever called for rapid thought and great sagacity,

Everything we know about Philip serves to accentuate this characteristic. Whenever he appears on the page of the Gospel narrative it is as a man whose heart was right but whose head was dull.

When Christ called him to be a disciple, He dealt with him, as one would with a child, who is expected to obey what it cannot always understand. He makes no revelation of truth to Philip as He does to Bartholomew. He asks no questions that will require mental effort on the part of this disciple. All that He does is to utter the blunt, terse, perspicuous command: "Follow me."¹ Any child could understand that. Even a dullard may grasp it and obey. True, this incident, of itself, is not conclusive of Philip's mental characteristics, for Christ used the same command in His call to Matthew, but the circumstances in Matthew's call were different, as well as the career which followed.

The call of Philip coupled with what he does and says afterwards, fully vindicates the estimate given.

A stupid man usually tries to copy after some one of stronger mind for whose intellectual ability he has conceived an admiration. Philip

¹ Jno. 1: 43.

seems to have been an echo of Andrew. They were fellow-townsmen, both living in Bethsaida.¹ It is not an uncommon thing for the conservative, because of his prudence and safe caution, to be a man of considerable personal influence in his community. May not this have been the case with Andrew in Bethsaida? At any rate Philip thought so, and took for his model the conservative apostle.

When Andrew was converted, the first thing he did was to bring some one else to Jesus; and when Philip is converted, the first thing he does is to follow Andrew's example and bring some one else to Jesus. In seeking to do this, Andrew had said: "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ."² Philip concludes that this is the best speech that can be used, and in almost the identical words of Andrew, he says to Bartholomew: "We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write ["The Messiah"], Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."³

The same disposition to make Andrew his oracle appears again when the Greeks come to Philip and say: "Sir, we would see Jesus."⁴ Philip is perplexed. He knows not what to do.

¹ Jno. 1: 44. ² Jno. 1: 41. ³ Jno. 1: 45. ⁴ Jno. 12: 21.

His dull mind is unequal to such an emergency, and in his extremity he takes the Greeks to Andrew. He seems to say: "Andrew, what would you advise me to do with these Greeks? They want to see the Master. Is it safe? Would he approve? How are we to arrange it?" Without further ado, Andrew goes straight to Christ.

When Bartholomew in reply to Philip's statement, asks: "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?"¹ Philip is unable to argue. Bartholomew's objection seems to be fatal. Nevertheless Philip does what any dullard might, and which after all is more convincing than the profoundest argument. He simply answers: "Come and see."

Philip is resourceless. He is utterly lacking in originality, and in that ability which can provide for an emergency. Christ would feed the vast multitudes that have come out to the lakeshore to hear Him preach; and, lifting up His eyes, He says unto Philip: "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" Philip begins to wrestle with that problem, but after a severe mental effort the most brilliant thing he can say is: "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may

¹ Jno. 1: 46.

take a little.”¹ Of course, Philip, that is apparent to the most thoughtless, but that is no solution of the problem. Anyone knows that two hundred pennyworth of bread will not feed 5000 people; but “whence shall we buy bread that they may eat?”

Philip was a dullard.

Christ on another occasion, is speaking to His disciples, in perhaps the most solemn interview of His entire ministry. In a few hours He is to be delivered into the hands of His enemies to be crucified. He has just said: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him and have seen him.” Could Christ more explicitly have taught His oneness with the Father? Yet just here Philip breaks in with the stupid and irrelevant request: “Lord shew us the Father and it sufficeth us.” Then Jesus, as though in utter despair of ever getting thought clearly lodged in the dull brain of this blundering disciple, exclaims: “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then,

¹ Jno. 6:5-7.

shew us the Father? . . . Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, or else" (for the dullest mind can at least do this) "believe me for the very work's sake."¹

Philip is not a genius. Such a man will never set the world on fire. He will not be guilty of brilliancy. He can be counted on to do the wrong thing at the wrong time, and to say the wrong thing at the most inopportune moment. He is clumsy, utterly lacking in tact, and forever bringing about awkward situations; a dull, slow-thinking, blundering, but earnest, honest-hearted man.

What can Christ do with such material? He can make an apostle out of Philip, and use him to do a great and glorious work. Philip brings Bartholomew to Jesus. He is not a sage, but he leads a sage to Christ. He cannot write a system of theology, but he can save a theologian. How often has this incident repeated itself in the history of the Church. Spurgeon, in some respects the greatest preacher of the century, was converted through a sermon preached in an obscure mission chapel by an illiterate preacher who could scarcely utter a sentence with grammatical correctness.

¹ Jno. 14: 6-11.

The story is told of an old preacher, of few and ordinary gifts, who labored an entire year as pastor of an obscure church in a little Scotch hamlet and succeeded in adding but one name, that of a young lad, to the communicants' roll. The officers said the old man was a failure and the church would die unless a more vigorous and gifted man could be secured for pastor. The years went by, and the lad grew to manhood. As Robert Moffat, he went out to darkest Africa, where he struck a light for Christ, which will never die. Not once nor twice in this blessed Gospel story has the dullard saved the sage.

There is a place in the church for the dullard, despite his paucity of ideas and poverty of mental functions. Perhaps he is more numerous than any other class. We meet with him on all occasions. We have seen Philip. It was such a man in the person of a good Presbyterian elder, who unwittingly precipitated a staid congregation in Virginia, from the sublime to the ridiculous. The beloved pastor, at the close of the Wednesday night prayer-meeting, announced that he had received a call to another church and that after carefully and prayerfully considering it, he felt it to be his duty to accept. He said he knew that it would be a bitter struggle

to leave his present flock, but that when duty called, feelings must not be considered. After the announcement, he sat down, and then followed an awkward pause. The good elder referred to, felt that something should be done to break the silence, and nothing better offering he arose and said: "Brethren let us sing the long metre doxology, 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow.'" He meant well, but he was a dullard.

Nevertheless, for all the mistakes he makes, the dullard is indispensable. The one-talent Christian does the largest part of church work. It is the faithful private that makes the great general; and no more fitting monument was ever erected than that which commemorates the fidelity of the man who marched in the ranks and fought in the trenches. He had not the sagacity to plan and execute a great campaign, but he could and did obey the order that passed down the line; and on this, at last, depended the reputation of commanding generals, and the final issues of war.

After all, the extension of Christ's kingdom does not depend on brains, but on the faithful testimony of those who have experienced God in their own hearts. "Ye shall be witnesses of me." The province of a witness is not to argue

the case, but to tell what he knows. A controversy between a Christian and an infidel settles nothing beyond the superior mental agility of one of the disputants. It does not determine whether Christianity be true or false.

Not intellectual gymnasts but men and women who know God and who can tell what they know out of loving hearts are Christ's best evangelists. For such work a dullard may be as serviceable as a sage.

Nevertheless it would evidently be a mistake to send Philip out by himself. He would be at his wits' end before the first sunset. Hence Christ puts Bartholomew at his side.

II.

Bartholomew was a typical sage. His other name was Nathanael. In the synoptists he is always called Bartholomew; in John he is always called Nathanael (Matt. 10: 3, Mk. 3: 18, and Luke 6: 14 with Jno. 1: 46-51).

He never asked but two questions, but these displayed a perfect familiarity with the theological status of the Messiahship, and at the same time went to the bottom of the whole problem. These questions satisfactorily answered, Bartholomew was convinced for all time to come both as to the person and claims of the Messiah.

His mind acted with lightning rapidity and logical exactness. He grasped the main points of a question and settled them; then left the details to arrange themselves.

When Philip announced that he had found the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, in an instant Bartholomew flashed into the dull face of his companion: "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"¹ That seemed to be a fatal objection. In the estimation of many, it was fatal. Had Bartholomew been a man of small mental calibre, he would have stopped here, allowing his prejudices to estop all further investigation. Because he was a man whose habit it was to go to the bottom of a thing, he acted on Philip's suggestion and went to "see."

As he approaches Christ, Christ opens the conversation, with the remark, "Behold an Israelite in whom there is no guile!" Naturally enough Bartholomew asks: "Whence knowest thou me?" They had never looked into each other's faces before, were total strangers. How then can this Jesus of Nazareth know anything about Bartholomew? Is He some imposter, who, with a sweetened compliment would win a disciple? If so, He has mistaken His man, for

¹ Jno. 1: 46.

Bartholomew has too much penetration to be caught by subtle flattery. "Thou sayest I am an Israelite in whom there is no guile. Whence knowest thou me?"

Christ deigns to tell him. In the case of the dull Philip it had been enough to say "Follow me," but this man must be dealt with differently. He must have proof. He must be given evidence. He must be convinced. Hence Jesus answered: "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee."

The fig tree is the oriental study, and the reference is doubtless to some deep religious experience which there had come to Bartholomew. He had been trying to work out the problems of "God," "soul," "hereafter," and as he mused One had revealed Himself to him. That One now stands before his eyes, clothed in flesh and blood. "When thou wast under the fig tree I saw thee." In an instant it flashes upon Bartholomew that here is one who reads men's thoughts, holds deep spiritual converse with men's souls. Speeding swiftly to the great conclusion he exclaims, without a moment's hesitation, the mighty and forever unalterable conviction of his heart: "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."

A duller man would have halted, but the sage

grasped all at once. That interview settled everything for Bartholomew.

That he was capable of understanding deep truths is further evidenced by what Christ said to him afterwards. "Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."¹

Bartholomew was the man for knotty problems and deep mysterious truths. He was thoughtful, studious, reflective. He lived in the realm of the speculative and contemplative rather than the practical, and was concerned with ideas rather than people.

He was a good man to build a system of theology. He could see truth in all of its relations. Truth is what a thing is in itself, what it is in relation to other things, what it is in relation to him who perceives it. The great majority apprehend truth only in relation to themselves. They color it with their prejudices, and measure it with their experiences. The result is all of the 'isms that afflict the world.

¹Jno. 1: 45-51.

Bartholomew had a broader grasp. Settling once and well the foundation of his faith, he was as serene in storm as in sunshine. An assault of rationalism might greatly agitate Philip, but it would be as impotent against the settled and impregnable convictions of Bartholomew, as the mad waves of the sea that fling themselves against the granite cliffs only to be cleft asunder.

Nevertheless, Bartholomew never, so far as we are told, performed any service beyond that implied in this first missionary journey. The only incident recorded of him is that, on a certain occasion, he went fishing with some other of the disciples.¹

He is not remembered for any personal work. He was the sort of man to make a good controversialist. He could emphasize orthodoxy and would be found fighting for "the five points."

What can Christ do with such a man? He makes him into an apostle.

The Church has need for the sage, even if he does think more of a system than of a soul. He will kill a church, if you put him in the pulpit, but he is fine on creed-building; and at his best in the field of speculative apologetics. He is in

¹ Jno. 21: 1-8.

danger of giving the truths about Christ greater prominence than the person of Christ, and thus of sacrificing life to system.

A little Presbyterian church in a southern city had been vacant for more than a year, and was being supplied, from Sunday to Sunday, by a Methodist licentiate who was attending the Theological Seminary of his denomination located in the same city. The Presbyterian Ministers' Meeting, one morning, was addressed by one of the brethren as follows: "Something must be done for blank church. This Methodist licentiate is giving these people no Presbyterian doctrine whatever." One of his auditors ventured to ask: "What is he giving them?" To which the speaker, without a moment's reflection, replied: "Well sir, he is giving them nothing but the plain simple Gospel." The critic was magnifying his system above "the plain simple Gospel," a tendency perhaps which is not limited to the sage.

Nevertheless the sage saves the Church from dangerous extremes, and helps keep pure the faith once delivered to the saints.

Still Bartholomew is a warning. The vital power of Christianity does not reside in its apologetics. We may vindicate all our creeds and still let the world go to the devil. We need to

be on our guard against that fatal culture which develops the head at the expense of the heart. It is all very fine to be as sound as the Confession, and to settle once and forever the foundations on which rests your faith, until no heaving tide of rationalistic criticism can trouble you; but for the world's redemption there must be the apostle of evangelistic effort and personal work.

It would be a dreary church made up of sages. It would lack fire, enthusiasm, heart-throb. So Christ warms up Bartholomew with Philip, and sends the dullard and the sage out together.

III.

The conversion and career of these two apostles in juxtaposition, emphasize some important truths.

The Gospel is not so abstruse, but the simplest child may possess, practice, and proclaim all it offers. Nevertheless its truths have in them such a mighty sweep that the world's greatest intellects have stood uncovered in their majestic presence. Christ's Gospel is so divine that Philip, the dullard, is not abashed, nor Bartholomew, the sage, exalted.

Therefore it was not an incongruous thing

which Christ did when He sent these two men out side by side. They needed each other, they helped each other.

The dullard accepts, the sage investigates. Both processes are demanded. There are some things in the Gospel which we can only accept; Philip is the man for this. There are other things which we are to search out and investigate; Bartholomew is the man for this.

The dullard exhorts, the sage instructs. The Church needs both hortatory and didactic preaching; and the ideal preacher is not he who is always hortatory nor yet he who is always didactic, but he who combines the two.

The dullard brings to Christ, the sage builds up in Christ. Each work is vital in his place. The dullard proclaims truth, the sage refutes error. The dullard is concerned with the concrete, the sage with the abstract. The dullard knows whom he believes, the sage what he believes. The dullard is the epitome of heat, the sage of light; the one is fervid, the other brilliant.

The dullard is in danger of effervescing in a bubble of emotionalism, the sage is in danger of freezing up into an icicle. Christ unites the two and the dullard is kept from effervescing and the sage from congealing.

The ideal Christian worker is not he who is all dullard nor yet he who is all sage, but he who has the fervor of the dullard without his stupidity and the sagacity of the sage without his frost.

What a glorious religion is this! Childhood is not confounded by it, nor is the astutest wisdom unduly exalted. The world's profoundest philosopher can find nothing stronger than its words of heavenly wisdom, which likewise become rod and staff to the weakest and lowliest of earth's children.

God is for all, for angel and seraphim and cherubim, and not less for the humble faith that can do no more than stretch forth its hand and take.

CHAPTER V.

THOMAS AND MATTHEW OR DOUBT AND CONVICTION.

"We doubt in order that we may believe."—Hamilton.

*"To be open to conviction and information is the mark of
a noble mind."*—Newton.

Thomas and Matthew, two men of diverse temperaments and antipodal mental habitudes, form the fourth group in the catalogue of apostles. Thomas was the incarnation of doubt, Matthew of conviction. Christ laid the doubts of one and the convictions of the other on the anvil of grace, and from their joint apostleship, forged a faith that had the liberty of doubt without its license, and the strength of conviction without its bigotry.

The name of Thomas has come to stand as a synonym for doubt. He could not subscribe to all the creeds of Christendom. He might not be able to pass muster under the interrogatory fire of certain church courts. Some might be disposed to refuse him church membership.

Were he a preacher in this day and time, it is not improbable that a heresy trial would soon be dragging its slow wearisome length through the ecclesiastical judiciary. Christ received Thomas into the church, actually made the great doubter an apostle, and that, too, with the full knowledge of his weaknesses.

I.

The portrait of Thomas, the apostle of doubt, is given in three incidents, all recorded in John's Gospel, and all disclosing the same countenance and emphasizing the same traits of character. Wherever we see him, Thomas is prone to look on the dark side of things. He is fearful, distrustful, sensitive, pessimistic, skeptical; but honest withal, ardently devoted to his Master, earnestly anxious to know the truth, and capable of great things despite his proneness to skepticism.

The first incident took place beyond Jordan, whither Jesus and His disciples had gone because of the bitter hostility of His enemies. A message comes from Mary and Martha at Bethany, begging Jesus to come to the bedside of Lazarus who is sick unto death. Thomas would dissuade Christ from the hazardous and venturesome journey. He believes that, if He returns

to Judea, the Jews will kill Him. His fears and doubts, for the moment, have gotten the better of his memory; for he seems to lose sight entirely of the many times when Christ by His divine, miraculous power, had escaped death at the hands of His foes. Despite the protest of His doubting apostle, Jesus determines to go to the stricken household at Bethany. What does Thomas do? Are his doubts so great as to deter him from accompanying Christ on this perilous journey? With an abject despair from whose sky every ray of hope seems to have perished, Thomas says: "Let us also go that we may die with him."¹

We are astonished at the unbelief which can drop into such black depths of pessimistic despair, but we are also spellbound with admiration in the glorious presence of a devotion, that, rather than forsake Christ, does not hesitate to walk straight into the jaws of death with Him.

The second incident is connected with Christ's discourse on the night of the betrayal. The institution of the Holy Supper has just taken place and Christ is uttering His last words to His friends. He has said: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for

¹ Jno. 11:16.

you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know."¹

Just here Thomas breaks in with the objection: "Lord we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" He is raising difficulties again. The evidence is enough to satisfy the other disciples, but not so for this doubter. He seems to say: "Lord you take entirely too much for granted. You may think that we know the way, but the matter is not clear, the evidence is insufficient. We know not whither thou goest."

The clearest light on the personality of Thomas is that given in the famous incident connected with the proof of Christ's resurrection.² On a certain Lord's Day evening all the disciples were gathered together, with the exception of Thomas. Why was he absent? Perhaps it was this same tendency to a morbid, morose, sensitive skepticism that led him to absent himself from this gathering of the disciples. As they sit there, perhaps in the same "upper room" where Christ had kept the last Passover with His disciples, suddenly the radiant form of

¹ Jno. 14: 8, 5. ² Jno. 20: 20-30.

the risen Christ stands in the midst of them, and once more they see Jesus.

It may be the next morning, when Thomas has returned, that they say to him: "We have seen the Lord." What were his feelings? How should we have felt under such circumstances? All at once it flashes upon Thomas that Christ has shown Himself to the other disciples, but not to him. He alone has been left out. His is the only vision unblest. Has not Christ slighted him? It almost breaks his heart; and in an agony of mingled rebelliousness, reproachful resentment, and characteristic doubt, he cries out: "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."

The next Lord's Day evening, the disciples are gathered together again, and this time Thomas is present. Once more Christ shows Himself. As the radiant vision shines, with a light not of earth or sky, full upon that group of earnest faces, a hush falls upon the little company, whose silence is broken not until Jesus, turning with a look of indescribable love to His doubting apostle, says: "Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and

reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.”¹

Did Thomas obey? Did he touch with the hands of his flesh those sacred wounds that had been glorified by a love which all suffering could never quench? It would have been sacrilege. All at once Thomas realizes that he does not need as much evidence as he imagined, and unmindful of his rash vow, forever flinging to the winds his every doubt, he throws himself at Jesus’ feet in the abandonment of a perfect trust, exclaiming with a faith that has never been surpassed, “My Lord and My God!”

“With what a new-born, deep intensity
Of consecrated love and quickened trust,
All perfected, the doubting Thomas must
Have loved the comprehending Christ, when He
Looked in his heart, then bade him come and see
The nail-prints in those tender palms, and thrust
Into that blessed side his hand of dust.
Not for the proof vouchsafed so graciously
Must he anew have loved his Lord—ah, no!
That was of all the very smallest part;
Belief, perchance, had dawned ere long, without
A granted sign, to his slow mind; but, O!
The mighty Savior understood his heart,
And had divine compassion on his doubt.”²

¹ Jno. 20: 24-29. ² Katrina Trask.

Such was Thomas, the apostle of doubt. He comes close to us in our mental difficulties. Who is there, but his sky is sometimes overcast with cloud? Doubts come to all, until sometimes faith reels and staggers, and is all but wrenched of its hold on God and His truth. Most of us have our dark days when doubts come and standing there, like spectral ghosts in the shadows, taunt and mock us. At such times Thomas is a gospel of good cheer.

He tells us that one may be God's child and yet have honest doubts. One may exercise saving faith in Jesus as his Redeemer and yet have intellectual difficulties about truths connected with religion. One may be an apostle of the Lord and yet have doubts. God does not damn us for our doubts. He does not demand a faith which involves a lie, He puts no premium on mental dishonesty. To be sure He asks for faith, and declares that all things are possible to him who believes; but if we are unable to believe with an absolutely unclouded faith,—if the best that we can do is to cry: "Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief," He does not for that reason refuse to bless us.

Honest doubts may even be overruled for good. Thomas unwittingly enriched the faith of the Church with an unimpeachable evidence

of the Savior's resurrection, when he demanded to see the nail prints and wound in Christ's side.

Still Thomas was not great because of his doubts. Doubts are disabilities, disasters, deplorable weaknesses. The fashion nowadays is too often to boast of doubt. An interrogation point has come to be regarded as a mark of high degree among the first families in the world of intellect. There are those who imagine they have achieved "glory and honor and immortality," by calling in question the old fashioned faiths of their fathers. They subscribe to a creed, which begins with:—"I doubt."

Doubts mar peace, jeopardize happiness, diminish usefulness, retard spiritual growth. Down with doubt! Instead of bragging about it, let it be kept in the background and treated with a dose of its own disorder. The best thing to do for doubts is to doubt them. There is a better place in which to live than a fog-bank. Instead of stopping half way up the hill where all the landscape is swathed in blinding mists, it were better to climb higher and reach a summit with unclouded sky and a clear-shining sun overhead.

At last Thomas was saved from doubt. What cured him? Love for Christ. Deep down beneath all his skepticism, the heart of the apostle

beat true to Christ. He had anchored his soul to the Nazarene with a mighty and abiding love. This was his salvation, the cable that held secure through all the storm of doubt. But for this love, Thomas would have drifted to the utter wreck and ruin of all religious hope.

Cold, intellectual skepticism, without any heart-beat, has its face toward a wintry sky, and grows drearier and more benumbed as it travels; but doubt, with love for guide, will find the truth, until some day passing beyond all chill and dreariness out into the sunshine, it may there fall at the feet of Him who is the truth's radiant incarnation, and exclaim with Thomas: "My Lord, and my God!"

II.

With Thomas went Matthew. Matthew's other name is Levi. By vocation he was a tax-gatherer, by class a publican, in character most probably vicious and dishonest. He farmed out the taxes under the Roman government and grew rich through shameless extortions. Having sold out his patriotism for a price, he belonged to a class that was under the ban of social and civil ostracism. This is the man whom Christ calls from a nefarious business to a glorious apostleship. What we know of

Matthew is gathered from his call, the feast he gave Christ, and his gospel. All of these show him to have been a man who formed his views quickly and thoroughly, and whose convictions had the strength both of sacrifice and courage.

One day Christ walked forth from Capernaum, the town of His adoption, along the sea-shore. Down there at the lake-side a man sat collecting toll and receiving taxes. It was Matthew. The narrative which Matthew himself penned, says, "As Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man." Perhaps the crowd jostling upon one another in their selfish eagerness to reach the Savior's side, saw something else as they looked at Matthew. Some of them saw a tax-gatherer and shunned him. Others saw a wealthy, well-to-do citizen and envied him. Others saw an avaricious money-getter, who prized shekels above patriotism, and despised him.

Jesus saw a man and loved him, and Jesus, the Savior of men, said to Matthew the man, "Follow me."¹

What did Matthew do? Think of all that obedience involved. It called for the most heroic sacrifice. He must give up his business.

¹ Matt. 9: 9.

He must surrender his illgotten gains. He must turn from his old life utterly, and all at the call of One who had not where to lay His head. Most men would have faltered. Not so Matthew. At once, without parley, argument, or question, "he arose and followed him." Surely it was conviction of no ordinary strength that measured up to the heroic demands of such instant surrender and utter sacrifice.

The strength of this man's convictions appears again in the feast which he gave Jesus, not long after his conversion. One of the tests of faith is a readiness to confess it. Few things call for higher moral courage than to avow, among the companions of old and dissolute days, one's new faith and allegiance. Matthew made this confession. He gave a feast to Jesus and His disciples and invited thither a great number of "publicans and sinners,"¹—the boon companions of his former iniquitous career. It meant simply this,—that Matthew believed in Christ with such depth and intensity of conviction that he would burn all bridges behind him, and announce to all his little world, in no unmistakable way, the irrevocable purpose of his life to follow the Nazarene.

¹ Mark 2: 15.

This pronounced characteristic of Matthew's personality comes out again in his life of Christ. Matthew's gospel is almost blunt in its presentation of Christ's Messiahship. It is the production of a man who believed that Christ's claims were so strong as to admit of no questioning. He seizes on one great line of argument, the fulfillment of prophecy. His gospel is intensely Jewish. He frequently quotes from the old Hebrew prophets. Indulging in no speculation, he refuses to be side-tracked by minor issues. He rings the changes on the fulfillment of prophetic Scripture. This is his vindication of Christ's divinity, and it is complete.

Matthew is the apostle of conviction. We are not surprised that Christ gave him a place in that coterie of chosen disciples. Neither are we surprised that this man becomes Christ's historian, and gives us the first book in the canon of New Testament Scripture. Thomas will not do to write the life of Christ. Not a doubter but a man of mighty faith must be chosen for such a task. The doubters have not moved this world much. It has rather been the men and women who, like Matthew, believe a thing with all the soul they have, and who will not quail under any fire.

Convictions make a man a convincer.

**"There's untold power
In him who knows his mission is a
thing
Of God's own willing, and that it can-
not fail,
Though doubt may shroud in cloud
The transient hour."**

Matthew cannot be diverted by non-essentials. Having been a business man he carried into his apostleship the brusqueness and straightforward direction which characterize the practical man of affairs. Constitutional questions and hair-splitting distinctions were wasted on him. He was the man to pitch doubts into the middle of the ocean and, with a confidence amazing and at the same time sublime, exclaim: "I know whom I have believed; I have a knowledge that rests on belief. This is enough for me."

Ecclesiastical life has developed a type of churchmen, whose stock in trade is the phraseology of scholasticism, and whose creed is profound reverence for the metaphysical distinctions that have their rise in the dark ages.

It was such a school that came to the front in a famous discussion before the highest court of one of our great religious denominations. The case at issue involved the question of eccle-

siastical polity. One of the leading disputants was a brother recently from the theological seminary, and still within gunshot of the text books on Ecclesiology. He warmly argued that the whole trouble with which the church was confronted arose from confounding the "diatactic and the diacritic powers." He was followed by many others in the same line, the discussion flopping first to one side and then to the other, but always around those two central orbs, "the diatactic and the diacritic."

At last one speaker arose and addressed the venerable court as follows: "Moderator, Fathers, and Brethren:—For a long time I have been convinced that things were not running smoothly in their grooves, the times are out of joint, and there is an evident tendency on the part of all things to go to the bad. In casting about for an explanation of this, I had accepted, as the best theory at hand, the views presented here to-day. Things are going to the bad because the relations between the diatactic and the diacritic are not properly observed. True I did not find mental rest in this theory, but I accepted it as the best that could be found under the circumstances. Recently, however, I have read a very learned article in our Church Review by Dr. Blank on the relation of the

'cognizable to the cognozable.' That article has given me mental rest. Brethren the real trouble with the world is not the confounding of the diatactic and the diacritic; but the confounding of the cognizable and the cognozable."

Suddenly the venerable court came to its senses, and, with little ado disposing of the scholastic logomachy, gave itself to the consideration of business that had some relation to the vital progress of Christ's kingdom.

Matthew represented the type of Christian that stands as the sworn foe of such scholastic nonsense. His convictions seized essentials and he was too profoundly in earnest to be diverted by that which was trivial and inconsequential.

What was the secret of Matthew's strong convictions? Not pulpit apologetics. Not arguments and evidences. These appeal to the head and beget mental assent. Matthew's faith was vastly more than mental assent. His conviction was the outcome of experience. He had been a great sinner, and was perhaps soul-hungry for a better life the day Christ called him. As he looked into Jesus' face, he saw the answer of his heart's cry for a holy life. He experienced Christ—conviction of sin and conviction of Christ, with an experience as the pivot between

the two, on which the tax-gatherer turned into a great apostle.

III.

It would seem that at last we have come to one man whom Christ can safely send out alone. Does Matthew's faith need supplementing? Surely his convictions are strong enough to stand any shock. But Thomas cannot stand alone; and Christ has not forgotten Thomas. For the doubter's sake, the man of strong convictions is sent forth by his side. A closer inspection will also discover that Matthew needed Thomas not less than Thomas, Matthew.

We can readily see the benefit that Matthew would be to the apostle of doubt. His very presence would be a standing challenge to skepticism. It helps weak faith to breathe the atmosphere of a life whose beliefs are impregnable; and the doubts of Thomas would seem lean and starveling as he brought them out to sun in the light of Matthew's triumphant faith.

But why did Matthew need Thomas? To save him from bigotry, to teach him new truth, to deliver him from sectarian narrowness. The temptation to the man of strong conviction is ever to believe that he has all the truth, that God made the universe by his nine and thirty arti-

cles, and that when the Confession of Faith had been formulated, creed-making was over forever. It was conviction that had degenerated to bigotry in the earnest preacher who was berating his flock for their indifference to divine truth. "You do not believe the Bible," he said, and then waxing warmer in his denunciation, he exclaimed: "You do not ev'n believe the Confession of Faith."

Therefore Matthew needs Thomas, not less than Thomas needs Matthew. Hence Christ sends them forth hand in hand. Such a union is always prolific of the best results. Doubt sees difficulties, conviction sees opportunities. The double vision is a boon.

Doubt is agitation, conviction is determination. Both are needed, first the man who gets things to a white heat, and then the strong arm that strikes while the iron is hot. Doubt is timid, conviction is daring. Doubt is speculative, conviction is practical. Doubt asks for evidence, conviction calls for action. The strongest ministry is that which combines the two; first embracing truth that is certified, and then sending it out to serve.

Doubt degenerates into liberalism, conviction into absolutism. It was a reign of doubt that preceded the awful license and liberalism of the

French Revolution. It was a reign of bigotry and dead formalism that preceded the absolutism of Austria under the icy, iron hand of Prince Metternich. Doubt is abused by infidels, conviction is abused by bigots.

What is needed is not to divorce these twin apostleships, nor to array them against each other; not to excommunicate doubt nor to anathematize error, but by blending the two, examining our beliefs under the microscope of an honest mental inquiry and fighting our doubts with the heart-throb of a loving trust, to reach a sounder creed and a richer life, where error is exposed and truth enthroned.

CHAPTER VI.

JAMES AND THADDEUS or DUTY AND DOCTRINE.

"Duty and right are relative terms. If it be the duty of one party to do something, it is the right of some other party to exact the doing of it."—Fleming.

"True doctrinal preaching, though it lies high, should, like clouds, before it gets through, come down to the ground in rain."—H. W. Beecher.

The men who occupy the fifth place in the college of apostles present two distinctive types of Christian life. One stands for the Gospel expressed, the other for the Gospel held. One puts the emphasis on upright conduct, the other on sound creed. One champions morality, the other orthodoxy. James is the apostle of duty, Thaddeus of doctrine.

They were brothers, and either brothers or cousins of Christ. By a comparison of Matt. 10:3, and Mark 3:18 with Luke 6:16 and Acts 1:13, we find that Lebbeus, Thaddeus and Jude are all names of one and the same apostle.

Certain critical questions gather about the identity of James, into which it is not our pur-

pose to enter. The matter may be studied satisfactorily in any good commentary, or in some Bible Dictionary. Suffice it to say that the names, "James the son of Alphaeus,"¹ "James the Brother of the Lord,"² "James the Less,"³ "James the Brother of Jude,"⁴ "James a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,"⁵ seem to be but different appellations given to the same apostle.

We are to study then, in this chapter the personalities of James Junior and Jude. James is the author of the "General Epistle of James," and Jude is the author of the "General Epistle of Jude." We must form our estimate of these men from their writings. We shall find that the material is ample, and that while these two men were blood brothers, they approached the problem of religion from very different standpoints.

I.

James champions practical Christianity. He thoroughly detests frauds of all kinds, and has a very poor opinion of professions that are not backed up by the life. He says little about creeds and dogmas but is tremendously concerned over

¹ Matt. 10: 3. ² Matt. 13: 55. ³ Mk. 15: 40. ⁴ Jude 1.

⁵ James 1: 1.

conduct. The key-note of his epistle is: "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only."¹

The most cursory examination of his writings cannot fail to discover the temper of the man. At the close of the first chapter, James presents his conception of "pure religion." He says not a word about symbols, creeds, liturgies, rituals, sacraments, vestments or any such thing. With him the question reduces itself to a faithful discharge of one's duty to his fellows, in a life of practical philanthropy accompanied by a character of stainless morality.

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."²

He next hurls anathemas against caste distinctions in churches, and his contention is not that caste is a violation of some fundamental doctrine of the creed. It is outrageous treatment of God's poor, who should be as welcome as the rich to the house and table of that Lord of glory with whom there is no respect of persons.³

A few verses further on, this apostle of duty heaps withering sarcasm upon the charity that

¹ Jas. 1: 27. ² Jas. 1: 27. ³ Jas. 2: 1-4.

says to the poor and needy: "Be ye warmed and filled," but provides not those things which are needful for the body.¹ James would place "free luncheon," "fresh air fund," coal and bread and raiment for the poor and starving, above psalm singing and the distribution of tracts.

He wields a trenchant pen and uses it with powerful effect upon church frauds of all kinds. He pronounces against dead orthodoxy, and declaring that "The devils also believe and tremble"² teaches that one may be as sound as the Apostle's creed in his doctrinal subscription, and still be a devil at heart.

He inveighs against procrastination,³ and his contention is that procrastination is the thief of duty. It defers doing until the fatal "too late."

James closes his epistle, not with the statement of the attributes of the deity, nor with a deliverance on doctrine, but with a panegyric on human effort, and on him who does his duty here. "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."⁴

The apostle of duty grew on the church. He

¹ Jas. 2: 15, 16. ² Jas. 2: 19. ³ Jas. 4: 18. ⁴ Jas. 5: 19, 20.

seems to have been rather an obscure disciple at first, but he "proved his faith by his works," he lived as he professed, until at last he is held in highest esteem and greatest honor. He is the one apostle to whom Christ appeared after His resurrection, when no one else was present.¹

Why the Savior singled out this man for such a distinguished honor, we are left to conjecture. Soon he ranks with the chiefest apostles.² Ere long he is the leading churchman in Jerusalem.³ Paul calls him "a pillar,"⁴ and before the record of the New Testament church closes, we find this apostle of duty occupying the moderator's chair in the first Ecumenical council of Christendom.⁵

James stands for a distinct and glorious type of religion. Sometimes his teachings are thought to clash with those of Paul, in that Paul declares that we are saved by faith without the works of the law, while James affirms that faith without works is dead. There is no real contradiction, of course. Paul is concerned with the instrument or sole condition of salvation, James with its evidence. Both men are dealing with our part in the problem of religion;

¹ 1 Cor. 15: 7. ² Gal. 1: 18, 19. ³ Acts 21: 18. ⁴ Gal. 2: 9.

⁵ Acts 15: 18.

Paul with that which makes us Christians, James with that which proves us Christians. Both are vital, and neither antagonizes the other, any more than the stalk of the sunflower antagonizes the golden disc of blossom it supports.

Duty is the manifestation of religion; its blossom, its beauty and fragrance and wealth.

There can be no question about the importance of duty. The piety that does not make the scoundrel quit his meanness, that fails to follow profession with practice, that contributes nothing of sweetness and sunshine to home life, that produces no Christ-like transformation in the character it tenants, is an awful sham. We may orate about our creeds until doomsday, sing hymns, pray long prayers, and indulge in endless discussions of the fine points of a theological system, but still above all else the word endures: "If ye love me keep my commandments."

The religion that does not make the world better and human life sweeter, stronger, richer, is a dismal failure. Rowland Hill says: "I would give nothing for that man's religion whose very dog and cat are not better for it."

God does not redeem His saints to vegetate. It is not enough to have holy feelings and pious experiences; to cry over sad stories and fall

into sentimental reveries under the spell of touching music. Do something! If one's religion is worth anything it will bring him to the mark where obligation shall be recognized and duty regarded. The sort of religion which one may accumulate without its making him any better, is certainly of dubious origin, however loud it may shout or long it may pray. A man may sing in rapturous song:

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all!"

but if he has a spasm at the heart every time the collection plate is passed, James would pronounce that man's religion "vain."

Jesus "went about *doing* good." The Christian is to follow the divine example. He is not to escape from life, but to throw himself into the full tide of life's incessant activities, and to do his best. Thus only may one hope to hear at last: "Well *done*, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord."

Perhaps the Methodist more nearly than any other denomination of Protestant Christians, embody the James type of piety. They have put the emphasis on duty. They have not said much about the "eternal decrees of God."

"The free agency of man" is the central doctrine of their theological system.

The characterization of "the Methodies" by "Posty" in "Auld Lang Syne" is not entirely amiss.

The aunt is describing to him how Lily found her way to church in the great city of London. She had asked information of a policeman, who, "as luck wud have it," was a Scotchman, and who said: "Come awa, lassie, a' see wha ye're frae; it's a mercȳ ye didna fa' intae the hands o' some of ma neebbers; they micht hae sent ye off tae the Methodies, an' they wud hae gien ye a fricht wi' cryin' Hallelujah." "A graund body for a' that," remarks Posty, "but clean astray on the decrees."¹

Nevertheless, while the Methodists have not said much about "decrees," they have been tremendously concerned with works. Sounding trumpet blasts to duty, they have done glorious service for the cause of Christ by insisting that Christians be doers of the Word and not hearers only.

Still one may exaggerate duty. We may look upon our own works, until, forgetting Christ's work, we shall regard them not as the evidence

¹ In *Auld Lang Syne*, p. 298.

but as the ground of salvation. The temptation is ever to go back to a system of works-righteousness, and to believe that somehow heaven is to be won by pious deeds, rather than through faith in the merit of an all-atoning Savior.

Duty may be exaggerated until what lies back of and high above duty is forgotten.

Man is a rational creature, acting out from motives. What is the motive power of duty? We may look at the river in the valley until we forget the fountain in the hills that feeds the river. As long as the fountain springs the river will run, but when the fountain dries up the river dies. What is the fountain that feeds the river of duty? It is doctrine, and so behind James stands Thaddeus or Jude.

II.

Jude is the apostle of doctrine. His epistle is short, containing only twenty-five verses, but long enough to give us a clear insight into the kind of man that stands behind. The author is concerned with the truths rather than the duties of religion. The key-note of all he writes is, "Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."¹ In the open-

¹ Jude, v. 3.

ing verse he goes back to God's everlasting decrees and grounds thereon the great doctrines of election, sanctification, and final perseverance of the saints. From this he passes on, in verses 3-5, to a statement of the dogma of everlasting retribution, speaking of those "who were before of old ordained to this condemnation."

He next anathematizes heretics, and no more awful denunciation can be found within the lids of the Bible, than the scathing words which fall hot and blistering from the fiery pen of this champion of orthodoxy. He says: "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear; clouds they are without water, carried about of winds, trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever."¹

Jude also dwells approvingly upon the delights of theological controversy, and insists that the ungodly should be "convinced" not only of their "ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed," but also of their "hard speeches."²

¹ Jude 12, 13. ² v. 15.

The apostle of doctrine closes his epistle, not with a panegyric of human effort, but with a recitation of the attributes of deity, and a statement of the doctrine of divine sovereignty. "Unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever Amen."¹

Like James, Jude stands for a distinctive and glorious type of religion. He believes it does make a mighty difference what one believes. He does not trouble himself much about duties, but asks "What is your faith?" He is convinced that if a man is sound in doctrine, he will be pure in life. He does not stop with the fragrance and beauty of the blossom of Christian life, but goes down to the roots and digs vigorously there, knowing that thence springs the power of life.

Without spirituality, Jude degenerates into an uncomely and unlovable churchman, like old Lachlan Campbell, in the Bonnie Brier Bush,² whose life-business was theology from Supralapsarianism in Election to the marks of faith in

¹ Jude 24, 25. ² *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush*, p. 105.

a believer's heart," and whose library consisted of some fifty volumes of ancient divinity, over which he poured and droned, by his fireside, of a long winter's night.

But let Jude catch Christ's spirit, give him heart-throb, baptize him with love, and there is no more glorious and magnetic disciple than he,

There is a prejudice against Thaddeus in our times. The world is impatient of doctrinal preaching, damns dogma as dry, and confronts the pulpit retailer of systematic theology with empty galleries and sparsely filled pews.

"Down with theological differences. One creed is as good as another, one church is as good as another, one ritual is as good as another, Down with the dogmas, and up with a polity lax enough for all, and a creed so elastic as to provoke no controversy." That is only the bellowing of baptized paganism, or the rattle of a dead formalism that seeks the rewards of religion without sharing its life. Nevertheless there may be some justice in the complaint that is lodged against a religion that magnifies dogma, to the neglect of duty.

The prejudice against doctrinal preaching arises from confounding dogma with doctrine, There is a vast difference between the two,—all the difference between a living man and a corpse.

Dogma is truth from which all the heart-beat has died. Truth was given to preserve, rather than to be preserved. When it has grown so decrepit that it must be put on the pension list, so frail that it must be placed in a glass case and marked "handle with care," so mummified that it is valuable only for the purposes of a museum, truth has about lost its value to the world; and certainly has lost its drawing and transforming power. It has degenerated from doctrine into dogma, from life to corpse, and the most that can be done is to give it decent burial. When the church must be perpetually rallied and its energies expended in guarding some old dead dogma, faith is in peril of eclipse. The mission of the church is not to stand ceaseless vigil against the ghosts that may prowl around the grave of some ecclesiastical corpse. "Let the dead bury its dead."

If the world should grow weary of dead dogmas, the church need not grow despondent. But to discard religious doctrines on the same ground is as short-sighted as it is fatal. Doctrine is truth incarnate; it is flesh and blood aglow with great convictions. A Christian without doctrines is like a human body without bones. Doctrines are the bone and sinew of duties. It were as easy to hang a planet on a

moonbeam as to have religion without doctrine. The doctrines of religion are its motives. What the fountain is to the river, doctrine is to duty. Duty degenerates into barren, lifeless formalism without the life-throb of conviction.

There is a dead orthodoxy that is ever brandishing, in the face of the church, the grave-clothes of buried by-gones; and that demands, as one has said: "That whenever a man has a new thought on the subject of God, he must build a church to house it in."¹ Let the world tire of this as quickly as it please.

Then there is an orthodoxy which believes that God is as immanent in the church to-day as He was in the days of Luther, making clearer old truths, revealing new truths, until we need not run back to Luther and Calvin for all our creeds. Long live such orthodoxy as this! Its pulse-beat is vigorous. Let it have a large place in the life of the church.

Perhaps the Presbyterians, more nearly than any other denomination of protestant Christians, embody the Thaddean type of religion. They have ever been valiant for doctrine. They have emphasized the decrees, until not a few have imagined this denomination to stand chiefly for

¹ Dr. Thomas before Sunset Club of Chicago.

the defense of the dogma of foreordination; like the Sunday-school boy who jumped to his feet when the superintendent asked "Why are we called Presbyterians?" and replied, "Because we believe in predestination."

An evangelist of the Southern Presbyterian Church, visited a point in western North Carolina where there had never been a preacher of his faith. Being asked by one of the residents, "What is your persuasion?" he replied, "Presbyterian." "O yes," said the old man, "you are the people who believe in procrastination." "No," said the evangelist, "we believe in predestination and practice procrastination."

Presbyterians have given a high place in their creed to the doctrine of predestination, not higher perhaps than is given by Paul, but this is but a single truth in the great system of theology held by this church of the historic creed, whose doctrines have been so vitalized that to-day they lead all denominations in the effort to preach the Gospel to the whole world, sending out and maintaining one third of the total missionary force of the world.

Thus emphasizing doctrine, it is not surprising that Presbyterians have given to Christendom its most distinguished theologians and formulated its most celebrated creeds.

Nevertheless the danger to the School of Jude is ever that men will satisfy themselves with being "sound," and, keeping their creeds on the parchment page or library shelf, imagine that they have done their full duty, by subscribing to a sound doctrinal system.

The King of Abyssinia could discuss, by the day, with the Ambassador of the British government, the fine points of doctrine involved in the two natures of Christ. At the same time he was issuing orders for the cold-blooded slaughter of hundreds of poor victims daily, whose only crime was that of being suspected.

Doctrine must not be left to stand alone any more than duty, and so Christ unites James and John, duty and doctrine, and sends the brothers forth upon a joint apostleship.

III.

In many ways they were mutually helpful.

Duty is strength, doctrine is food. Food is useless without an appetite to feed, and strength wanes unless nourished.

Duty is practical, doctrine is ethical. One is the deeds of life, the other its precepts.

Duty is movement, doctrine is momentum. As well try to divorce wind and air as these two powers.

Duty may become formal, doctrine controversial. Duty is in danger of making too much of its methods, doctrine of its creeds.

Duty degenerates into pharisaism, doctrine into sectarianism; but unite duty and doctrine and once more an apostolic equipoise is reached.

It was remarked that James finds his apostolic succession in the Methodists, Jude in the Presbyterians; so that these brothers in their joint mission, epitomized the blending of the distinctive characteristics of these two great churches.

A lady on a railroad train between Knoxville and Chattanooga, Tenn., in conversation with a delegate on his way to attend a Presbyterian Synod, remarked, "We had the meeting of Conference in Knoxville last week." Being asked whether it was the Conference of the M. E. Church North or the M. E. Church South, she replied that she did not know there was an M. E. Church North and an M. E. Church South. Then after a moment's reflection, her face brightened as she said: "I think it was the M. E. Presbyterian Church!"

The M. E. Presbyterian Church! Would it not be a splendid combination—James and Thaddeus; duty and doctrine; Methodist heart-beat and Presbyterian conviction; the church of

the fiery zeal and the church of the historic creed; enthusiasm and orthodoxy; enthusiasm potential with orthodoxy and orthodoxy aflame with enthusiasm. It would be the most glorious church that ever unfurled the banner of the cross and assayed to preach the Gospel of divine love to a dying world.

Over the doorway of the old Moorish palace, the Alhambra, carved in stone, on one side was a book and on the other, reaching out to clasp it, was a hand. There was a legend that when the hand clasped the book, the Alhambra would fall.

The old Moorish palace is a fitting symbol of that kingdom of evil which is dominant in the earth, and for whose complete downfall and destruction the church goes forth to war. Every sermon is a cannon shot in this war, every holy life is bombardment of evil. When will Satan's stronghold fall, and the victory of the church be complete?

When the hand clasps the book, Alhambra will fall. The hand is the hand of duty, the book is the book of doctrine, and when duty and doctrine touch and clasp in the fullness of their divine meaning and power, the reign of iniquity will crumble to ruin, and hell's foundations quiver and totter to their everlasting downfall.

CHAPTER VII.

SIMON AND JUDAS OR THE ZEALOT AND THE TRAITOR.

"Zealous men are ever displaying to you the strength of their belief, while judicious men are showing you the grounds of it."—Shenstone.

"The punishment of a traitor is death."—Bouvier.

The last and least of all the apostles form the sixth group; Simon Zelotes and Judas Iscariot; the one the apostle of zealotry and the other the apostle of apostacy. It is the strangest group of all. One cannot but wonder whether the evangelistic tour of these two men was not a disaster rather than an advantage to the cause they represented. Where did they go? How did they preach? What miracles did they perform? What impressions did they leave behind? What interpretation of the Christ life did they give? Perhaps Jesus found His way into some hearts, not because of but in spite of the joint apostleship of Simon and Judas.

Not all who have preached Christianity have

helped it. One of the strongest proofs of the divine origin of the Gospel is that it has survived some preaching, and spread notwithstanding its followers.

Simon was a man too good, Judas a man too bad. Exaggerated good and exaggerated bad are made twin comrades. One man was redeemed; the other, so far as we can learn, never was converted.

That Christ actually placed an unsaved man in the college of apostles is strange. It becomes startling when we learn that Christ knew the character of the man before He called him and was fully cognizant of what the end would be.

Perhaps, among other things He intended thus to foreshadow the general character of the visible church for all time. These twelve men are a complete portraiture of the material which Christ saves and through which He does His work in this dispensation of the church militant. They portray the gifts temperaments, classes, conditions, shortcomings, weaknesses, mental peculiarities, frailties, passions, blunders, triumphs, defeats of the followers of the cross for all times and places.

Simon and Judas, standing within the apostolic circle, proclaim that the church will have bad mingled with good; will be eleven parts

good and one part bad. They suggest that tares will grow with the wheat until the harvest.

Church-membership is not an infallible evidence of a redeemed heart. One may be a good churchman but a poor Christian. He may hold office in the church, order its government, shape the ecclesiastical life, and yet himself be "a son of perdition." Judas Iscariot is evidence of the mournful fact that one may be a preacher and go to hell.

Imperfections among those who are the professed followers of Christ are not new. Some modern prophet of unbelief discovers a villain inside a vestment, and empties his lungs with the news that the Gospel is a fraud and Christianity on the decline. He would better recall the career of Judas Iscariot, and understand that the church visible makes no claim to sinless perfection in this dispensation when the membership is composed of those, who, confessing their faults, strive to be made better; and of others who, because its vows do stand for the saintliest life, would cloak their villainies with its stainless robe.

Christ, with the full knowledge of all their faults and hypocrisy, gave Simon and Judas places among the Twelve. What worse material could he have chosen than these two? It looks

as if He had reached the dregs, and could do nothing else than pour out a zealot and a traitor on the church. It would almost seem that, unwilling to mar the career of any other apostle with the companionship of either of these men, and in utter despair of being able to do anything else, He sent them out together.

A more careful study of their peculiar characteristics, however, will discover that there was not less reason for this union than for the five which preceded. These two men were matched, not mated. They needed each other. Simon could do more for Judas than any other apostle, and Judas more for Simon. Indeed we shall find that Christ's wisdom and loving care are nowhere more apparent than in throwing these two men into a joint ministry. They were matched not on the basis of their gifts, as was the case with the ten other disciples, but on the basis of their defects. The traitor was matched against the zealot, the zealot against the traitor, until faults were neutralized, blemishes consecrated, evil restrained, and every modicum of good crowded to the front.

I.

Simon is the apostle of zealotry. All we know of him we get from his name. Sometimes

he is called "Zelotes," sometimes "the Canaanite," or rather "the Canaaneean." Both of these terms mean the same and class Simon as a prominent member of a well-known sect of Christ's time, call "Zealots." Ordinarily it would be hazardous to venture the reading of a man's character from his name. In this instance, however, the materials are sufficient. The characteristics and doings of the Zealots are well known. Josephus has written at length on this subject, and has given a full and vivid account of their tenets and practices. Among other things he says:

"The Zealots grew more insolent, not as deserted by their confederates, but as freed from such men as might hinder their designs, and put some stop to their wickedness. Accordingly they made no longer any delay, nor took any deliberation in their enormous practices, but made use of the shortest methods for all their executions; and what they had once resolved upon, they put in practice sooner than anyone could imagine, but their thirst was chiefly after the blood of valiant men, and men of good families, the one sort of whom they destroyed out of envy, the other out of fear."¹

¹ Josephus' "Wars of the Jews," Book IV, Chap. VI.

They were extremists and fanatics of the most rabid type, who did not hesitate to resort to murder for the vindication of their peculiar religious views. They swore by the Mosaic ritual and believed that it should be maintained at any cost. They baptised violence and robbery with the name of religion and canonized deeds of unbridled license as evidences of sacred zeal. It was to this sect that Simon belonged. He was a prominent member, possibly a ringleader for he is called "the zealot," as though he were the incarnation of zealotry, and the full embodiment of the tenets of his sect. Let it also be remembered that the spirit of inspiration has deemed it worth while to preserve for us this appellation, and to give us not a syllable more from which to form an estimate of Simon. In the Church, as in the world, he is Simon Zelotes, his zealotry consecrated with a holy direction to be sure, but zealotry still and capable of disastrous influence unless heroically hindered.

Simon Zelotes! That is all there is of him. He is a man without a history. The zealot does not make history. He mars it. He is a man whose blind fanaticism is ever carrying him to wild extremes; a sort of crazy Don Quixote in the church, whose crotchets and vagaries are

ever sending him on crusades against ecclesiastical wind-mills.

What are the measurements of the zealot? The scales of the apothecary will weigh him, and a thumb rule will take his dimensions. The zealot is not large. He is an intellectual light weight, incapable of seeing truth in its relations. He colors all with his prejudices. He is known as a bitter partisan and intense ritualist, championing his beggarly forms and starveling rite, as though eternity depended on their vindication; nor hesitating to roast in the purgatorial fires of heresy any who may dare to transgress his ritualism.

The worst feature in his creed is that he believes God is behind all this infamy, and the inspirer and abettor of all the zealot does. His tone is always pious, and he can quote Scripture with amazing facility, in defence of all he advocates.

It was a zealot, who had become so rabid a Prohibitionist that he denounced all voters of the Democratic and Republican tickets as "in league with hell and the devil." He was rebuked by his pastor for such uncharitable language, and reminded that he himself had, only four years before, voted for one of the old

parties. "You were conscientious in casting that ballot then," said the pastor. "Were you at that time in league with hell and the devil?" To which his fanatical parishioner glibly responded: "The times of that ignorance God winked at, but now calleth on all men everywhere to repent."

The zealot is a man whose knowledge is eaten up by zeal. He is an ecclesiastical wasp. In conduct he is precisely what the bigot is in creed. He waves the firebrand of schism in the congregational life, and there leaps up a conflagration.

It was a zealot in the person of a preacher who one day said to a ministerial friend: "Why is it that while you and I hold to the same opinions, I have trouble and you have none?" His friend could not tell him, but entering his church not long after, while the zealous preacher was praying, heard this:

"We commend to Thee the case of four millions of our fellow-beings trodden down under the iron heel of slavery. Now we know, O Lord, that there are persons in this congregation so low, base, and mean, that they do not wish to hear Thy servant pray for the negro, but neither men nor devils can padlock Thy servant's lips, and all hell cannot fetter him."

After service, the ministerial friend remarked: "I can explain now why you have trouble. Any man who will take advantage of a prayer to stigmatize his fellow-men as 'low, base, and mean,' must not only antagonize the saints below, but arouse the saints above to righteous indignation."

Wrongs have been done in the name of religion. Every century has its page of intolerance. Back of flaming stake and dungeon gloom, where earnest faith has glorified conviction with suffering and death, the zealots have stood, gleeful and boastful, imagining that they were serving God by such world-infamous horrors as the slaughter of innocents, St. Bartholomew's massacres, the Inquisition, the Martyrdoms of Scotland.

It is a sufficient condemnation of zealotry that it is offset by apostacy,—Simon on one side of the balance and Judas Iscariot on the other. Perhaps there is a place in nature for the earthquake and the sirocco. At any rate they appear, and inasmuch as the Moral Governor of the Universe "doeth all things well," we must conclude that these disasters are needed in the economy of nature.

Perhaps the zealot is a necessity in the economy of grace. He is needed to wake the dead,

to sting the moribund into activity, to keep an eye on traitors. If one must choose between dead orthodoxy and blind zeal, he can only choose the lesser of two evils. Still life is always preferable to death. The roaring mountain torrent is dangerous, but is preferable to the stagnant pool whose only mission is to breed malarial poison and death dealing microbes. Dead orthodoxy is a stagnant pool, zealotry is a roaring mountain torrent. Of the two, the zealot is preferable. He is all agitation, all zeal, all sail. If enough ballast can be secured, perhaps the ship of Zion will go faster for an occasional zealot.

II.

Judas Iscariot furnishes the ballast. He is all dead weight. His is the most infamous name in all the chronicles of mankind. Nevertheless he was an apostle, with transcendent privileges. For three years in close companionship with the purest life that ever walked this earth, he looked with his own eyes upon the most blessed philanthropy and listened to the highest and loftiest truth ever phrased into human speech. Notwithstanding these glorious opportunities, Judas went day by day deeper

down into the darkness and infamy of a traitor's hell.

Perhaps his character was not so black at first. There was doubtless a time, when to all outward appearances, the career of Judas promised to be as bright as that of any other disciple. But he surrendered himself to an unholy ambition. He entered on a downward trend, and that which lifted other men, damned Judas.

There is no account of his call. But for Christ's statement: "Have not I chosen you twelve?"¹ we would almost be tempted to believe that Iscariot was never called, but impelled by inordinate greed for place and power, he thrust himself into Christ's service.

He was doubtless convinced of Christ's wonderful power, but seems never to have been a true believer in his Messiahship.² He was cursed with covetousness. What more contemptible exhibition of avarice than the sordid greed of Judas over the precious ointment which Mary poured upon Jesus' feet!

After this almost heavenly act of loving devotion to her Master on the part of a woman Christ had helped, the harsh voice of Iscariot

¹ Jno. 6: 70. ² Jno. 6: 64.

breaks in with: "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor?" "This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bore what was put therein."¹

He was the tool of the devil.² His deceit was amazing. As Christ and His disciples were gathered around the table on that fateful Pass-over eve, the announcement is made that the Master will be betrayed. One man at the table understood the full import of those words. Judas had arranged the details, and was only waiting the ripeness of the hour to complete his treachery.

With a boldness of deceit, an effrontery and hypocrisy which defy the powers of language adequately to characterize, this man, who has sold out his apostleship and every vestige of honor for thirty pieces of silver, looks up into Christ's face and asks: "Master, is it I?"³ After this we may not be surprised at any apostacy of which Judas may be guilty.

Detected in his nefarious scheme, he persists.⁴

The climax of the man's infamous career is reached in Gethsemane. Christ is fresh from His agony, Judas from his bargain. Christ has

¹ Jno. 12: 3-8. ² Jno. 13: 27. ³ Matt. 26: 25. ⁴ Jno. 13: 26.

just held a conference with His Father concerning their compact for the world's redemption; Judas has just had a conference with the high-priests concerning their compact for the betrayal of the holiest life that has ever blessed this earth. There in the garden they meet—Judas and Christ, apostle and Master, traitor and Son of God. With the full light of the harvest moon making all vivid and distinct, Judas advances, at the head of the mob, and thrusting his evil face, dark with all the passions of hell, close up to the face of the Son of God, he actually dares to touch lips ablaze with the fires of perdition to the cheek of Jesus, exclaiming: "Hail Master!"¹

All the devils in hell seem for the moment to be incarnate in this apostle of apostacy. No wonder, blessed with privileges so high and falling so low, his should be the blackest name in all the calendar of mankind.

Is there any good to be found in the career of Judas? Yes, he was overcome by an awful remorse. Surely that is something in a villain's favor. He went out and hanged himself. This too must be set down to his credit; not that suicide is ever justifiable, but that the re-

¹ Matt. 26: 49.

remorse which drove this man to end his wretched life indicates that he was far from being insensible to the enormity of his crime. It is also to Judas' credit that he hanged himself before Christ was crucified. The apostate died before his Master whom he had betrayed. It looks as if he could not endure facing the consequences of a deed whose awful reach he had not contemplated; and, frenzied with despair, he took his own life.

The two sides of Judas' life, the betrayal and the remorse, the apostacy and the suicide, do not hang well together. A criminal capable of selling out his manhood and all that life holds of honor, for less than \$20.00 is not usually troubled with remorse. His callousness has reached a degree of utter indifference to all save self-preservation. Judas is driven to self-destruction.

What is the explanation? How comes it that a man with the cunning of a serpent and the treachery of a fiend is so sensitive of his crime that life becomes intolerable and he kills himself?

It is very evident that the ordinary theory which explains Judas' betrayal of Christ, by his greed for money, is wholly inadequate. That was something, but not all. It looks as if he

never contemplated the possibility of Christ's defeat. He had seen Him frequently extricate Himself from greater dangers than the mob which invaded Gethsemane that night. Why could He not do so again? Judas was growing impatient of Christ's long delay in declaring Himself king. He believed in Jesus' destiny, even if he did not practice His teachings. He was ambitious for place and power under this new king. To him the time seems most propitious for a dénouement. The people have hailed with their heart's homage Christ's entry into Jerusalem, and but a word seems needed now to pass the crisis and reach the throne. Still Christ wavers and hesitates. With the astuteness of a politician, Judas determines to force an issue, believing that when Christ finds His enemies hard upon Him, no other alternative will be left Him but to beat them down and sweep on to victory.

To his utter amazement and discomfiture, Christ surrenders and is led away to trial. Judas' heart dies within him. He is bewildered, dazed. His brain reels, reason staggers, his disappointment is unutterable, and mad with remorse, in the frenzy of his utter and abject despair, he takes his own life.

This theory of Judas' crime is no apology for

his apostacy. Still it needs not that he be painted blacker than he really is.

Was Judas lost? It is strange that such a question should ever be raised? Fiction can throw the gauze of saintliness around the devil himself, and fiction has been doing its best for Judas Iscariot; until there are those who, getting their theology from modern novelists, rather than the Bible, wonder whether after all, they will not meet Judas in heaven? Here is the light which the New Testament throws on the fate of Iscariot.

He is referred to by the disciples as a "traitor,"¹ and under this title he goes down in church history. In the early part of his ministry, Christ referring to Judas, says: "One of you is a devil."² Later he declares: "It would have been good for him if he had not been born."³ In John 17: 12, occurs the expression "The son of perdition is lost," and the reference is almost certainly to Judas. On the opening page of the Acts, Peter declares that Judas fell and "went to his own place."⁴

Surely the heaven that such statements predict cannot be beatific. If heaven is a place congenial to the spirit that betrayed Christ on earth, it degenerates into an awful torment.

¹ Luke 6: 16. ² Jno. 6: 70. ³ Matt. 26: 24. ⁴ Acts 1: 25.

Judas is a terrible warning to any who may be drawn to religion by aught less than Christ. He bartered, calculated, counted, was doomed. The mercenary spirit is antipodal of the Christian. One must leave barter behind him when he starts out to serve God. He must venture wholly. Like Epaphroditus he must not hesitate to "hazard his life" if needs be for Christ.

Judas is an illustration of the downward trend of an unsanctified ambition; and a fearful example of his ruin who sells honor for wordly gain.

III.

Simon and Judas! What a group to preach the Gospel! And yet is it not evident that each man was less dangerous because the other was his comrade? They were extremes to each other. Mold the two into one man and the extremes of each are less pronounced.

Simon made Judas a better man than he otherwise would have been. He watched him. John with his love or Philip with his dullness or Jude with his head full of dogmas would have made a poor detective. Simon naturally suspicious, and heedless of feelings where zeal drove him, argus-eyed and waspish, was the man of all others for Judas to fear; and doubtless the very presence of Simon kept Judas more correct in

conduct. In addition to this, by the very heat of his fiery zeal, Simon forced Judas to think on spiritual things, and to give some consideration, even if he withheld his heart, to the ideas of the Gospel.

On the other hand Judas made Simon a more serviceable man than he otherwise would have been. He was ballast to Simon's zeal. By his utter lack of sympathy, he toned down his ardor from fanaticism to something like common sense. He was a block of ice to the hot temperament of the fiery zealot.

The zealot is all momentum, the traitor is all gravity. Christ unites them and the zealot acquires gravity, while the traitor acquires momentum.

The zealot is all velocity, the traitor is all stagnation. Christ unites them and there is less of either.

The zealot is all centrifugality, the traitor is all centripetality. Matched against each other they both come nearer the safe middle.

The zealot is the license of religion, the traitor is the license of irreligion. Fuse the two and the passions of each are cooled, until license is reduced to liberty.

The zealot is overbearing intolerance, the traitor is overvaulting ambition. Sent forth

side by side, one becomes more endurable, the other more considerate.

The zealot lives at the boiling point, the traitor at the freezing point. One is all fire, the other all ice. Make them touch and life's temperature stands at 70 degrees, where living is comfortable.

The zealot damages the church by his rashness, the traitor by his infidelity. The traitor keeps the zealot from fanaticism, the zealot keeps the traitor from embezzlement.

Both are danger signals. Anyone but the Son of God would have given up in despair before such material, but Christ links them together and while failing to produce an ideal apostleship, limits the evil in each to the minimum.

Thus these men would tell us that Christ is careful of our very faults. If there is the barest possibility of any good in any man, His is the magic presence to evoke it. He can consecrate anything, even zealotry. We may not have the gifts of Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James Jr., or Jude. We may be only a bundle of contradictions, a failure, the blemished exaggeration of some little good. We come to the Master just as we are, and lay our very disfigurements down

in the divine presence. Christ touches them,
and directly they begin to grow wings, until on
the pinions of our weaknesses we mount to
something better than we ever otherwise could
be.

“Thus looking within and around us, we ever renew
(With that stoop of the soul which in bending, upraises
it too)

The submission of man's nothing perfect to God's all
complete,

As by each new obeisance of spirit, we climb to His
feet.”¹

¹ Browning.

CHAPTER VIII.

SAUL OF TARSUS OR THE COLLEGE OF APOSTLES IN ONE MAN.

"Paul, a servant of God, and apostle of Christ."—Letter to Titus.

Saul of Tarsus, the bitterest of all persecutors, converted became the greatest of all apostles. He was not great after any worldly fashion, but the world will not let his name die. He sacrificed everything for a conviction and went up and down the earth preaching an old, old story; but the man fills a larger place in the world's thought and heart as the years go by, and every century makes more lustrous the crown of his immortality.

The apostacy of Judas Iscariot left a vacant place in "the Twelve." One of the first things for the apostles to do was to choose a successor. They selected Matthias for the vacancy. His election seems to have been a mistake; for so far as the sacred narrative informs us, Matthias never amounted to anything.

By and by God elects a man to the vacancy.

He selects the most aggressive and influential enemy of the infant church,—Saul of Tarsus,—and transforms him into the profoundest theologian, the most tireless missionary, the most astute debater, the most successful worker, the most glorious exponent of apostolic Christianity.

God foreordained Paul to an apostleship, before ever man ordained him. He received his bishopric straight from the Almighty, and church-courts could not improve it. If there were more men in the ministry to-day, entering from motives as high, and living as free from the entanglements of the world, the conquest of divine truth would be amazingly accelerated.

I.

Glimpses of the man are given, prior to his conversion. He must have removed from Tarsus to Jerusalem when he was a mere lad, perhaps not more than ten or fifteen years old. Even then, he was probably a good Greek scholar. At Jerusalem, he sat at the feet of the famous Jewish rabbi, Gamaliel, where he was "instructed according to the strict manner of the law of the fathers."¹

¹ Acts 22: 3.

Always a man of strong conviction, he acted from high conscientious motives. Even when persecuting the defenceless disciples of Christ, he believed he was doing God service.

Then comes the intensely dramatic incident of his conversion. It was a profound spiritual experience, in which Paul saw the face of Jesus, and heard the never-to-be-forgotten question: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"¹

He surrendered at once. One of his credentials as an apostle must be to see Christ after His resurrection, and God gave the greatest of all the apostles his credentials in this miraculous way.

There follow three years of meditation and preparation which were probably spent in the Arabian desert.² Call this "Paul's course in the School of Christ," for he tells us that "he conferred not with flesh and blood."³ Three years at the feet of Jesus; three years of spiritual tutelage; three years of heart experience of the Gospel, and then—the work!

What a work it was! Those three years had not been wasted. Time spent in preparation is never wasted. It took Moses eighty years to get ready to do forty years' work.

¹ Acts 9: 4 ² Gal. 1: 17, 18. ³ Gal. 1: 16.

The other apostles tarried forty days at Jerusalem for their enduement; Paul tarried three years for his. It was worth while.

What a work the man did! His career is marvelous. Tireless in activity, steadfast in purpose, scourged, imprisoned, shipwrecked, sometimes left for dead by brutal mobs, deserted by false friends, but always proclaiming the glad Gospel of a risen Christ, Paul swept like a flaming evangel around the then known world. He sounds the key-note of his ministry when he avows,—“I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”¹

The man fills a large and radiant place in the early church. The Acts of the Apostles are really the Acts of one of the Apostles—Paul. He is the author of half the books of the New Testament and the ablest expounder of the doctrines of Christianity.

He is sometimes called “the Presbyterian apostle,” perhaps because the members of that denomination are so fond of buttressing their tenets with citations from his writings; perhaps because Presbyterians insist on a more literal interpretation of certain mooted passages in his epistles; perhaps because the Presbyterian the-

¹ 1 Cor. 2: 2.

ology is more distinctively Pauline. Paul was himself the greatest teacher of that system of divinity of which Augustine and John Calvin have since been famous expounders. Divine Sovereignty is the bed-rock truth of the system, and connected inseparably with this are the great doctrines of unconditional election, particular redemption, total depravity, efficacious grace, and final perseverance.

Whether Paul is more a Presbyterian or more a Methodist or more a Congregationalist, we need not discuss.

He is too great to be shut up within the limits of any single denomination. Just as Phillips Brooks and Charles H. Spurgeon and John Knox and John Wesley and Martin Luther and Francis Xavier belong to all the churches, so Saint Paul, the most potential product of apostolic Christianity, belongs to all Christendom in all ages.

II.

A volume instead of a chapter is needed for the character and career of Paul. We must content ourselves with a single phase—that set forth in the caption of the chapter. Paul was the entire college of apostles in himself. The others were sent out two and two. He went out alone.

He had companions to be sure, and he was cheered by their presence and sympathy, but they were not his apostolic compeers.

In studying "the Twelve," it has been noticed that each apostle stood for some special trait or gift. All of these meet in Paul. He was perhaps the most versatile man the church has ever known. There is a length and breadth, a height and depth about the man and all he does that classes him as colossal.

Peter and Andrew were extremist and conservative, Paul was both. He could be as bold and venturesome as ever Simon Peter dared to be and then he could outrank our Scotch friend Andrew for caution. It is Paul the extremist whom we discover in a hundred perils, recklessly hazarding his life for the name of the Lord Jesus. It is Paul the conservative whom we hear admonishing Timothy to hold fast to the Bible of his mother and grandmother. Paul was radical in his methods and conservative in his principles. This is the ideal blending of extremism and conservatism. The fanatic carries his radicalism into his principles, and supposing that truths change as easily as methods, does not hesitate to cast anything overboard which hinders the accomplishment of his purpose. He is at heart a Jesuit, and practically makes the end

justify the means. The moss-back carries his conservatism into his methods. He will die trying to do the thing "the way it always has been done." Making the mistake of supposing the way a thing is done is as important as the reason for doing it, he becomes essentially a pharisee. Both fanatics and moss-backs are disastrous to any cause. Paul was neither. He keeps the moral focus well adjusted. When it came to the way, the method, the custom, he was "all things to all men";¹ when it came to a principle he would "give place in the way of subjection, no not for an hour."²

James and John epitomized old age and youth, experience and enthusiasm. Paul was a blended likeness of the two. He was still a young man at his conversion,³ and his whole career is full of that bounding and buoyant enthusiasm native to youth. Hear him singing songs in the Philippian jail. Had we stood without that night and listened, we would probably have said: "Just some young enthusiastic Christian Endeavorers in there, whose religious syllabub is brimming over."

Yet with all his enthusiasm, Paul had an experience of the Gospel in his own soul, that

¹ 1 Cor. 9: 22. ² Gal. 2: 5. ³ Acts 7: 68.

makes him an example to all believers. Never was old age crowned more royally than when Paul the aged, standing in the glow of life's sunset, said: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give to me at that day."¹

Paul incarnates the Christian ideal of youth and old age. What is needed is that the best of both shall be resident in the same individual. Let us have the enthusiasm of youth tempered with the judgment of age. Let us have the experience of age vitalized with the enterprise of youth. To the young the Gospel says: "Let no man despise thy youth." To the old the Gospel says: "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age." Christ enables a man to grow young as he grows old. What Victor Hugo once said of himself may be true of all those who go down into old age in fellowship with Christ: "Winter is on my head but eternal summer is in my heart."

Philip and Bartholomew, the dullard and the sage, also blend in Paul.

Paul was not a dullard himself to be sure, but

¹2 Tim. 4: 7, 8.

he made the fundamentals of the Gospel so plain that any dullard could apprehend them; and at the same time he could take the profoundest philosopher beyond his depths. Peter says that Paul wrote some things "hard to be understood."¹ When Peter can bring himself to an admission like that, we may rest assured that the thought is abstruse.

Sometimes mist is mistaken for depth and a man is called profound because he cannot be understood. Paul's depth is not mist. He does not bid us bow down before a fog bank to worship. Occultism and theosophy may do so, but Christianity does not perplex. Paul discusses truths that are as vast as eternity but the atmosphere around us is as clear as noonday, and the veriest dullard need never lose his bearings.

Thomas and Matthew combined doubt and conviction.

Was Paul ever a doubting Thomas? What shall we say of the period lying between Stephen's martyrdom and Paul's conversion? Paul saw Stephen die. He beheld the rapt look that lit up the face of the proto-martyr, as he caught the seraphic vision of his Lord coming down out of the glory to meet him. Does it not look as if

¹Pet. 3: 26.

Paul's faith in the old order received a shock then from which it never recovered? "May be after all these Christians are right. May be Jesus is the Son of God." That is the doubt that came, but Paul is unwilling to yield, and throwing himself into bitterest hostility to the Christian Church, he tries to consume doubt with zeal. Is not this a plausible explanation of what otherwise seems unnatural conduct? Whether so or not, certain it is that Paul knew how to sympathize with honest doubt. He has set forth the true method of dealing with all those who have intellectual difficulties about questions of religion. "Him that is weak in faith receive ye, yet not for decision of doubts."¹

About Paul's convictions there can be no question. Like Matthew he did not hesitate for an instant when the call came, nor did he ever waver after once entering upon Christ's service. He never gives forth an uncertain testimony. He has voiced the summit note of conviction when he says: "I know whom I have believed."²

So Paul had enough of Thomas in his make-up to sympathize with whoever was troubled by honest doubt, but enough of Matthew also never

¹ Rom. 14: 1. ² 2 Tim. 1: 12.

to falter in his own allegiance to Christ.

James and Thaddeus, the duty and doctrine group, meet perhaps more plainly than any of the others, in the character of Paul. Paul is certainly doctrinal. His epistles are the doctrinal thesaurus of Christianity. All of the creeds go back to Paul for their vindication. Nevertheless his emphasis upon duty is none the less pronounced. The man himself is a magnificent illustration of doctrine translated into duty. He is no theological Dr. Dry-as-dust, living in a cloister, and droning away over sapless dogma, but a great missionary, a flaming evangelist. Paul's epistles are "doctrine," his life "duty." Even his epistles cannot be brought to a close until the whole doctrinal dynamics is packed into a chapter of duties.

Paul was a splendid and notable illustration of the union of great brain and big heart. Usually we regard the two as antipodal. Mental culture is at the expense of heart warmth. A man of fervid impulses is an intellectual lightweight. In Paul however both head and heart were at the maximum. Let a single selection from his writings suffice to illustrate. Towards the close of the eighth chapter of Romans, he writes: "Whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many

brethren: and whom he foreordained, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

There truths, as big as eternity, are massed in solid phalanx. Brain-beat is at the maximum.

But note the tremendous transition a few lines farther on: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? . . . I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

There the blood is jumping furious as a torrent. Heart-beat is at the maximum. Foreordination and inseparable love linked! The iron decrees and the pulse throb of God!

Paul is sometimes regarded as coldly speculative, dealing with religion in the abstract, but this does him great injustice.

When the Ephesian elders bade Paul goodbye, they all wept sore, and fell on his neck, and kissed him sorrowing most of all that they should see his face no more.¹ Surely a frigid, doctrinal icicle could never have inspired such tender and ardent friendships.

Simon the zealot and Judas the traitor remain.

¹ Acts 20: 37, 38.

Was there aught in common between these men and Saul of Tarsus?

Paul was certainly a zealot before his conversion, and occasionally so afterwards, but he was kept from injuring the Church by the balance of his splendid judgment and sanctified common sense. Then as to Judas Iscariot, there was this in common. Like Judas, Paul's worldly ambition was great. Who can read his letter to the Philippians without being impressed with this? "If any other man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more."¹ There was this vital difference, however, between the two men: The ambition of Judas was self-centered. It consumed him. Paul nailed his ambition to the cross of Christ, crucified it; then, like his Lord, his cross became his crown.

III.

Such is the man whom Christ sets before the church as the last and greatest of the apostles, embodying in himself the graces and gifts of all the others.

"Set Mark Hopkins on one end of a log and a boy on the other, and you have a university," says someone. Place the apostle Paul anywhere and a lost sinner before him, and you have the

¹ Phil. 3: 4.

church and its mission. All there is of a church, outside of such a man—ritual, vestment, architecture, music, is infinitesimal in comparison.

Paul is the product of Christianity. He is himself impregnable evidence of the divinity of the Gospel which he preached. Reject his dogmas if you please, criticise his premises, shrug your shoulders at his conclusions; what will you do with the man? Such lives are not accidents. Skepticism and infidelity shrivel lean and gaunt in the kingly presence of such a splendid type of Christian manhood.

Paul shows what one man can be by God's grace, and what one man can do in a single generation if his heart is aflame with the love of God. A dozen such would turn the world upside down.

Still this man was not a companion of Christ's earthly ministry. He was a spirit-taught disciple. He had no more than what is accessible to the common, average Christian of to-day.

Despite his glorious service the man had a hard time. His career was one unbroken threnody of suffering; but Paul did not complain. He did not whine. He gloried in tribulations, and rejoiced to fill up that which was "lacking of the afflictions of Christ."¹

¹ Col. 1:24.

If ever anyone might have professed sanctification it was Paul; but none was farther from it than he. About the year A. D. 57, he said he was the least of the apostles.¹ Four years later he said he was the least of all saints.² Five years after this he confesses that he is the chief of sinners.³ As he grew in greatness, he grew in humility. As he approached nearer to the radiant person of Christ, his own imperfections became more apparent.

The unbelief which is intolerant of Paul's teachings and which sounds a blatant protest against what it characterizes as his "dogmatism," demands that Paul be "revised," "toned down," "modernized."

But Paul's thought is too great for the world ever to let it die; and his life too redolent of blessed self-sacrifice for the world ever to revise. Attacks on the man and his doctrine there will be as long as men prefer the easy to the heroic, but the man and his doctrine will survive as long as God crowns suffering and honors heroism. After his critics have found oblivion, the great apostle will still stand before the world as a glorious and immortal type of Christian manhood, and the old Gospel which he proclaimed, will still be the light and life of men.

¹ Cor. 15:9. ² Ephes. 3:8. ³ 1 Tim. 1:15, 16.

CHAPTER IX.

APOSTOLIC LESSONS.

"A church to be apostolic must have ministers powerful in preaching, and members mighty in prayer."—W. Arthur.

We have been in the companionship of the men who stood closest to Christ in the dawn of the church and who became the first preachers and inspired expounders of Christianity. They launched the "old Ship of Zion," and it will not be wholly without profit to linger a little longer in the glow of their presence, and note the truths which remain after the men who embodied them have passed.

I.

All of these apostles were men of like passions with ourselves. There is not a perfect man among them. Peter denied, Thomas doubted, even Paul had an unseemly contention with gentle, sweet-spirited Barnabas. The Bible is

careful to tell the whole story. It does not attempt to gloss over glaring defects. There is no effort at veneering. It is a plain, straightforward, unvarnished story that is told. The church is composed of precisely the same material still,—people with limitations of head and heart, and ever prone to make mistakes. The Bible does not canonize the apostles. The church, in some ages has attempted to do so; but the Scriptures hold these men up as encouragements rather than examples. They show what Christ can make out of next to nothing, and are full of cheer to all who try to do their best.

The militant church will probably never be higher in the average of its piety, nearer to perfection in the type of Christian character it produces, than was the college of apostles. Moral and spiritual progress for anyone to-day begins as low down as it did with Peter and Thomas, and must pass through precisely the same stages, encounter the same hindrances and be helped by the same grace.

We stand on the shoulders of all who have gone before us, as regards knowledge, discovery and invention; so that with truth it may be said that a child in our public schools to-day may know more than did Plato; and an ordinary man

may wield more power than did the gods of the ancients. But when it comes to brain-culture, all men stand on the same level and must pass through the same struggle and application to achieve similar results.

So is it with moral and spiritual culture. The church has achieved bulk and acquired property, but human nature is the same now that it was in the days of Paul. In the acquisition of personal holiness, we do not stand on the shoulders of all the saints of past ages. We must begin just where Peter and James began, and it is not likely that we shall be more perfect than they before we die. After we have reached our best in personal holiness, there will still be need for Christ to supplement our virtues and neutralize our faults.

II.

The apostles were a miniature portrait of the constituent elements of the church for all time to come. Christ linked these twelve men in groups of two and sent them out. Each uniting link itself stands for a definite factor of Christianity. Two men supplemented each other and by their joint ministry created a more perfect apostleship; but the basis on which they were united is itself significant.

Peter and Andrew, extremist and conservative, fused their energies and the product was a *force*, that was aggressive without being erratic, and conservative without being stagnant. The church is a force. It has momentum. It is felt everywhere—a force flexible and fixed, radical in its methods and definite in its convictions, aggressive enough to destroy error; conservative enough to preserve and perpetuate truth.

James and John, old age and youth, suggest the *personnel* of the church, whose membership sweeps the whole gamut of humanity. The Gospel is for all classes and conditions. It touches the infant's brow with its baptismal water, and glorifies old age with its benediction. It bends over childhood and says: "Suffer the little children to come unto me"; and it lays its hands upon the whitening locks of many winters and affirms: "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness."¹

Philip and Bartholomew, dullard and sage, differ in their mental grasp of religious truth. They portray the *thought* element in religion. The church has a definite system of truth. It proclaims a creed. Christianity invites investigation. It does not create saintly character as

¹ Prov. 16: 31.

a mill grinds flour, by pouring so much grain into the hopper and turning out the finished product. Its demand is "search, investigate."

Thomas and Matthew differ in the degree of their faith. The faith of Thomas was mingled with doubt, that of Matthew was absolute. Together they stand for the *heart* element in religion. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Christians live by faith. It is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. It endures as seeing him who is invisible. Its most potential realities are those it never sees or hears but knows by trust.

But divine truth must not stop with a head and heart faith. "Faith without works is dead." Therefore we must pass on to the fifth group of apostles, one of whom is the very man to give us the cardinal maxim of faith and works.

James and Thaddeus, the duty and doctrine group, blended and the product was sanctified *activity*. They stand for practical Christianity and show us how doctrine is translated into duty, conviction into conduct, faith into works. They stand for the highest worship, which is not cult but service.

Let us see now how far the portrait of the church has been given in these first ten apostles.

The church is a definite force as epitomized in Peter and Andrew, working out through all classes as epitomized in James and John, who apprehend divine truth with their minds as epitomized in Philip and Bartholomew, embrace it with their hearts as epitomized in Thomas and Matthew, and practice it in their lives as epitomized in James and Thaddeus.

This would give a perfect church, but the church is not perfect; and so Christ adds another group to the apostolic company, forecasting the blemishes of the church. Simon Zelotes and Judas Iscariot blended their faults. One was exaggerated good, the other exaggerated evil. They were united on the basis of their defects, and indicate that despite all of its tremendous influence, its race-wide following, its glorious truths, mighty faith and sanctified activities, the church may still blunder into zealotry and at times become apostate.

Such is the portrait of church life in that age. Such are its main and constituent elements as prefigured in the characters and careers of the first little group of believers who held a common faith and served a common Lord. Such has been church-life, whether the disciples were twelve or twelve million, whether the century was one or nineteen. The painter who could

pack all the future into such a small landscape was divine!

III.

From these men we hear how Christ deals with our imperfections and limitations. He does not damn us for our faults. That is left for us to do in our treatment of one another. We would have suspended Simon Peter from the sealing ordinances of the church. We would have rebuked Philip for his stupidity, canonized Thaddeus for his bigotry, anathematized Simon for his zealotry, excommunicated Thomas for his doubts and burned Judas Iscariot at the stake.

Not so Christ. With Him a peculiar weakness in a disciple was not a fault to condemn, but an infirmity to supplement. He gives us the setting that will show each off to the best advantage, and places us in the environment that will evoke our highest usefulness.

Christ does not dower us with new natural powers when He redeems us. He does not change the caution of Andrew into the daring of Peter; nor does He give the sagacity of Bartholomew to slow-thinking Philip. We have the same minds, the same temperaments as before, but here is what Christ does. He gives all

this a new direction. He causes it to move in harmony with the divine purpose.

It makes a mighty difference whether the current of human activity runs across God's purpose or beside it. It is the difference between absolute failure and inevitable success.

A brooklet can do nothing but babble. But let it find a way into the great river, lose its murmur in the deep onflowing of the majestic stream that slakes the thirst of cities and turns the industries of the world; and the hour will come when the little brook will have its share in all this splendid achievement. The spring branch has not lost itself; it has only gained the river.

So is it with the life which God redeems. It loses its murmur in the deep of God's purpose, but it is glorified by all that God achieves. It can no more fail than God can fail. It moves majestically on to the accomplishment of what omniscience has planned and omnipotence must execute. The saved man has not lost himself; he has only gained God!

IV.

The apostles are an object lesson on the breadth and flexibility of the church as an organization. Men narrow the church. They

build sectarian walls and try to exhaust Christianity with a sect; but there is room for all the sects within the ample embrace of the mother church.

The church of Christ is the most catholic organization on earth. It knows no color line, no sex line, no geographical line, no culture line, no wealth line, no year line.

There is room in the church for all sorts of gifts. God can consecrate anything, the shepherd's crook of Moses, the sling of David, the song of Miriam, the impetuosity of Peter, the flaming zeal of Paul. He can utilize fanaticism, dress up old-fogyism, glorify stupidity and exalt learning.

There is room in the church for all sorts of people. It is not necessary that a man cease to be himself to serve God. Unless the Almighty made a mistake in your creation, the best thing you can do is to be yourself—yourself redeemed. The ideal church has a membership that stamps out caste, and joins hands with all classes. For a congregation to be made up of a "certain class" of people, is in itself condemnation. The true church will be preaching the Gospel to all sorts of people and gathering every class into the cheer of its fellowship. The ideal church session is composed of men representing di-

verse tastes, varied callings, different stations, different ages, manifold gifts.

There is room in the church for all the denominations. Perhaps some of the sects are superfluous, but God can make something out of a Simon Zelotes denomination as easily as out of a Simon Zelotes apostle. The denominations, in the economy of grace, have served purposes of good. Each has represented some special tendency in doctrine or practice, each has had in larger measure than its sister denominations some special gift.

What we need is not denominational death, but church harmony, not uniformity but unity. It would be as natural for the hand to wage war against the body because it has an ambition to be the body, as for the various denominations to be at strife because each wants to be all of Christianity.

The mission of the church will best be gained by every part of the church standing in its God-given place, and exercising its God-given grace to meet God-given opportunity.

The story is told of two staunch Scotch Presbyterians, one, Johnny Morton, a keen Burgher; the other Andrew Gebbie, a decided Anti-burgher. They quarrelled with each other, until so bitter grew their contention that they ceased to

Speak to each other. They lived in opposite ends of the same house, and by rental agreement each was to keep his side of the house well thatched. One day both happened to be on the roof at the same time, each repairing the thatch in the slope on his side; and when they had worked to the top, they suddenly confronted each other, face to face. They could not run. They could only stand and glower into the enemy's front.

At last Andrew took off his cap, and scratching his head, said: "Johnny, you and me, I think, ha'e been very foolish to dispute as we ha'e dune concerning Christ's will aboot our kirks, until we ha'e clean forgot His will aboot ourselves; and so we ha'e fought sae bitterly for what we ca' the truth, that it has ended in spite. Whatever's wrong, it can never be right to be unkind, unneighborly, in fac tae hate ane anither. Na, na! that's the deevil's wark, and na God's. Noo it strikes me, that maybe it's wi the kirk as wi this house—ye're warking on a'e side, and me on the tither; but, if we only do our wark weel, we will meet at the top at last. Gie us your han' auld neighbor."

The Scotchman's philosophy was sound. What God wants each denomination, no less than each believer to do is to be faithful in his

place, and if we do our work well, we shall meet at the top at last.

The church of the future will be flexible. If it is ever one in form, it will become one on the same basis that made the twelve apostles one—work! It will not be the Presbyterian denomination, nor the Methodist denomination, nor the Baptist denomination, nor the Episcopal denomination, but it will have all of these as “the Twelve” had Andrew, Peter, James and John.

In the church of the future there will not be an immobile ritual nor an inflexible polity, but there will be room, room!—room enough for Christ and the Bible, and for all those in every age and of every condition who turn toward the cross and are determined to do their mightiest for God and their race.

CHAPTER X.

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION.

"Successors in the apostolate of truth."—The Forum.

What is it to be a successor of the apostles? The phrase "apostolic succession" is a sectarian shibboleth that would discredit the ordination of nine-tenths of the active ministry of Protestant Christendom. Is there any such "succession" foreshadowed in the ministerial career of the twelve men whose lives we have been studying?

In the very nature of the case the apostles can have no successors in *office*. They were raised up in a unique era, for a definite and specific work. They were to be the witnesses of Christ's resurrection, and they were to certify their testimony with impregnable vouchments.

Paul asks, "Am I not an apostle? have I not seen Jesus our Lord?"¹ Is not the inference plain that unless he had seen Jesus the Lord,

¹ 1 Cor. 9: 1.

he could never have claimed to be an apostle? Writing to these same Christians, Paul adds: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty deeds."¹

An apostle then, was one who had seen the risen Christ, and who could certify his testimony thereto by signs and wonders and mighty deeds. When any man claims to be a successor to the apostolic office, it is in order to ask if he has seen the risen Christ and if he can prove it by working miracles. Then it will be time enough to give serious attention to his claims.

The only "apostolic succession" possible is to share with "the Twelve" a common service and experience which did not cease with the apostolic age. With this larger and more liberal interpretation of the phrase, what is apostolic succession?

Evidently it is not the sort of thing that passes down on the fingers of prelates. The grace that can be transmitted only through a long line of fallible men, some of these men notoriously imperfect and impure, must in the nature of the case be weak and diluted ere it reaches its destination. It were better to go straight to

¹ 2 Cor. 12: 12.

God for holy orders. You cannot make a lawyer out of a ream of legal cap and a volume of the state code; you cannot make a physician out of a box of pills and a case of instruments; you cannot make a merchant out of a show-window and a full-page advertisement in the daily paper; you cannot make a soldier out of a sword and a suit of regimentals; you cannot make a minister of the Gospel out of vestments and the "historic episcopate." It may be that you cannot make a minister of a certain denomination of the church without such insignia, but to say that they are essential in the making of a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is to take considerable liberty with the English language.

In all ages, great numbers of the most godly, most influential, most useful ministers of the Gospel have not had the "historic episcopate," and have not cared to have it.

Paul was not made an apostle by the other apostles. God ordained him, and if "the Twelve" had kept their hands on him until doomsday they could not have improved his apostleship. "The seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord,"¹ writes the greatest of all the apostles to his converts.

¹ 1 Cor. 9:2.

Instead of trying to trace his ecclesiastical ancestry back to the pope of Rome, over the hands of ritualistic bishoprics, it were better for the minister to look to the fruits of his work and see what God thinks of his ordination.

This is not crying down an ordained ministry, but let it be clearly understood what ordination means and what are its limitations. It does not confer grace. It is for the sake of decency and order. It invests with the authority of the court ordaining. It proceeds on the supposition that the mind of the entire church is more likely to apprehend the whole truth, than the mind of any single member of the church. Hence the church makes its symbol, to which the candidate pledges allegiance, whereupon he is ordained. Ordination is conferred upon those who presumably have already been called of God. Above the twelve apostles is the Christ who called them. He is still calling men and women to this service. Let us be sure that we get our call from Him.

Away with ecclesiastical trumpery, and up with vital, spiritual, dynamic Christianity!

To be a successor of the apostles is to hear Christ say, "Follow me," and then with the splendid resolution of a Matthew, to arise and follow Him.

To be a successor of the apostles is to lay whatever gift one has, on the altar of Christ, that He may touch it with His grace, until it shall be purified, supplemented, transformed, glorified.

To be a successor of the apostles is to be a member of that great household of faith, who believe in, love, and live the Christ.

"So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner stone."¹

To accept Christ with an old-fashioned faith, to follow Him with an old-fashioned devotion, to preach Him with an old-fashioned fervor; and to count all else as small in comparison with this, is to be crowned with the real dignity and power of apostolic succession.

Christ called and Peter, Andrew, James, John—the Twelve, answered. They served and passed. Nearly all of them suffered martyrdom. But that was not the last of those men. The world speaks their names with an ever-deepening reverence, and worships at the shrine of

¹ Ephes. 2: 19-20.

their Redeemer with a richer homage. Nor is that all. John, by and by gets a glimpse of eternity, and there emblazoned in the twelve foundations of heaven itself as an everlasting memorial of their imperishable greatness, shine "the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."¹

All hail to the Twelve! And all hail to that goodly company of their successors in all ages, who, exercising the "apostolate of truth" have turned their faces towards Jesus and, catching the light, have cried: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!"²

¹Rev. 21: 14. ²Jno. 1: 29.

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