

Sermon by Geo. C. Hall

[Text—Rom. V. 5. "God commends His love to us that we will be reconciled to Him through the blood of His Son, much more having been reconciled to Him through the blood of His Son, much more shall we be reconciled to Him through the blood of His Son..."]

(CONCLUDED FROM LAST WEEK.)

As Jesus said to them of the temple, "ye build the tombs of the prophets and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, saying, 'had we been in the days of our fathers we would not have been partakers in the blood of the prophets' (we would not have crucified the Christ,) yet are we the true children of them that killed the prophets (crucified Christ.) Ye fill up the measure of your fathers. Behold I will send unto you prophets, wise men, scribes; some of them ye will kill and crucify, others ye will scourge and persecute. Upon you shall come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, even upon this generation" (Matt. XXIII. 29-34.)

It is human selfishness that denies its relationship to love's Lord and His right to rule within. It is human selfishness that, for wealth, betrays Him with a kiss. So far as we are selfish we have condemned Him before our souls' tribunal, and slapped Him in the face. Selfishness puts a crown of thorns on love's bleeding brow, and scourges Him with that which is worse than Roman whips. So far as we are selfish we stand in Pilate's judgment hall, with malignant Jews, to cry crucify Him, crucify Him—release unto us Barabbas—give us a robber in His stead. And selfishness sits on Pilate's judgment seat, ambitious yet cowardly; truckling to public opinion, to give the Christ to them that cry out for His blood. The selfish see Him bear the heavy cross alone along the way of sorrows, careless of its awful weight and indifferent to the sufferings of Him that bears it.

12. Love prays for us. "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." And in our ignorance lies our only hope of forgiveness—in our enlightenment our only hope of reconciliation with our Father, God, and with our brother man. Hearing love's prayer how can we but fall at the foot of the cross, melted into deep contrition, to cry, "Father forgive for Jesus' sake." Yet our selfishness mocks and jeers at dying love, gives gall and vinegar for drink, and wounds His pulseless heart with a spear.

"Was it for crimes that I have done He groaned upon the tree? Amazing pity grace unknown and love beyond degree."

"Surely He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, on Him was laid the iniquity of us all." 13. But "with His stripes we are healed." "God commends His love to us that we being sinners Christ died for us."

While Christ was the victim of my sin, and of the sin of the world, He was more, infinitely more than that. He was love's eternal sacrifice to redeem the world. "God so loved the world," and "God commends His love to us that we being sinners Christ died for us." Viewed as love's sacrifice, we see no wrath, no enmity in the cross. "All the light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime." The intolerance, the jealousy, the malignity, the cruelty, the hate is all gone, as the light of heaven breaks from it, dispelling the darkness of our world. We then see in it nothing but love, mercy, spirituality, tenderness and forbearance, world-embracing. The voice of the Christ comes to our ears from it. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth (from the sensual the gross and the selfish), will draw all men unto me"—unto me in love, spirituality and refinement. As that voice is heard, the cross becomes the magnet of attraction for human uplift to earth's remotest most degraded confine, and that too for all ages.

Paul said "we judge this—that if one died for all; then are all dead"—to self. All who have seen, felt and appropriated the love of God in Christ Jesus have died to self. Such live to self no longer, but unto Him who as love's sacrifice died for us, unto Him who by love's power and authority rose again to conquer selfishness by love—"to lead captivity captive"—all such have been saved by the power of God in the cross. The Lamb of God hath borne away the sin of the world from the hearts of them that have seen, loved and followed the Christ of love, giving wealth, personal distinction, ease and worldly comfort, giving all a willing sacrifice for human redemption. No longer do such put self in God's place in the heart, no longer does selfishness extinguish brother love within, for self is crucified with Christ and God in love reigns supreme. Though crucified with Christ yet they live more truly and nobly, for, living to themselves no longer, Christ lives in them. The true resurrection has taken place, (Oh the soul's glad Easter morn!) God in love reigns supreme within. The reign of unflinching love is gone, and filial love now fills and thrills them, whereby they cry, Abba Father.

14. In finding the Fatherhood of God we always find the brotherhood of man. No where else is it ever truly found except in the Fatherhood of God. They who do not recognize the brotherhood of

man have never found the Fatherhood of God. "He that saith he loves God and loveth not his brother is a liar." He that truly loves God will love what "God so loved." "God commends His love to us that we being sinners Christ died for us." Oh the God for sinners expiated on Calvary!

15. Seeing there pictured in living characters the agony of God's heart on account of sin and its ruin, they, who love God are ever moved to become saviours of men, saviours of society, saviours of the world. They are moved to deny self, to take up the cross and follow Jesus down into deep Gethsemane of misery, woe and sorrow, and up rugged steep of Calvary of self sacrificing love. One with God, they look with His eyes of pitying sorrow upon a world perishing in its sin. "The love of Christ constraineth" them to live for Him in saving a world of men—to die with Him in the world's redemption, and, by the authority and power of eternal love, to be raised with Him and to bring "life and immortality to light" in this world of spiritual darkness "through the gospel."

It is the constraining power of Christ love in Christian hearts that must save the world from the awful thrall of sin—from the heartless, cruel, degrading, damning reign of selfishness. Some rulers in the Christ life and the life of Christ will rule the world in love.

16. This Christ was incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth. He has always been in the world. Since the beginning of human history, He has ever been in the world seeking recognition and reception, but "the world knew him not." "He came unto His own and his own knew him not. But to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." Yet how few received Him! One here, one there in the centuries received the Christ. Not till Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and became the sinless one, did He receive full recognition and find full reception. Jesus, the sinless man, was a fitting instrument for the full manifestation of eternal love and the only one in all the ages. In Him the Christ of God was made flesh and dwelt among us, showing us the heart of our Father in Heaven. He only among men could say "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "The love of God in Christ who can tell it? We may feel its constraining power but words will not express it. It found expression—it was manifested in the life of Jesus."

17. The life of Jesus as manifested by His loves, was like and unlike our life loves. He felt the sweet power of domestic attachment so much that on the cross He forgot His own agony, in His solitude for His mother's temporal welfare. He felt the charm of domestic life, rejoicing at a wedding, loving the children, and also feeling the sadness of its sorrows, weeping in sympathy with the bereavement of the Mary and the Martha of the quiet home in Bethany where He was wont to retire from His public labors. He knew the sacred power of friendship with its human sympathy and helpfulness, and cared for His friends so much that He once bade His disciples come apart from love's labors to rest awhile lest they might be overworked. "Having loved His own He loved them to the end." He loved His country, and its capital, Jerusalem, the city of David, about which clustered historic associations dear to His heart; and when He saw approaching desolation He wept with patriotic sorrow. He saw the poor, degraded, down-trodden mass of His own countrymen bearing nearly all the burdens of society with little of its compensations, and was moved with compassion for them, and also with indignation toward their oppressors. Looking over the walls of Judaism at the world's mad strife, He beheld it perishing in selfishness working ruin everywhere. Going down into Gethsemane He sweat drops of blood as the world's woe rolled in upon Him. But, obeying the impulse of eternal love, He stretched His hands toward the cross, feeling that, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." This is the love that God commends to us in the cross.

18. Domestic attachment was a blessed thing in Jesus, and may be such in us. But in us it is more or less mixed with animal instinct and is often poisoned with selfishness. But the love of Christ is spiritual, lifting above animality, leading those who have felt its power to forsake homes, dear ones, and friendship's charming circle, when necessary, to go on love's errands of salvation into the misery of society, and into the dark places of the earth. While patriotism was grand in Jesus, and may be grand in us, yet when it finds expression in national selfishness, or limits love to national boundaries, it is narrow and mean as compared with the love of God in Christ. Jesus, moved with compassion for hungry distressed multitudes, fed them and ministered to their distresses; and while this is ever part of love's noble work, yet philanthropy and benevolence are cool and tame as compared with the love of God in Christ. Indeed such love was peculiar to Christ, never having found expression in humanity till He was made flesh in Jesus of Nazareth. It has since fired the souls of millions of devoted men and women, and it now fires the hearts of tens of thousands. This love was the very life of Christ, and it is the soul of Christianity.

Love is life—All creation was born out of Christ love. Love is life—selfishness is death. He that loveth as Jesus loved is born of God and knoweth God; for God is love. Love is the eternal life of God. "God hath given eternal life to this world, and this life is in His Son." "He that hath the Son hath eternal life. He that hath not the Son hath not eternal life."

THE STATE FLOWER

A Plea for the Golden-Rod

From the earliest history, mankind has made use of flowers and foliage as emblems. The Greek athletes was prouder of his wreath of olive or laurel, than he would have been of a circlet of gold. Many of the gods and goddesses had their sacred flowers. Modern cities and nations have often, formally, or merely by popular sentiment, adopted certain flowers or plants to represent the peculiar traits of their people. So we have England, the queen of nations, choosing the rose, the queen of flowers. The Emerald Isle is known everywhere by "the little green sham-rock." The sturdy Scotch love their hardy thistle, wearing, above its rough coat, the regal color. France has her royal lilies and her modest violet which stirs yet the hard heart of the admirer of Napoleon. And so the list grows.

This is but natural. As flowers are the poetry of nature, so the poetic

instincts of all mankind turn to them for sympathy and expression.

A national flower for this country has been much discussed of late years. But so far, we believe, no formal action has been taken by congress. In the meantime why should not each state adopt its peculiar emblem? There is not much of poetry or sentiment in a ribbon badge with the label "Nebraska." How much more satisfactory to pin on your lappet a bright blossom and so be recognized everywhere as the son of one of the grandest states in this grand union of ours.

Our legislature is now considering a resolution favoring the golden-rod as our state flower, and we believe, in passing it they would make a wise choice. The violet is well known over the state, but that is already interwoven with the history of our country. The sunflower is brave, bright and handsome, even if plebeian and somewhat over-bold; but that belongs to our sister state, Kansas. Probably there is only one real rival to golden-rod, its close associate, the purple aster. But for many reasons, notably uniformity of color, the golden-rod is preferable. There is probably not a nook or corner of the state where one or more of the numerous specimens are not found. It is a native, and only a true native should be our representative.

It has a long season, though poets have always associated it with late autumn. The finest specimens are found in August, and the latest flowers brighten sheltered places late in October. Its courage under hardship is admirable, and nothing could better represent the hardy endurance of Nebraska's pioneers. It is both beautiful and graceful, so much so that, if it grew only in greenhouses, the rich would be ready to spend their gold for it. But now it is free to the poorest, blooming in every door-yard and orchard, along every village and suburban street.

The golden-rod is admirably adapted to decorative purposes, both indoors and out. It keeps its freshness for days after cutting, and even dries well, which is a rare good quality among flowers.

Its color is the most beautiful in nature: the color of the sunshine; the color of our King Corn; the color of gold, most precious of metals. Yet no one can accuse golden-rod of being a mono-metallic; for much of the foliage shows decidedly a silvery cast, for surely the gold and the green are kept on a parity.

Another good point is, that rarely does it become a troublesome weed, so Nebraska ladies need not be shocked by hearing their Josiah grow about "having trouble enough pull the dumdum things out of their own meadows."

In appearance the many species so closely resemble one another that all may recognize it readily after seeing one specimen. Probably the species most worthy of adoption is the Solidago Serotina, recommended by Prof. Bessey.

It may be objected that the flower has no history. But neither have we, comparatively. Let the new flower and the new state link names and fates, and in another twenty-five years both will be looked upon with more respect than now.

It would be easy, we believe, to find five thousand Nebraskans sufficiently interested in this matter to sign a request to the "powers that be" that henceforth we be represented by Lady Golden-rod.

IDA BROCKMAN, Stella, Nebraska.

Arion and Marcellus

Arion and Marcellus were twin brothers descended from the most illustrious families of southern Europe.

On arriving at manhood, their parents being both dead, they came into possession of such vast wealth, that their chief care was how to make the best use of it. Arion's wealth came to him from his father, Marcellus was his mother's heir, with the exception of a small annuity to his cousin Lucius.

The brothers were alike generous and energetic, but differed widely in their pursuits.

Arion's desire was to travel, and instruct men in useful arts. He soon became famous in the construction of bridges, canals, ships, dwelling houses, and princely mansions. He always paid his workmen fair wages, took an interest in their welfare, and mixed freely with them in their out-door amusements. But that was not all. He argued justly that the profit of his vast undertakings was as much the result of their labor as of his wealth.

"What!" said he, "Shall I avail myself of the advantage of their combined skill and labor to enrich myself alone? Their wages keep them alive, it is true; but when the work is done, what then? Shall they famish? Not so!" So he made them partakers of his gains.

His brother Marcellus was a student, and soon became a high dignitary in the church. He beheld with a pitying eye, the suffering masses of humanity, exhausted by poverty; often desolated by war; that inhuman occupation, in which the rich and great pay the poor to kill one another. He built schools, hospitals and houses of refuge for the poor and afflicted. His good name was known far and wide.

In the meanwhile their cousin Lucius saw the growing renown of the brothers with envy. He also coveted their wealth. He first attempted to sow discord in their hearts; but their fraternal love was too great. With the outside public he was more successful. He blamed the strict discipline of Marcellus and the like principles of Arion. By a plausible oration on freedom he persuaded people to build meeting-houses, lecture halls, and schools, and commence a new system of teaching to undermine the good work of Marcellus. Having a smooth tongue he persuaded many rich people to embark in larger undertakings than Arion's, promising the work people great rewards and loaning them money to buy land and build on "their own" (?)

Thus he gained many adherents, but in a short time they found themselves little better than bondsmen to Lucius and his crew.

They could not even pay interest. And so lost their homes and became vagrants and paupers.

As for the vast army of orators who had sprung up here, there, and everywhere, they certainly contrived to fill their own pockets; they flattered the rich and patronized the poor, but what permanent good resulted from their fine oratory?

Arion returning from a long journey soon saw the state of affairs and hastened to call upon his brother Marcellus, who thus addressed him: "Behold! My dear



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Arion the bad results of false teaching and erroneous ideas of progress, the industry of the masses serves but to enrich a few to the prejudice of the many; the very teachers are, in fact, little better than the paid agents of the rich.

"Quite true," replied Arion, "but the system I have adopted with my workmen will upset the schemes of Lucius, and the plan would be generally followed if you give it the sanction of your high place and power."

"And why should I not?" said Marcellus. "Surely the cry of the poor has gone up to Him whose ears are open. My influence shall be used to aid your designs of benevolence. The growing tyranny of wealth must be controlled."

And thus Marcellus, the great teacher, recognizing in his brother's conduct the life and essence of practical christianity; entered into a firm alliance with Arion, the friend of labour, the advocate of equal rights.

Thus combined what could withstand their power? (Many people thought they never would combine, but they did.) GEO. C. SPENCER.

The Songs of Samyowl

editor wealth makers lincoln nebraska dear sur az yew dont approve uv james whitkom riley (& i am in perfect akkord with yew) i enklos sum versus which i think yew will find more seawtable tew the times yours trewly sam fonagraf rok a by farmer hi up a gum tree gold dollars grow bigger when silver aint free & prises keep tumblin & never wunse stop till the sherrif scoops in the farm & the crop but evrythins luvly & awl thets rekwired is konfydantse gawl & a mind thets awl-fired 2 pay of them store bills & settle the rent & keep in good standin with old 10 per cent

so toil away farmer & dont ever stop jus werk like the dikkens saw wood & then chop go hitch up the mewel teem & fetch up sum water sing whissel & danse if yew aint werth a kwatar

but avoid awl reformers & tend 2 the farm keep votin old tikkets & spark theskool marm til yew smel them red herrins this wun iz free trade the utthers pertekshun billy makinlys old jane

& if et gets tuffer eech yeer az yew farm et dont ever yew say et wuz pollytika darn et fer evrythins luvly & awl thets rekwired iz faith 2 pay store bills & rent & get fired

& when that big note 2 old shilok kums dew jus say 2 him shilok yew no iz itez grow iz faith 2 him payk notes in thez trow-iz times (hiz reply wood look wel in respektubel rimes)

now let us ajern 2 sam fonagrafs farm & the hi graded mewels that puzzess such a charm fer gold bases lewis & also faith kew-ristis til thay suddently find thay ar heavenly tewristis

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