

IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD

What the Church Folk Are Thinking About and Doing.
News From Various Lands. Suggestive Words From Many Men.

...Sunday School Lesson and Young People's Topic...

Comments by William T. Ellis.

WHEN MEN FIND LEVEL.

Kipling's "Ship That Found Herself" came to that knowledge in the storm. Trouble tests; it is the wind which proves whether the metal be gold or brass. Before the presence of a real sorrow all artificial distinctions among men flee away. The king at his son's bier is no longer a king, but only an anguished father.

The nobleman who figures centrally in the story which is today's Sunday school lesson moved in another world from Jesus. He was in "society"; Jesus was beyond the pale, with the other poor people. The humble sabbath place as a suppliant at the bedside of a well-to-do man had been a welcome between the two was an insuperable social barrier; and it would have been an insult to the nobleman to ask which one of the two was the greater.

But when trouble came, and when he was face to face with an elemental grief—such a passion as moved in the breast of a father in the stone age—the nobleman was forced to take his place as a suppliant at the feet of Jesus. Then the men found their respective levels, and it was the great one who was looking upward. For all his hope for the health of his son lay in the compassion of this world-renowned Teacher. He gazed along pretty well in the serene days without religion, and they even affect to look down upon the preacher; but when death comes knocking at the door of their homes they send for the minister in a hurry. As the epigrammatist has put it, "Some men have to be thrown flat on their backs before they will look up to heaven."

The Really Great Questions. The president of the United States, who is famous as a preacher, has recently pointed out that the real "living issues" are not those which concern the tariff, the trusts, international treaties, and like questions of statecraft; but that they are rather those problems which concern the home, the family, and the moral character of the individual. If a man's wife is lying at the point of death he cares little whether a high or low tariff is in effect. The conduct of a first born son, who is inclined to be wild, the progress of an only daughter at school, the cunning ways of a new child or grandchild—these are matters of greater moment to a man than any of the business deals to which he devotes his days.

What did Herod's chief steward care about his title or position or honors, while his boy suffered? The one profoundly interesting subject in all the world to him was the son's health. Nothing else counted in his sight just then. And it was in this intensely human attitude that Jesus approached Herod for succor. The Master would not have cared about any question of title or property; but he could not resist the appeal of a needy spirit. For it is as such that men have access to God; not as kings and lords and aristocrats and plutocrats, but simply as living souls craving help.

The Briefest Biography. Peter condensed the biography of Jesus into five words—"Who went about doing good." Service was His life mission. He could not resist an appeal to help a man in need. This is the heart of the matter, when he came supplicating assistance. We are nearer to God in our need than in our self-sufficiency. The publican's prayer for help is heard while the Pharisee's boast of self-sufficiency is wasted. The best possible credentials for approaching God is a consciousness of necessity and helplessness.

So great was this father's sense of urgent need that he came up from the city of Capernaum, where his home was, to the town of Cana, where he found Jesus was there. The story of the first miracle at Cana, when the water was made wine, was undoubtedly familiar to him, and he knew that God's supernatural power was then displayed could save the little one who lay at the point of death. He did not wait for Jesus to come to Capernaum; he fulfilled the first condition of a miracle by doing everything in his own power to bring about the desired result. Official etiquette might have required that he send a servant with a message to the Healer to come down; but parental love could not wait upon the ways of ceremony. Indeed, in his instant request that Jesus should come down to Capernaum at once, we see the selfishness of sorrow; he had not thought of the possible weariness of Jesus, or anything else than his own great need, which he believed the Master could meet. His story shows small consideration for doctors.

The World's Great Need. The story is altogether a lesson in faith. That is why it is told. With all his shortcomings the nobleman really believed in Christ. He had that genius for faith which is the deepest quality of the human mind. The cynicism of ancient Rome, which likewise cursed our own time, had not touched him, or else its veneer had been swept away by the torrent of his grief. The nobleman displayed that which the Son of Man says He will seek in the earth when He returns again—faith.

It must be granted that much of the culture of our day runs to a shallow cynicism. The average man of the world is inclined to scoff at piety, at honor, at innocence, virtue, and like things. The faces that excite pleasure and love in the breasts of beholders are the faces filled with the light of a beautiful spirit, faces on which is written the story of a heart of unselfishness. There is no such cosmetic as self-sacrificing service. That is why the faces of our saintly mothers come to old age in a sweet and mellow ripeness of countenance that is nothing less than real beauty.

On this continent the idler is made to feel uncomfortable. No matter how great his wealth, unless he wants to be looked upon as a fool or a weakling, he is expected to do something to justify his existence. Service is counted manly. The world honors its workers,

who have lost that priceless treasure, a capacity for faith. To live at all in happiness we must trust; better death than total unbelief in men and God.

The Fire in Wales. What the father asked was nothing less than life itself. It was a daring request. But it was justified. For this Man had life to give. That was His higher love than simply to cure the sick. The distressed father asked greatly, and greatly was he rewarded. For he accepted in confidence the simple assurance, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." True, the distance was twenty-five miles between Physician and patient, and the like of this wonder had never been known before. Nevertheless, he believed, and it was done unto him according to his faith.

Is the story any more wonderful than the other miracles of Jesus? He transformed five loaves and two fishes into bread for five thousand men, and the like of this wonder had never been known before. Nevertheless, he believed, and it was done unto him according to his faith. Is the story any more wonderful than the other miracles of Jesus? He transformed five loaves and two fishes into bread for five thousand men, and the like of this wonder had never been known before. Nevertheless, he believed, and it was done unto him according to his faith.

THE REAL KNIGHTHOOD.

The paradoxical Christ is the author of the new universal law which declares that they are the greatest who serve the most, and that there is no higher honor than simply to help a man. His name came to earth to be a king, but He proved His royalty by His ministry. In all the reaches of His career there was not a single life touched that was too lowly to be freely accorded His service. The blind and lame, the leper, the outcast, the publican, and the great multitude of the undisciplined and unappreciative—of them all there was none to whom He did not lavishly pour out His best and noblest ministry. He literally "emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant." "Wherefore," the narrative significantly continues, "God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."

Service is the badge of true knight-hood. The pessimist is not prone to withhold his word of gloom, and we have all heard how this good word of ours is growing worse and worse; that truth and honor and loveliness have flown; and that only selfishness remains. One good antidote for all such pessimism is to sit down and count over the men and women and institutions, within one's personal knowledge, that are following in the train of the self-denying Christ. Consider those who are spending themselves for love's sake, the servants of humanity, the friends of the race, the watch for the self-obliterating acts of helpfulness which are daily being performed on every hand. They ask yourself, "Can the world which is so thoroughly leavened with the spirit of Jesus?"

Who is the "prime minister" of a state, but its first servant? And where do the undershepherds of Christ get their title of "ministers," except by virtue of having devoted themselves to the service of the flock. So transformed has the world become by the teachings of the lowly Messiah, that today "minister" is a title of honor, more proudly worn than that of master.

Self-surrender is the first law of heaven; self-interest is the first law of hell.

Service is the livery of heaven. A baby's interests all center in himself. He has no thought for others. Complete and unmitigated selfishness is the law of infancy. That all of life should minister to him is natural; and his baby eyes people, things, the moon in the sky, exist only for his service. This is because he is a baby. As he grows older he attains a better knowledge of the scheme of things. He perceives that he must give as well as get, serve as well as be served. And when he has reached manhood's stature he discerns, unless his spirit growth has been stunted, that the noblest law of life, the highest purpose of existence, is self-surrendering ministry to other people.

Service is immortal. They live forever who live in other lives. The women's magazines abound in prescriptions for looking beautiful. All of them are superficial, for there is no more distressing or painful face to be seen on the street or in the drawing room than that of the woman who has given years to the cultivation of her appearance and at last finds her most frantic efforts unable to overtake the course of nature. True beauty is soul deep. The faces that excite pleasure and love in the breasts of beholders are the faces filled with the light of a beautiful spirit, faces on which is written the story of a heart of unselfishness. There is no such cosmetic as self-sacrificing service. That is why the faces of our saintly mothers come to old age in a sweet and mellow ripeness of countenance that is nothing less than real beauty.

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jective case in every language is bound and determined to be "the whole thing." Arithmetic alone is founded on a rock. All else is fleeting, and else is futile, chaotic—a waste of time. What is reading but a rival of morphine? There are probably as many men in prison, sent there by reading, as by rum.

Light Literature. Fight it out! It's an even thing between the two of you; literature and liquor, books and booze—which can take a man's mind off his business most effectually.

but most of all those who work for the world's weal.

Service is the only true standard of success.

By a few strong strokes Robert E. Speer outlines in The Sunday School Times the principle of service as it animated Jesus. "The Son of God voluntarily chose this life of service. It was a moral self-limitation of his life. He rejected the principle of the world, and asserted instead a different principle—of restraint, of service, of self-sacrifice, not self-indulgence. He took upon him the form of a servant. No one compelled him to do it. He chose it. Here is a lesson for us—the glory of voluntary self-limitation. Some one says, 'Oh, I don't propose to be looked down upon. I am going to have my rights. I intend to attain to a place of power and authority. Self-abnegation is not my doctrine. I believe in assertion, push, in getting my share. No one shall walk over me.' How different the way of Jesus! He humbled himself. He took on him the form of a servant. He submitted to shame and death. And now? Is there any throne above His throne?"

Service is the royal road to greatness. Selfishness is the supreme heresy; the service the supreme orthodoxy. No man who, in the fashion of Jesus, pours out his life for his fellowmen, can be far from the kingdom of heaven; while, on the other hand, no amount of crying, "Lord, Lord," nor taking the place of obedience to God's will for human welfare.

NEWS AND NOTES.

The 12th of February is appointed by the World's Student Federation as a day of prayer for students.

New Hampshire has a commission representing the leading denominations which aims to cover the over-churching of the towns and the promotion of comity among the churches.

New York's "hotel chaplain," Rev. Dr. W. Warren, is now holding religious services in the dining rooms of a number of hotels. Dr. Warren devotes his entire time to ministering to hotel guests.

The leading figure in the religious revival which is sweeping over Wales is Evan Roberts, a miner, 26 years old, who is preparing to enter the ministry.

Bishop Wake of the Methodist Episcopal church says that "Ten times as many children have been taught in Porto Rico during the six years of American administration as in the 400 previous years of Spanish misrule."

The first instance of the union of churches of several different countries has been formed in England in the form of a union of the members of the non-conformist churches say is a battle for religious liberty, has been made more acute by a decision of the courts disfranchising those "passive resisters" ministers who have refused to pay the obnoxious tax.

In Germany the social democracy has become so bitterly anti-Christian, even disbarring church members from all office, that a reaction has set in, and "Christian unions" of workmen are now being formed. These unions are by no means necessarily members of churches or believers therein, but they protest against the avowed infidelity of the social democracy.

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Three missionary cows were taken to Hingua, South China, last month by a Methodist missionary. When this missionary went to China fourteen years ago he had no cows had ever been used for dairy purposes, but only as beasts of burden. Under the American's instructions from two to four quarts of milk a day was obtained from the cows and sold as medicine for the sick and for infants at a rate corresponding to about a dollar a quart in this country. The three selected animals that have just been taken to China are expected to raise the quality of the Chinese cows to the point of producing ten or twelve quarts a day, thus greatly benefitting the poor.

SEVEN SENTENCE SERMONS.

Obedience is the organ of spiritua knowledge.—Robertson.

Life is not so short but that there is always time enough for courtesy.—Emerson.

Why comes temptation, but for man to And master and make crouch beneath his feet.

The way to preserve the peace of the church is to preserve the purity of it.—Matthew Henry.

Heaven's gifts are not so highly arched as princes' palaces; they that enter there must go upon their knees.—Webster.

Life is a leaf of paper white. Whichever side of it I may write His word or two, and then comes night. Greatly begin! Though thou have time But for a line, be that sublime. Not failure, but low aim is crime.—Lowell.

What is the true test of character unless it be its progressive development in the bustle and turmoil of the action, and reaction, of daily life?—Goethe.

Timing an Egg.

London Truth. Cooks are often accused of want of method, but the Aunt Dinah in Howard Paul's new egg story is not open to any such reproach. Invariably, when she put the eggs in a saucpan she began singing "Rock of Ages," and sang through two verses.

"Aunt Dinah," asked Mr. Paul, "are there not three verses in that hymn?" "Dar is, massa, but I sings only two when I wants 'em soft and three when I wants 'em hard."

His other egg story is good, too. He was traveling on a Pennsylvania Railway, and when his breakfast was being the eggs were underdone.

"What time are we making on this train?" he asked the waiter.

"A mile a minute, sir."

"Then boil the eggs another mile and they'll be quite right."

Yes, indeed. "Ah, my poor man," said the housewife, "I suppose you have been in many a tight place?"

"I was in ten saloons yesterday and every one was tight in each place."

Light Literature. Washington Star: "You're getting gloomier every day," said the solicitous friend. "Why don't you read some light literature?"

"That's a trouble now. I've been reading my gas bill."

IN THE SHADOW OF SHAME

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Author of "The Dis of Destiny," "An Excellent Knave," Etc.

Mackworth on leaving the hospital drove directly to the flat in which Valerius Galbraith lived. Gaining this, the inspector was at once admitted and shown into the handsomely furnished sitting room, where he waited with the impatience of one who has important business to communicate; taking off his gloves, stretching, and placing them on the table, opening his great coat, glancing at himself in the glass, and smoothing down his hair meaningly.

It was 7 o'clock when he entered the room, but half an hour had elapsed before Valerius appeared, attired in evening dress, his Inverness cape on one arm, his gloves in his right hand, his air, handsome face lightly flushed, an air of grace and distinction in the movements of his slight, well made figure.

"Excuse me for having kept you so long," he said, "but I was dressing for dinner, to which I am going out."

"I would not have disturbed you, but that I have something very serious to say," replied Mackworth deliberately and reprovingly, he being displeased at having to wait so long.

"Very serious?" replied Valerius. "I am sorry to have—" then pausing suddenly in his sentence as his eyes met Mackworth's, he added in a quick, anxious voice, "You have made a discovery—"

"Not exactly a discovery—but the man I suspected—"

"Who is that?" Valerius demanded sharply.

"The man you spoke of a couple of days ago."

"Oh, Mr. Bostock, of course! Is he dead?" Galbraith asked, as he flung his gloves and cloak upon the table.

"Not yet."

"Then what about him?"

"I have made a confession."

"A confession?"

"Of the murder of David Dumbarton."

Valerius seized the chair nearest him, and then remained motionless and speechless, the questioning, penetrating look in his eyes, the strained, intense eagerness on his face showing the interest he felt.

"Early in the afternoon," continued the inspector, "the house surgeon saw Mr. Bostock had not long to live, and when this was made plain to him he at once expressed his desire to make a testamentary statement, when Mr. Coris was sent for, and the confession taken down in a formal manner in the presence of a magistrate."

"And he clearly confessed that he had killed David Dumbarton?" said Valerius, the concern he felt apparent in the troubled tones of his voice.

"They met that night in the Hixton road when a quarrel arose which ended in a fatal blow," the inspector said.

"That was how it happened?"

"As I suspected."

"Bostock still lives?"

"For all I know he may be dead at this moment."

"He cannot recover?"

"His death is but a question of time."

"And Mrs. Dumbarton's innocence is proved?"

"Beyond doubt."

Valerius, after a second's profound silence, walked to the end of the room and touched the little knob of an electric bell. When it was answered he bade the servant bring brandy and soda, and these having been placed before him, he turned to his guest and himself. His throat had been dry, his nerves unstrung, and this stimulant helped to renovate and steady him.

"Here is the end of this terrible suspense and mystery," he said, as he set down his empty tumbler.

"An unexpected turning, sir."

"Ah! but a welcome ending," Valerius exclaimed triumphantly.

"Welcome?" queried the inspector, raising his brows.

"Why not? I had not spoken you night never have been able to find your man, never."

"I won't say that, sir."

"You won't?"

"I was on his track; I had suspected him for some time, and I must have found the evidence I sought sooner or later."

"Be content that it is sooner, and that he has escaped the penalty of his crime," said Valerius cheerfully.

"But I don't get the credit of making his discovery."

"Who was ever yet satisfied?" said Valerius laughing; and then out of the full measure of his good humor, thinking he could afford to be complimentary, he added, "and besides, the force does not need another proof of your cleverness."

"For all that I should like to have given one," replied Mackworth, well pleased by the remark.

had already conveyed to him. Knowing there were no news criers in St. John's Wood, and that the evening editions of papers were slow to arrive at that suburb, he believed the account would not yet have reached his cousin; but he saw likewise he had no time to spare if he would first convey the tidings of George Bostock's confession.

On reaching the house he was told Mrs. Dumbarton was at dinner, when, without standing on ceremony he entered the dining room.

"It's Valerius," exclaimed Veronica, who faced the door.

Oliver Dumbarton rose, and with outstretched hand went towards him, saying, "You have almost finished, but if you will dine here the dishes can be brought back."

"No thanks," he answered. "I didn't come to dine, but—but to tell you something." And he glanced at the servant.

His cousin noticed the restraint he sought to exercise over his excitement, and her thoughts reverted to the dread tragedy from which they were seldom separated. But she made no reply until the maid had left the room, when Oliver Dumbarton turned to him expectantly, pale from her fear of that unknown event of which he had come to tell.

"And now he was before her he scarcely knew how to begin, until suddenly he plunged into his subject saying:

"I suppose you have not heard of Bostock lately?"

"I have not seen nor heard from him for some days," she replied, somewhat surprised by his question.

"You were not likely to have seen him; he has met with an accident of which I didn't like to tell you before, lest it might add to your worries."

"Nothin' serious, I hope?" she said quickly.

He noticed the sudden anxiety which came into her face, and that her hands trembled, and resenting this betrayal of her concern, he said roughly:

"Serious enough; a kick from a horse's hoof has used a compound fracture of the skull."

"Oh, how terrible!" Veronica exclaimed pitifully.

Oliver Dumbarton said nothing, but the sudden pallor of her face and the tremor of her hand above the region of her heart told what she felt.

"He was taken to the hospital, and—"

"Why did you not tell me—why did you not tell me before?" Oliver Dumbarton cried out reproachfully.

Her words but served to irritate Valerius, who asked,

"What could you do?"

"I would have gone to him," she answered bravely.

"Why not? He was the best friend I had in the world; and now he may be dying," she said, her eyes full of tears.

"He is dying," Valerius replied in a harsh voice, in which his triumph was apparent.

"Dying?" she whispered.

Without any feeling of compassion he saw the appealing look in her eyes, the twitching of her white lips.

"Dying?" she murmured again, eager that he should unsay the word.

His anger and jealousy rose at sight of her pain, and losing all control over himself, he cried out:

"And there, is nothing in that you need regret, for your innocence was dying; he has vindicated your innocence."

She looked at him with questioning eyes, her mind not understanding the drift of his words.

"What do you mean?" she asked in a low, tremulous voice.

"That having but a few hours to live, he confessed to murdering your husband," Valerius bluntly exclaimed with a vindictiveness of which he was scarce conscious.

"George Bostock?"

"Yes."

A flush of color came to her face, a look of energy to her eyes, as she rose and said:

"It is false—it is false."

"It is true," answered Valerius. "His confession was taken down by George Coris, and signed by witnesses. You may read an account of it here," and he produced the newspaper.

"It is not that; no matter what he has confessed he has never committed the crime."

"You have his own word—his oath," Valerius replied, his excitement increasing.

"But don't you see, cannot you understand?" she exclaimed, "a look of tenderness upon her worn face, an expression of pride in her luminous eyes. He has done this to save me from my fate. But I will not accept his sacrifice, living or dead his memory shall be cleared from this crime."

"Olive are you mad?"

"No, no, I am sane enough to see what he has done has merely been for my sake. He is innocent."

"The world will believe his own word—his sworn testimony."

"Then it shall be my duty to prove his innocence."

Valerius already pale with excitement rose up and in a burst of anger shouted:

"You love him—you love him!"

She raised her head and her calm eyes met the furious gaze of the man before her, as she answered slowly, and with something of defiance in her voice:

"I love him."

Valerius laughed mockingly, and then almost shouted:

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