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### RELIGION MADE ATTRACTIVE. A RIGHT AND A WRONG WAY.

In the "Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon," we find a letter addressed to her by the Dutchess of Buckingham, in which the disrelish of the natural heart for the humbling truths of the gospel is confessed without disguise. The writer, after referring to the "Methodist" preachers of the day, proceeds to say "their doctrines are most repulsive. It is monstrous to be told that you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl the earth. This is highly offensive and insulting."

But this Phariseism of English aristocracy is nothing more than the Phariseism of our fallen nature. It scorns the Publican and the Publican's humility. It demands for itself a proud religion. Offensive doctrines must be pared down. Disagreeable truths must be disguised, and the presentation of the gospel must be governed more by the sympathies and tastes of the fastidious hearer, than by the authority of its Divine author.

It has become in many cases a question of absorbing interest, how religion can be made most palatable—how its repulsiveness to the natural heart can be most effectually disguised. The practical answer that is given is not always wisest or best. To conquer the world we must not begin by borrowing from it. This was the secret of the rapid temporary success, but of the final failure of many of the Jesuit missions. Religion has its own legitimate adornments, but they are not borrowed from the world's wardrobe. No doubt piety has been often made needlessly repulsive. It has been set as a picture in an ungainly frame. It has been associated with narrow views and unreasoned scruples. It has elevated matters indifferent to the rank of essentials. It has been invested with tone and gesture and garb that were merely sanctimonious. It has been sharply hedged about with precise habits and angular forms. No wonder that careless hearers were wearied out with the long prayers of the Puritan preachers. No wonder Lord Bolingbroke rose disgusted from the perusal of Dr. Manton's long dry sermons on the 119th Psalm, and felt predisposed to be an infidel. Scotch Presbyterianism in the days of the Covenant risked its altar to guard the tent-pins. New England Puritanism was never the sweeter to the inner man for denying mince pies to the outer man on Christmas. No doubt an excessive prejudice against harmless sports and indulgences has done mischief. God did not make the world so beautiful that we might turn it sombre by smothering the spectacles of our religion. An exquisite piece of art is not necessarily a Dagon, nor is propriety of garb necessarily a sin of pride.

Nor should any one deny religion those ornaments or associations which are id keeping with its character, or which are not unbecoming its presence. Angularity is not piety, nor is boorishness a proof of principle. Paul was ready to become all things to all men that he might gain some, only he would not forget that we must all stand at the judgment seat of Christ. The sweet charities and the gentle graces of social life, as the fair verdure of the tree of grace within the soul, may well invite repose beneath their grateful shade. The humanity of the good Samaritan may be worn without a blush, an ornament richer than gold or gem. Nay, it is often by the genial spirit which religion has fostered, and which is exhibited in the common intercourse of daily life, that piety itself is commended; and one may well humor a prejudice, if he can do it without the sacrifice of truth or candor, in order to open to good impressions a heart, which denunciation or severity would close more tightly.

But the complaisance that would go so far as to conform to the world in order to make religion attractive, is no better than Aaron's policy in conciliating the people by the golden calf. Cannot religion speak unless all her strains are musical? Must she never be exhibited except in fashionable attire? Must she depend for her attractions on the same resources to which worldly enterprise resorts? Must she consult the tastes of the world in order to know how to secure the homage that will flow from their gratification? Such a policy as

this, carried out to its logical result, would turn the church into a theatre; suppress every unpalatable truth and substitute for the simplicity of Christian rites the gaudy ceremonial of Papal or Pagan Rome.

How then shall religion—how shall the church be made attractive? We need not forsake tasteful edifices for worship; we need not eschew the eloquence which charms the ear and commands the attention of the listener. We need not repress every naturally cheerful impulse. We should be false to the Spirit of him who shared the social delights of the family of Bethany, and had taste to appreciate the beauty of the flowers, if we did so. But we may not borrow Mammon's ritual for the service of the sanctuary, or couple a single luxury and extravagance with a Christian profession in order to show how easy it is to be a disciple. To lighten the burden of the Cross with balloons inflated with the vanity of ball rooms and dancing halls surely is not the true method of commending the religion of Christ. It is the willing and submissive spirit that makes us unconscious of self-denial, and the grace of Christ himself, and not the arts of the world, that make his yoke easy and his burden light.

Religion should win by love, but she should not surrender her tone of authority. The rewards she has to bestow are not the blandishments of sense, nor must she employ these when they will be interpreted as symbolizing her compromise with the hostility of the unrewarded heart. But she has in herself the most attractive charms—not indeed to a Dutchess of Buckingham, not to one who has become so habituated to worldly indulgences that the loss of it would make heaven itself seem a Sahara—but to the soul made conscious of its needs, or roused to the solution of the great problem of its final destiny. There can be nothing more beautiful on earth than the life pervaded with the Spirit of Jesus; and a genuine devotion, even to worldly minds, can invest the lowliest roof with a solemn charm beyond that of "storied vault" or grand cathedral. Eschewing as we do, and must, the borrowed drapery and incongruous show of cumbersome liturgies and demonstrative rites, it becomes us not to overlook the importance of our only substitute, but to let the light of piety shine forth, and the unencumbered power of truth be felt, both in public and in private, in the sanctuary and the dwelling, till all that we come in contact with is hallowed by the spirit in which we deal with it, and we can sing with the poet—

"There's not a strain to memory dead,  
Nor flower of classic grove,  
There's not a sweet note warbled here,  
But minds us of thy love."

**FALSE COMFORT TO THE DYING SOLDIER.**

The American Unitarian Association is issuing a series of Army Tracts, one of which, termed "A Letter to a Sick Soldier from Robert Collyer," and which claims to be in the "Fifty-fifth Thousand" of the issue, has fallen under our notice. Our readers would like to know in what language it addresses men, in hourly danger of dying, upon the great concern of the soul's salvation. We will let them see. The writer, after introducing the scene of a soldier falling and dying on the field, and exclaiming with his last breath "My Mother," continues thus:

"The love of the best father and mother in the world is no more than a poor shadow of the love of God. God is love, and he loves us right through. He loves us here, he will love us yonder. He loves us now, he will love us forever. Death makes no difference with the love of God. When the body is dead, then God takes that one good grain that is in us all, and plants it again in better soil than this, and under a kinder sky, and he will care for us and see to our growth forever and forever. And so I say cheer up. You are a true, brave man." &c.

Not a word of a Saviour, not a word of repentance, nor of a day of judgment, but blank, stark universalism. "In us all"—the inebriate, the profane, the godless,—there is "one good grain" that God will take care of and plant in heavenly soil when we die! Christendom will hold the American Unitarian Association responsible for offering a dying soldier such unmitigated heathenism as a consolation, in this nineteenth century of the Christian era.

And see with what a mere affectation

of earnestness, after this utter rejection of the strongest sanctions of morality, it addresses the sinner's conscience and seeks his reform:

"And I do hope, my friend, if you have been a wicked man, when you get well you will take a new start. Nay, take it now you are sick. If you have done a good deal of hard, coarse swearing, you will feel how wrong it is to speak so, of Him who loves you so well, and you will drop it entirely. It will do you no good. It will do you harm. If you do not take care, you will be shocked when you get back home, to find how you have run down in the things that make a gentleman, a true man."

Was ever such dilettanteism witnessed? Is not this homeopathic mode of dealing with gross sins enough to provoke a smile of derision on the face of the bluff soldier, who knows well enough what kind of doctoring his corrupt nature requires? The doctrinal and the practical part of the tract are logically inseparable. Universalists make but rose-water reformers when anything deeper than the mere surface of things is to be mended.

**HOME MISSIONS.**

150 NASSAU ST., N. Y., Dec. 16, 1864.

MR. EDITOR.—The following account of a Missionary field, may interest many of your readers. We receive similar accounts from other Presbyteries in other States, indeed from nearly every State of the West, when any one takes the pains to make the investigation.

More thrilling statements reach us from Minnesota, from Kansas, from Western and from Northern Iowa. What shall we do?

Shall we appeal to all our young men in the seminaries, and to our unemployed ministers to go into all these fields in force? Shall we appeal to the churches for \$200,000 to sustain the missionaries till the churches formed in these destitute places will assume their support? Will the churches respond? They never have failed! There is encouragement in that.

Yours truly,  
H. KENDALL.

**GRAND RIVER PRESBYTERY.**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Oct. 18th, 1864.

DEAR STR.—My object in writing to you at this time is to lay before you the needs of our Presbytery.

The Presbytery of Grand River Valley embraces the North Western portion of the Southern peninsula of Michigan. Its Eastern boundary is the meridian line, the line which separates the counties of Lenawee and Hillsdale, and then passes North through the State, going two miles East of Jackson and two miles East of Lansing. Our Southern boundary is the Northern limit of the counties of Allegan, Barry, &c. Our Presbytery extends over all the territory between these boundary lines and Lake Michigan. Its area is more than 18,000 square miles. If the three States of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island could be placed on the top of it, they would leave more than 4,000 square miles uncovered.

And by a reference to the map you will notice that nearly one half of the Detroit and Milwaukee Railway passes through our Presbytery. Other lines are projected and will be built in time, one of which will connect this city with Kalamazoo and pass Northward to Grand Traverse. The rivers Grand, Muskegan, Manistee and others afford many miles of navigable waters, and have good harbors at their mouths.

At present the lumber trade is the leading interest in all this region. This employs thousands of workmen.

A large portion of this territory is yet unsettled. And some of it will not soon be settled. The prairies do not make at once the best of farms. But a large part, probably one half, has a soil and climate as favorable for agriculture purposes as Western New York. It is a mistake that the climate is too cold for the ripening of crops. Grains and fruits can be raised in great abundance. Settlers in Manistee county, one hundred miles north of this city, have told me that there is no doubt that they can there make it profitable to raise fruit for the Chicago market. It is not so cold in Northwestern Michigan as it is in many localities farther south. There was more suffering from severe cold last

winter on the prairies of Illinois than any where in the State. The thermometer indicated from ten to twenty degrees severer cold one hundred miles south east from here in Detroit and Jackson than in this city.

The population included within the bounds of our Presbytery is by the census of 1860, 73,827. In 1850 it was 27,146, showing a decennial increase of 271.97 per cent.

Such is the field with which our Presbytery is charged with the oversight. And we number in all but eight ministers and eight churches. Only two of our churches are self-supporting, and those only just able to sustain themselves.

We want to send a missionary into all of this destitute region. We want him to go to those who are in danger of rejecting heathenism and preparing a gospel to them. We want him to go and look up those who have emigrated from your Eastern churches, and are without a shepherd in the wilderness.

I know that congregations can be gathered at many points, if there is only a man to attend to it. And we can find the man, but we can pledge nothing for his support. Our feeble churches are not so well supplied that it is not desirable to send a missionary to them. And where it is desirable for a missionary to labor, it will not do to begin by asking for money. The people are godless and careless, and will be at once prejudiced against a man, who comes among them and asks them to do something for his support. The only way that many of these people can be reached is to go among them and labor with them. They must learn the importance of the institutions of the gospel, and then they will of their own accord do something.

The only way, by which our Presbytery can engage in this work is by an appropriation of \$500, from your treasury. And the object of this letter is to inquire whether, if the application is made out in due form, you will grant it. Our Presbytery holds its next meeting on the 8th of November. We would like to set Mr. M. at work immediately. Can you reply to this in time so that we can have definite information?

I know that you will feel the importance of the work proposed. I believe that by means of such work, churches may be organized, that will in a few years become self-sustaining, and will pour back into the Home Missionary treasury far more than they will receive. It seems very plain that the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom demand immediate attention to this work. The people are prepared for it. I am trying to do some of the same kind of work within ten miles of this city. I cannot well go farther away than that. The school house will be filled with an attentive, often tearful congregation. But there are many places beyond the reach of pastors, that cannot be supplied in any other way than that already indicated. I am often receiving invitations that I cannot accept. Let some one be sent to these dying sinners.

I could add many more facts and statistics, but have already made this communication too lengthy. Yours in Christ,  
A. M.

**SAVANNAH A CHRISTMAS GIFT.**

The celebration of the glad event which proclaimed "Peace on earth good-will to men," again comes to us in the midst of war. But we are aided in our celebration by the news of a splendid and bloodless victory that fills our hearts with hope of a speedy and a righteous peace. A Southern city of great importance, with cotton, stores, guns and material of war, worth many millions, seized and handed over to the government, without the firing of a gun or the sacrifice of a life, is a truly appropriate, as well as magnificent, Christmas gift to the nation. We accept it with devout gratitude to God, and to the brave Generals, officers and men who crowned a long series of splendid achievements by this easy capture of the fair city of Savannah. Happy men, who may all join unharmed and comfortable in the celebration of their Christmas and New

Years; within those entrenchments which only their appearance stripped of defenders, and on which no drop of their valued blood had first to be spilled. Happy President who receives this gift, happy America, in whose civic crown another recovered gem is set, unsoiled with military violence, bright with its palmetto bowers, and soon to shine with all the glory of a better national and municipal life. Never was a nation so dowered on a Christmas day—never had a people greater cause of humble gratitude, hope in God and rejoicing in the triumphs of a righteous and struggling cause.

**THE LAST CONTRIBUTION.**

HARRISBURG, Dec. 17, 1864.

REV. J. McLEOD.—Enclosed I send you a draft for fifty dollars, in addition to our contribution to the A. B. C. F. M. This comes from a very dear friend who, at four o'clock this morning, closed his eyes to all on earth, Mr. William M. Kerr, a beloved member of our church, President of the Harrisburg Bank, member of our Board of Trustees, and a faithful Sabbath School teacher. He died in the prime of life—47 years of age. During his illness he has expressed most triumphant hopes of redemption and magnified the love of Jesus in tenderest and most confident words. This was his last contribution.

Yours very truly,  
T. H. ROBINSON.

**HOW TO OBTAIN THE REMAINS OF FALLEN SOLDIERS.**

A correspondent of *The Presbyterian*, writing from Fortress Monroe, gives the following valuable information, for the want of which time and labor has been lost, and much unnecessary expense has been incurred:

"For the information of friends of home would say, that to exhume a body you must procure a metallic case, get a permit from the surgeon in charge, Dr. E. McClellan, and then you can get the grave-diggers to take up the body and put it in the case, and send it home by the express company at the Port. All this can be done by writing to a friend, the surgeon in charge, or the express company, who will attend to the whole matter. The cost of a metallic case and exhuming is \$30. A great many bodies have been taken up this fall. Nine were exhumed on Thanksgiving day, and transferred into new coffins."

**CITY RELIGIOUS ITEMS.**

**ACCESSIONS.**—We are informed that at the last communion season in Rev. James Price's Church, Frankford, on the 18th inst, fifteen persons were received into the church, mostly on profession. This church is in the United Presbyterian connection. It is in its infancy, but gives promise of a vigorous growth.

**TABOR CHURCH.**—We reported last week the dedication of the new house of worship, erected for the use of Rev. Mr. Van Deus' Church. One of the Deacons reports that seventy-two pews have been already taken. Prompt and good.

**REV. DR. MARCH,** of Clinton St. Church, received a Christmas gift of \$1000, from his people. Another pastor whose people are as modest as they are liberal, received \$2,500.

**DEATH OF REV. DR. SAVAGE.**—We read, with a sad feeling, the death of Rev. John A. Savage, D. D., of the O. S. branch of the Presbyterian Church, late President of Carroll College in Wisconsin, and formerly for many years pastor of the church in Ogdensburg. In our early ministry, Dr. Savage was our co-presbyter and personal friend. In generous cordiality of temper, and faithful kindness, it could not have been easy to find his superior. He was a good and useful Christian pastor of the so-called conservative stamp, remarkable for tact and wisdom in dealing with human nature. In the divisions in our church, previous to the disruption, his theological sympathies were strongly with the Old School, but in the Assembly of 1837, he opposed the Extending Act as an outrage upon constitutional rights. After the division, however, his Scotch affinities took him over to the other side, but we believe he never became properly a partizan. He died in Waukesha, Wis., on the 13th inst. passing away in a decline calmly and peacefully.

**FRANKS OF THE TIMES.**—We see it stated in an exchange, that the Central Methodist Episcopal Church, Seventh Avenue, New York, when furnishing their church, used cotton for stuffing the backs of the seats. Recently they have been refitting, repairing and painting their house; in doing this they substituted horse-hair for the cotton, which they disposed of for \$3,399.50. This amount more than sufficed to cover all the expense of the refitting, &c., leaving them a balance of several hundred dollars.

### News of the Churches.

**MINISTERIAL CHANGES.**—We notice, under this head, the installation of Rev. Edwin A. Buckley, at Plattsburgh, N. Y.—Sermon by Rev. Dr. Darling of Albany; the tendering of a call from York Pa., to Rev. H. E. Niles, of Albany, N. Y., and the resination of a pastoral charge in Coventry, N. Y., by Rev. W. A. Smith. We do not yet learn whether Mr. Niles is expected to give a favorable response to the call from York. We know that his acceptance of it would give great satisfaction alike to the church, and to the Presbytery with which it is connected.

**REVIVAL.**—Special interest is reported as existing in Rev. J. M. Bishop's church, in Bloomington, Indiana.

**CHURCH DEDICATION IN THE WEST.**—The First Presbyterian church in Warren, Ill., have just completed a plain and neat church edifice, well adapted to their present state and circumstances. It was dedicated to the service of the Almighty God on the 3d of November. Sermon by Rev. A. K. Strong. The Pastor, Rev. E. H. Avery offered the prayer of dedication. Warren is an interesting field, and prospectively one of much importance to our church.

**SUPPLEMENTING OF SALARIES.**—An out-and-out stipulated increase of a Pastor's salary, up to the standard rates of living, is the first and best arrangement for the times. Where this fails to be done, the good practice of supplementing the salary by complimentary presents of money and really valuable articles for living, comes next in order of excellence. In the latter category we this week notice a gift of \$400 from people of the Presbyterian church in Valatie, N. Y. to their Pastor, Rev. C. F. Berry, presents to the value of \$350 having been previously donated. We also notice that the people of the Presbyterian church in Monticello, Ill., after erecting a new \$5,000 parsonage, gave the family of the Pastor, Rev. G. L. Little, a house-warming visit which filled up the cellar and larder for a good time to come. A cash donation was also left. Rev. Alexander Parke, of North Madison, Ind., has also been the recipient of the like compliments of his congregation.

**A WISE AND THOUGHTFUL MUNIFICENCE.**—As such we characterize the following which we take from the *Christian Herald*:—"On Thanksgiving day, Rev. Wm. Van Vleck gave \$100 to each of the members of the Senior class in Lane seminary, to purchase books. He appreciates the fact that a workman needs tools. No more judicious and acceptable gift can be made to a young minister than good books, or the means to buy them. We hope that during the approaching gift-giving season the libraries of our pastors and theological students may be liberally replenished."

**A CALL ACCEPTED.**—A unanimous call to the pastorate has been tendered to Rev. Martin P. Jones, of this city, by the united churches of East Whiteand and Reesville, in Chester county. We are informed that Mr. Jones has signified his intention to accept the call, and that he has already entered upon his work there. We congratulate those churches on their acquisition, feeling that we have the most ample reason for so doing.

**DEATH IN THE MINISTRY.**—Rev. Frederick W. Graves, a brother well known in this city, and who has been an occasional and useful laborer in some of our churches, departed this life in Canandaigua, N. Y., on the 8th inst. His funeral was attended at Corning on the Monday following, Dr. Curtis of Elmira, and Mr. Niles of Corning participating in the services. Mr. Graves was a warm-hearted Christian, and an earnest laborer for Christ.

**DEATH OF A HOME MISSIONARY.**—Rev. Abraham Blakeley, of Lawrence Kansas, died suddenly of apoplexy, in the city of New York, on the 19th inst., aged 53 years. Mr. Blakeley was recently in this city, soliciting aid for our church in Lawrence, and was in New York pursuing the same enterprise. He was an earnest and faithful missionary, having spent most of his life in that work. We learn from an obituary notice in *The Evangelist* that Drs. Adams and Kendall ministered to his last hours, and that, dying far from home, the Home Missionary Committee were attentive to meet every need.

**THE VETERAN MISSIONARY WINSLOW GONE.**—We announced a short time ago that Rev. Dr. Myron Winslow, long and well-known as the American Board's Missionary in India, was on his way home. So he was—but not as we meant—on his way home. We have the account of his decease at the Cape of Good Hope, on the 22d of October. His age was seventy-five years. He was the founder of the Madras Mission, and first President of the native college in that place. He was the author of the "Tamil and English Dictionary," a work of great labor and of much usefulness for general as well as missionary purposes. He was a profound scholar and an earnest and successful Christian missionary. It is but a few months since we recorded the decease of his two brothers, Rev. Dr. Hubbard Winslow and Rev. Dr. Gordon Winslow, and his mother, who died a few weeks ago at Williston, Vt., at the advanced age of ninety-five years.