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SPIRITUAL INSIGHT.

There is much sight in the world, but very little insight. There are many eyes which are no eyes; there is much light, but great blindness. There are twelve hours in the day, yet few walk without stumbling. The great failures and blunders of life are largely due to lack of insight. At some time or other we must have it, or we die. Where there is no vision, says the inspired proverb, the people perish. The business man must have insight into the currents of trade and into his own affairs, or he fails. The physician must have insight into the malady and constitution of the patient, or he loses him. The parent must have insight into the nature of his children, or they will be ruined. The statesman must have insight into the condition, wants, and relations of his country, or it will decline and fall. The general of an army must have insight to guide him in the choice of subordinates; to discern the strength or weakness of positions, the proper moments of attack or retreat; without these qualities he must expect defeat and ruin. The hills around Gettysburg are an object of interest to the ordinary observer, because of the softness and beauty of their outline and the opportunity for picturesque views which they afford. Otherwise they seem to such an observer little more than a confused mass of irregularities on the earth's surface. Scientific men, geologists, engineers, &c., will go a step further and observe that they belonged to a system, both in their outward form and their internal structure. But it was the insight of General Howard, which, in the hour of imminent peril to the national life, discovered their admirable fitness for defence, saw how Providence had raised them up for just such an occasion of unspeakable need as that, and changed them from a mere amphitheatre of charming views into a grand impregnable citadel of liberty, made their green slopes and their rocky walls forever memorable as the breakwater of treason; immortalized a common-place scene of mingled rocks and bushes as "the highwater mark of rebellion." Without that insight into the military capacities of the position, the Army of the Potomac might have been annihilated, and the whole current of our history disastrously changed. Man must have insight just as much into his spiritual nature, needs, and relations, or he will surely die. He must not be content with first impressions, but must use his higher powers of vision. He must penetrate beneath the shell of his own pride and see himself a sinner; he must see the frailty of his hold on life and the vanity of earthly things through all their glitter; he must see his destiny not bounded by the present, but inwoven with the judgment, with heaven, hell, and eternity. Above all, he must have insight into the character of Christ, whom he is, of all beings, likely to misjudge, to overlook and to disbelieve, and yet whom, of all others, he must see and know in His true character. Without insight into Christ's person and work, he must perish beyond all hope. In Jesus Christ, he must "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." There are those who cry Lo here! and Lo there! Ecce Homo! and Ecce Deus! who seem to have remarkable gifts of insight into philosophy and esthetics and history and nature, who seem to understand all mysteries and all knowledge, who yet fail to apprehend Christ, as John the Baptist, and many humble Christians, since, have done—as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. What is necessary to the exercise of this indispensable spiritual attribute? (1.) Candor, teachableness, the child-like spirit; the absence of preconceived notions of what Christ and Christianity must be. Men claiming unusual powers of insight are found approaching the Gospels with the axiom—as they would like to have it considered—that a miracle is an impossibility. How can such penetrate beyond the mere external shell, the bare grammatical meaning of this history, whose beginning and whose end were chief miracles, and which, if it be not a miracle of truth and divinity, is a miracle of falsehood, the crowning cheat of the world? Men learn nothing if they count themselves too wise to be taught. Men

shut themselves out from the greatest facts of all, if they deny perfectly credible evidence to save a theory of their own. Some sort of Christ, men sometimes think they have, when they deny miracles; a teacher, a martyr, perhaps, but never the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. The bitterly prejudiced Pharisees of Christ's own time, beholding Him through the distorted medium of their own worldly opinion of what Messiah must be, are the most striking example of the blinding power of prejudice. And they and their nation whom they controlled, perished for lack of vision; and "until this day remaineth the same veil, untaken away" from their minds. Our Saviour, over and over again, required the spirit of the child, in His disciples. Ancient Pharisees and modern philosophers lose the knowledge of the true Messiah, because, before Him and before the great themes of which He treats and the facts of His martyrdom, they choose to bear themselves, as men with education in morals and religion so complete that they can be taught nothing farther. And they will be taught nothing farther, but shall die in their conceit and their sin. 2d. Element of insight: attention. Men fail to see from want of steady looking. In truth, they do not give their faculties a chance. There is an immense amount of carelessness in the world. Even men who want or who consciously need to see, fail because they look so ill, so hastily. Insight is gained by patient contemplation. We must not let our sorrows, our sense of present loss, so overwhelm our powers of vision as to miss success close at hand. Hagar, doubtless, was so blinded with despair that she could not see the plentiful fountain bubbling up amid the desert. The miracle was to open the eyes of the weeper, not to create the fountain. The Prodigal Son "came to himself." By dint of recollection he assured himself of the deliverance which had long been within reach, but which, in his thoughtlessness, he had overlooked, until he was ready to perish with hunger. So Bunyan's Pilgrim, shut up in the dungeon of Giant Despair, allowed himself for a long time to be blinded to the fact that the key of hope, the means of easy escape, lay in his bosom all the time. We need to look at the truth attentively, carefully, patiently, or perhaps its most important aspects will escape us. The plan of God is a trial to the mind of man. Truth must be sought. The spirits must be tried. There are even false miracles, to be distinguished from the true. Would a momentary glance have persuaded John and his followers that Jesus of Nazareth was the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world? Not at all. Aside from inspiration, it needed study of the Old Testament; careful observation of the character and work of Christ; a following him through every stage of His brief and rapidly unfolding mission; to the solemn institution of the Lord's supper; to the agony in the garden; to the shame before Jews and Gentiles; before Pilate and Herod; before the soldiers and the multitude; to the cross and the tomb; to the resurrection and the ascension. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord. "Search the Scriptures," says Christ, "for they are they which testify of me." This is to-day the best guide to an insight into Christ's true character as the sin-bearer, the Redeemer of the world. (3.) Finally, to insight faith is necessary. This is not contrary to the first requirement of candor. Faith is the truest and most candid expression of ourselves. Faith is to the exercise of an instinctive sense of want or of affinity toward an object beyond or above us, as fitted to supply our want and to correspond to our sense of relationship. Faith reaches out to an object as adapted to satisfy the innate craving of the soul. Faith is the torch-bearer to the mind, which must otherwise grope in darkness, without any profound insight into spiritual truth. It was faith in the overruling providence of God in forming our earth and adapting its surface and configuration to the development of man, that has enriched physical geography with its most beautiful and significant facts. Faith gave Carl Ritter his insight and led the way to his brightest discovery. Unbelief would have left the earth without form and void, or surrendered it to the teachings of materialism. The evil heart of unbelief will shut us out from all the bright light, from all the wonderful revelations and adaptations of spiritual truth. We must approach the consideration of Christ's character and work, if not believing in them, yet believing that God has somewhere and in some adequate way provided for our deep spiritual wants, just as he has provided bread and water for our hunger and thirst; we must come to this spiritual inquiry believing that provision has been made for the deep and dreadful maladies of the soul, just as medicinal substances have been provided in nature for the healing of our bodily ailments; we must come in such a spirit of mind that the news of pardon to guilty sinners, by some plan of divine wisdom and mercy united with justice, though beyond our own conception, would recommend itself to our highest judgment. In short, when the deepest innate principles and convictions of the spirit of man are awakened, then he is prepared to apprehend, in the fulness of their meaning, the objects which are divinely adapted to meet his convictions and satisfy his wants. It is in faith, that insight is perfected and rises to actual possession. The awakened sinner, who beholds in Christ, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world, does more. The believing sight identifies him with the object. All its blessed powers and influences, with that sight, flow into his soul. His sight is his salvation. He looks and he lives. Not such a look as our Saviour's cotemporaries might, and in most cases did, give Him. That look was sight, indeed, but not insight. Of itself, however much we might be disposed to covet it as a privilege, it can do no good. (John's cotemporaries had to do far more than merely look at Christ, if they would behold in him the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. To mere mortal vision, he was no such a thing, but simply the youthful prophet of Nazareth. Then, as now, every saving sight of Christ must look beyond the exterior; it must be insight. Then, as now, we must have insight—the insight of faith, or in spite of all religious knowledge and privilege we must die, forever.)

Christians. "Having attended three of the meetings, I give you the result of my observations: (1.) The Sabbath desecration in the West is alarming. On the Mississippi steamer we inquired, a few weeks ago, if any of the boats rested on Sunday. "We never knew there was such a day on this river," was the reply. Processions march, with bands of music to beer gardens in the suburbs of Chicago every Lord's day morning, and return with noisy revelry in the evening. In the centre of the city on Clarke Street, there is an open garden, where, drunkenness, mountebank performances, and ribald singing, continues from morning till late at night. In St. Paul the agitation was begun just before Dr. Schaff's providential arrival. But it was begun by the enemies of the Sabbath. They proposed to repeal the Sabbath laws on the ground that they were a dead letter. This was unfortunately not an infamous lie, but an infamous truth. We trust such an ugly argument will not long exist. But, among the enemies of the West, we are happy to say, has made progress in the right direction. Fifteen years ago, trains departed, boats were loaded, officers were busy on the docks, and factories were driven every day in the week. Now business has generally ceased, and factories continue, with bands of music, beer gardens, and notorious liquor shops. The running of street cars on the Sabbath, against which our Philadelphia neighbors have made such a brave and successful fight, has never been challenged by Western Christians. They not only submit to it, but, very generally, encourage it by their practice. The "New Christians" are not indifferent to this alarming evil. They only need a rally to be united and determined in their opposition to it. These Sabbath meetings prove this beyond all question. They have been immense and enthusiastic in Chicago, the opera house was densely packed. In St. Paul the meeting was called in great haste; little preparation could be made, but the largest hall in the city was too small for the multitudes. The same was true in Milwaukee. But the most significant response to this appeal was in Buffalo. A commodious building was selected and packed almost to suffocation on a very hot evening, before the hour for the service. By 8 o'clock a throng of thousands filled the street, unable even to approach the door. An insignificant number in Chicago and St. Paul manifested opposition to the movement, but the sentiment of the meetings as a whole, has been overwhelming in favor of Sabbath observance. The deepest feeling was shown in Buffalo, where not a seat was empty, and hundreds were standing patiently until half past nine, listening to addresses in a language which half of them could not understand. This means work. In fact, work has followed the demonstration instantly in every case. A Sabbath Committee similar to that in New York is already forming in Chicago, and a meeting was called for organization in Buffalo, before Dr. Schaff left that city. A German Christian can be relied on for the support of this movement. The German pastors have met Dr. Schaff everywhere, with warm admiration for his learning, a national pride in the honor he has won in America, and upon freely interchanging views with him on this question; have responded to his appeals with surprising alacrity. In Chicago, the brave Hartmann, the ablest and most popular German minister of that city, stood his ground against all obliquity, defended the American idea of the Sabbath before his own congregation; and was unanimously sustained by him. Ten thousand copies of a German paper published in the interest of Evangelical Christians of the West, containing revised reports of the meetings, with Dr. Hartmann's address, were distributed among the beer gardens and saloons of the city. One of the German pastors in Buffalo frankly informed Dr. Schaff at their first interview, that he was opposed to the movement. He lamented the desecration of the day, but he did not believe in Puritan strictness. He regarded the Sabbath and Temperance questions as an outgrowth of New England hypocrisy and asked to be excused from all co-operation in the matter. But he was so fascinated with the "mild" Christian spirit in which he was met, and above all with the affectionate manner of the American pastors, when for the first time he met them together, then he invited Dr. Schaff to preach for him in the morning, and actually came to the Sabbath meeting and made a speech! He said a few things about law being too strict, about the *Gemeinlichkeit* of a Sabbath which was partly religious and partly social; but he said a great deal more against Sabbath desecration, and responded with splendid eloquence to the offer of the olive branch from his American brethren. The fact is the German opposition to the Sabbath, comes from German infidelity, not from German piety. With discretion, with a platform including only those things necessary to procure quiet and good order, leaving everything else to the Christian conscience, we can secure the co-operation of all Evangelical Germans. There is something full of animation and hope in these mixed assemblies, with addresses in both languages. The thing itself is fascinating and excellent, independent of the momentary interest it attracts and the good words and lights it sheds.

The effect of the sudden transition from German to English, and vice versa, is sometimes almost amusing. The President introduces the speaker, in clear Anglo-Saxon. The speaker rises and commences a *Darstellung der wichtigen Sonntags-Frage*. You just get resigned to let him go on without understanding a word, when he suddenly electrifies you by exclaiming in idiomatic English—*I appeal to my American friends*, if what I have been saying is not true! But he takes only a moment to satisfy you what he has been saying, and to secure your hearty approbation; when back he pounces again into *Deutsch-ist-hier die ungeheuerste Liebe*; &c. The great attraction for the Germans is to hear Dr. Schaff's splendid platform speaking in their own magnificent language. Once in St. Paul, when he was going on too long in English, they good-naturedly called him back again. Once we heard all over the hall, "*Deutsch! wieder Deutsch!*" It is a great thing to bring German and American Christians face to face. We need to appreciate the genuine Christian power in this best element of our immigrant population. We need to hear the same walls echo with our "*All hail the power of Jesus' name*," and their Reformation hymn, "*Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott*." We need to get 6000 hearts and hands together, and stand solid against advancing unbelief and immorality. STRAINING OUT THE GREAT AND SWALLOWING THE SMALL.—Our neighbors of the *Christian Instructor* have a strong article on the Associated Reformed Presbyterians of the South. They pronounce a long and cordial eulogy on their faithfulness in the matter of Scriptural Palmsody, and Glosolomian union, with just a passing notice of their connection with slavery. They say: "As God in His high providence has swept away and made utterly and forever a dead letter the great disturbing and separating trouble of the Churches and of the land—slavery—it is believed the Churches of this Synod and our own Churches, as being largely of like precious faith and practice in the worship of God, might very properly have some degree at least of recognition and co-operation, and perhaps ultimate union. A very pleasant and useful correspondence might be opened up. Delegations might be interchanged. Mutual labors might be engaged in their churches, helping ours in carrying on the Home and Foreign Missionary work, and ours helping them in the great mission work, which God has so signally called His people to do for the multitude of the South and in this whole land of do for the multitude upon multitudes of the Freedmen. In this way much good might be accomplished every way, and we cannot doubt that there are very many both North and South who would rejoice to see something of this kind brought about." To them, the *Instructor*, which finds its distinctive principles an insurmountable obstacle in the way of union with the Northern Presbyterian Churches, is quite willing as soon as "the deep, and we fondly trust, gradually healing sores of the past are bound up," to take unrepentant rebels, dealers in human flesh, and slave-drivers, to its embrace. Psalm singing covers a multitude of sins! MARKS OF PROGRESS.—In the recent great changes in public affairs, there is nothing more satisfying than to witness the rebound of mind, on the part of our colored people, from that inertness of ambition which is so natural to social degradation. With as much rapidity as their most sanguine friends could expect, they respond to their newly gained opportunities, and advance toward the condition of self-respect and self-reliance. A striking example of this is just now being furnished in our city west of the Schuylkill. A colored Christian congregation, (African M. E.), finding its small house of worship, built thirty years ago, insufficient to meet its present wants, is erecting a new church of sufficient dimensions and respectable architecture, to take its place, and its people are meeting the entire expense from their own means. It is said there is to be no outside begging—a circumstance which we presume has not its parallel in the history of any colored church enterprise in our city, if in the whole country. The edifice is located on Locust Street, above Fortieth, the corner stone was laid on the 1st inst., by Bishop Weyman, of the A. M. E. Church, attended by several of the clergy, in the presence of a deeply interested congregation. The Bishop, in his remarks, spoke of the Christian property by possessing a sacredly consecrated building for sacred use, and that the solemn services of consecration imported that it was to be preserved for such use, and such use only. Other religious exercises usual to such occasions were had, and a liberal contribution toward the expenses of the enterprise was made.

THE SABBATH AND THE GERMAN IN THE WEST. No problem is of more pressing interest to every thoughtful American than that of the assimilation of our citizens to a common standard of American nationality, in morals, manners and religious faith. It involves questions of present duty of the utmost importance, and the widest bearing. In whatever points the result may obscure, in one respect at least, our duty is plain. The Anglo-Saxon, the Anglo-American race possess in itself any characteristic elements of strength, that are respect for God's law, and God's ordinances. Whatever we may have to learn from Teuton or Celt, these it is our duty to teach. These are the forces that have built up the strong nationalities, that rest on the immovable foundations of Christian firesides and Christian homes. No man in the United States is doing more to-day to interpret between the German and the American elements of the community than Dr. Philip Schaff. His New York Sabbath Committee, and no man is lifting up his voice more powerfully and effectively in advocacy of the Christian good order which should characterize a nation called by the name of God's Son. He has recently held a series of meetings among his German brethren of the West, and North West, some of which have been already reported in our columns; but we gladly make room for the following letter in regard to them, from the pen of Rev. Wolcott Calkins, late of this city, now of Buffalo. He writes under date of August 8, to the *New York Observer*:— Dr. Schaff, who represents the liberty of his native Switzerland, the learning of Germany, and the Christian progress of his adopted country, left New York a few weeks since to seek much needed rest. But his vacation has proved one of the most effective periods of labor in his rich and varied life. In Chicago, in Milwaukee, in Watertown, in St. Paul, and in Buffalo, not to mention other cities on the route, he has addressed immense assemblies on a question of absorbing interest to the public, besides preaching regularly on the Sabbath. Some of these meetings have been reported in the *Observer*, but there are facts and characteristics belonging to them all, which ought to be grouped together in order to show the profound interest in the Sabbath question, which now agitates the minds of Western business men, who have a good body and a good