

SERMON OF REV. MR. BELL

Delivered at the Plymouth Church Anniversary Services Last Sunday.

IT WAS A THOUGHTFUL EFFORT

Faith Is Not to Be Confounded with Feeling and Is Not the Measurement of Good Works—What Religious Faith Is.

Last Sunday the Plymouth Congregational church on Jackson street, was fourteen years old, and the anniversary sermon preached in the evening by Pastor Rev. Thomas Bell, is a concise resume of the history of the church. The speaker took for his text the words found in John xiv, 12. The sermon was as follows:

In the portion of the life of Jesus we have a most comprehensive account of John. In the closing chapters of his book, the author gives us a wonderful insight into the real inner life of Jesus. For sixteen years a public life and in many respects a life unlike any other public character. But in the chapters of John we find a friendlier and more conscious life of Jesus. This deeper human consciousness does not manifest itself until the ordinary consciousness is arrested or diverted. Below the surface stream, shallow and light, Of what we say we feel—below the stream, As light, as of what we think we feel—there flows.

With noiseless current strong, obscure and deep,

The hidden stream of what we feel in detail.

If a psychologist and poet are right, if a large part of each man's self is below the threshold of his own consciousness and beyond the reach of his own observation, then we have in our practical concerns to take account of this subconscious self. The self of which we are conscious is only one section, perhaps a small one, of the whole.

The foundation ground for faith and hope is therefore deeper than the experiences that have gone through John here shown. How perfect the work of God is throughout the working out in intended character and sacrifice the consciousness of a supreme end. The completed work of the apostolic ministry bound the limits of the theory, as well as the nature of the works accomplished.

Not a great many weeks later Peter delivered his famous sermon, while the crowds were added unto the Lord. The great missionary, Paul, going from place to place preaching the truth and organizing the church, from the down to the humblest Christian endeavor who faithfully effects in others the work of salvation are doing things Jesus could not do on earth. The wall of separation between God and men should have been destroyed and the Holy Spirit given to mankind; the glorification of Christ.

The works of Jesus were illustrative of His divine purpose, mission and authority. He was the true success and wide influence. It is four thousand years since the first of every human being there are experiences which test vitality and durability. This church has had its powers of creation and regeneration, the standard of Wilkes Booth, and presents much new information concerning his personal life, his plots, his crime, and his subsequent flight. Another feature in this issue which merits conspicuous mention is Marquand's well-worded description of "The Old Olympic Games," illustrated with Cudworth's pictures.

A series of thoughtful papers on "The Correlation of Spiritual Forces" from the pen of Franz Hartmann, M. D., begins in the April Metaphysical Magazine.

A series of thoughtful papers on "The Suppression of the Nerves" by Dr. George W. Ladd, from the New York Medical Journal.

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