# COMFORTING CERTAINTIES

## A Brilliant Sunday Sermon By Rev. Dr. Robert Bruce.

### Words Addressed to Nicodemus—The Person That the Verities of Our Faith Cluster About.

BROOKLYN, N. Y.—Sunday morning the Rev. Dr. Robert Bruce Hull, pastor of Greenwood Baptist Church, preached on "Comforting Certainties." The text was from John iii:11: "We speak that we do know." Dr. Hull said in the course of his sermon:

These words were addressed to Nicodemus. He was an earnest, honest, yet timid inquirer after truth. He had come to Jesus under cover of the darkness. As an official of the Jewish Sanhedrim, he did not dare to be seen talking with the Nazarene Teacher. Yet he is convinced in his own mind that Jesus is a prophet and that, too, a prophet sent of God. This much he confesses to the Christ. Then begins the wonderfully instructive interview from which the text is taken. This interview is evidently only an outline, but the outline is marvelously suggestive. Nicodemus was a good man. He was a religious man. He conformed to all the religious forms and ceremonies of his nation. His outward deportment was blameless and his standing in the community was honorable. But he was not a spiritual man. He was not what we would call to-day a converted man. To him Jesus thrice used the solemn double "Amen, amen, I say unto thee."

Nicodemus could not understand what Jesus meant by being born again. He was unable to see what that new spiritual life was of which he himself was lacking. Then it is that the third double amen of Jesus introduces the words of the text: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know and testify that we have seen." In this utterance Jesus uses the word "we," not simply as the plural of majesty, but connecting Himself with all His disciples, so that it is perfectly proper and right for us to-day to use His words and say: "We speak that we do know." Christians are competent witnesses to the certainties of religion. While in a sense it may be said that "the Bible and the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants," yet in the fuller sense our religion is a life, Christ is Christianity. His life in Himself and in His disciples is the spirit and the power of true religion. We have something more than opinion; something better than creeds; we have as one of the eternal verities Jesus Christ as the manifestation of God. It has been well said that "Christ either deceived mankind by conscious fraud or He was Himself deluded and deceived, or He was divine. There is no getting out of this trilemma. It is inexorable." He stood before the men who knew Him best and said: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," and again declared to them: "I and My Father are one." This was tremendous assumption and awful blasphemy if it was not the truth. That it is the truth the course of time and the course of Christianity both abundantly declare.

The verities of our precious faith cluster about a person. This person was God, manifest in the flesh, and for all the centuries since Bethlehem the noblest, wisest and holiest have bowed before Him, reverently exclaiming, "My Lord and my God!" It matters not from what point we view Him, Jesus stands before the world as more than man. It is said of a safe and perfect arch that it must meet two requirements. Its feet must not slip and its middle must not bend. Jesus Christ is the arch connecting humanity and divinity. The weight of the centuries of Christianity rest on that arch and they rest there safely, for

"Jesus is God; there never was a time
when He was not;
Boundless, eternal, merciful, the word,
the Sire begot;
Backward our thoughts through ages
stretch, onward through realms of
bliss,
For there are two eternities and both
alike are His."

Another of the certainties is that the Christian life is a divine life. This was a new thought to Nicodemus. It is a new thought to many to-day. It was not a figure of speech, but a plain statement of fact, when Jesus insisted that it was necessary to be born again in order to enter heaven. Those of Nicodemus' time would have said it was necessary to reform, to deal honestly, to behave kindly, to live uprightly. So many say to-day, and if by all this they mean uprightness in its perfect form they are right. But no man has ever lived who ..as been thus upright. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The history of mankind shows that we must not seek holiness in order to God, but God in order to holiness. Christ must come into the soul of man with His divine life, and then, and not till then, are we in harmony with the divine holiness.

When that life comes in then there is manifested the "expulsive power of a new affection," better still, the expulsive power of a new life. Nothing less than life can account for the change in men. Nothing but life can exert the power which the centuries of Christianity have manifested. In physics we affirm confidently that every effect must have an adequate cause. This also is true in the realm of spirituality. If persecutors are changed into preachers, if those once thoroughly depraved have been molded into recognized saints, if the dregs of society have been transformed into unparalleled martyrs for the truth, if common people have been fashioned into those of whom the world was not worthy—we ask what cause or what power is adequate for such marvelous alterations. We know these changes. It is folly to say we do not know the power.

Twice each day our city is washed by a mighty ebb and flow of tides that sweep in and out, despite all the winds that blow. Your child recognizes the fact, but he is puzzled to think that the pale, silent moon, serene amid the clouds, is the cause of those resistless floods. The child is puzzled, but when your philosopher explains to you that the moon does this by attraction of gravitation, and you ask him to explain to you this attraction of gravitation, then he, too, is puzzled. Yet he knows the power, knows it so well he can measure it and use it. So, too, with Christianity, and its power. We can recognize its force and use it, but its secret is the secret of life. Like all force, in its origin it is a mystery. Tennyson says:

"We have but faith we cannot know,
For knowledge is of things we see."

This is not quite true. Knowledge is of things we feel, as well as of things we see. Many things we know that we cannot see. We never saw a pain, but we should call him a fool who should say we never felt or knew a pain. We know the power of the Christ life in the believer, because we have felt it, and sometimes when this Christ life in us has its perfect freedom we are able to say with Paul: "I can do all things in Christ who strengtheneth me."

This certainty concerning the power of the Christ life can be attained by all who will fulfill the conditions. There must be a surrender to Christ and a trust in Christ. You cannot have the sunbeam without the sun. You cannot have the power of Christ without the Christ Himself. The apostle says: "Christ is in you the hope of glory," and it is certainly true that Christ must be in us the power for glory. Thus the centre of our certitude is Christ Himself. We know Him. We know His power. It has been exercised upon us and in us. Like the once blind beggar, we exclaim: "One thing I know, whereas, I was blind, now I see." There was no note of uncertainty about this; there should be no note of uncertainty about our utterances concerning our faith or concerning our own position.

But in this age of doubt many Christians are so frightened out of sanity that they are afraid to say even of the deepest experiences of the soul, "I know." Not so Paul, facing death: "I know whom I have believed." Not so John, the beloved disciple, declaring, "We know that we have passed from death unto life. We know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him." It is not modesty, but lack of faith which prompts Christians to say, "I hope I am a Christian." When we have life we know it and should not be ashamed to say so. If we have not the life then by all the importance of eternity make sure of obtaining it. It is possible to have a living experience of Jesus Christ. To have such an experience that we may say: "I live, yet not I, but Christ, liveth in me." Belief may be glorified into this experience if we yield ourselves completely and unreservedly to Him who is able to "keep that which we have committed to Him against that day."

The effect of this certainty is in every way most precious and helpful. Consider for a moment what this certitude means in the presence of the awful calamity which last summer sent a thrill of horror around the globe. True, indeed, is the Scripture declaration "if in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable." If death were the end of all then we might well believe that cruelty sat in the throne of the universe. But, staggered as all are by the unutterable sorrow, yet God rules and overrules, and though we cannot see it now, yet in eternity we shall know that the carelessness—or worse—of man has been overruled to eternal good. Because we know that God is love, and because we know Jesus still lives and is the same to-day as when He shed tears at the grave of Lazarus, we dare to go into bereaved homes and speak of the reunion at the right hand of the throne of God. I went over to the pier where lay hundreds of the unclaimed bodies, and I would not have dared to do it, but that I might comfort some heartbroken one with the assurance that God cared, God loved and in eternity God would make this unspeakable sadness a source of perpetual joy. Can I explain it? No! But I could not preach, I could not hold up my head as a Christian if I did not believe; yea, if I did not know, that somehow, some time, the curse shall be changed into a blessing. This is the privilege of Christians to say even now: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

Why is it that all do not know these things? Partly because of their condition. There are to-day those who "having eyes see not, and having ears hear not." The influence of training is not easily overcome. Trained only to consider as real that which can be analyzed by scientific implements, men refuse to admit the reality of things which they cannot weigh in their scales or measure by their rules. They are honest. So is the blind man honest who says color does not exist. So is the deaf man honest whose soul cannot be moved by the concord of sweet sounds. It is not a question of honesty, but of fact. God is, even though the unbelieving eye may sweep the heavens with the telescope and assert I cannot see God. But trusting hearts will say with ever increasing certitude: "I know whom I believe." This gives us comfort in such a time as this. It is the only thing which can give comfort. So, brethren, let us place ourselves in the hands of a loving God. Let us lean on the divine power. Let us trust the divine wisdom. Let us assure ourselves of the divine home in those mansions which divine love has prepared for us, and let us be confident that

"Trial works for ends
Too high for some to trace—
That oft in dark attire He sends
Some embassy of grace."

#### Love as a Cosmetic.

Love is the greatest beautifier. The reason is easy to see. Love itself is beautiful, and if we give unselfish love a lodgment with us it is constantly exerting a molding influence upon us.

Love always appears at its best. When it goes wooing it always chooses the most becoming attire and the most captivating adornment. So love, when it gets possession of a human body, proceeds to mold the face of that body into the most attractive form, for love always seeks to clothe itself in the most attractive garb.

That is the explanation of the transformation that takes place in a woman who is a mother. She may be plain otherwise, but when she bends over her babe in an ecstasy of mother-love she becomes beautiful. And in proportion as we give place to unselfish love do we become attractive.

There is no masseur like love to work miracles in a homely face, says the Christian Endeavor World. There is no facial specialist who can begin to do as much to make a plain young man or woman attractive, to overcome deformity or hide blemishes as the magician love can do.

To hate is to become hateful. To love as Christ loved is to become lovely. It is not a cheap recipe, for such love costs in proportion to its depth and intensity. But any one that is willing to pay the price may be beautiful.

#### Boastful Building.

"Blow, O winds! Rise, O ocean! Break forth, ye elements and try my work!" Such was the boastful inscription put upon the first Eddystone lighthouse built by the eccentric Winstanley. His challenge was accepted, and one fearful night the sea swallowed up the tower and its builder.

The next one met a similar fate, the structure and its builder, Rudyard, again perishing together.

The third was erected by Smeaton, who built it all of stone, making it a part of its rock foundation, so that the lighthouse penetrates it as a tree penetrates the soil. Upon this lighthouse no vaunting inscriptions were placed, but on the lowest course were chiseled the words: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it," and on the keystone, above the lantern, is the exclamation, "Laus Deo!" That structure still stands, a never-failing beacon light to storm-tossed mariners.

He who would build for eternity must not set about his task in any vainglorious, over-confident spirit. He must be careful as to his foundation, building firmly and deeply upon the rock, Christ Jesus, and relying in trust and humility upon Him who alone can enable one to reach a perfect result.—Wellspring

#### Grace to Bear.

When Christ does not take away the thing that is hard for us to bear, He gives us grace to keep it and to get on even better than if He had relieved us of it. To Paul He said: "My grace is sufficient for thee." That is, Paul would receive grace from Christ, Christ's own strength in his life, enough of it to meet all his need, so that the suffering would be overbalanced by the grace, and the hindrance overcome by the divine strength imparted. This promise is for every Christian who has a thorn of any kind which Christ does not remove. While we must keep it we shall be helped to bear it, and it will be as though we did not have it.—Forward.

#### Idols Transformed.

A missionary in Travancore, India, saw, one morning, a native coming to his house with a heavy burden. On reaching it he laid on the ground a sack. Unfastening it he emptied it of its contents—a number of idols. "What have you brought these here for?" asked the missionary; "I don't want them." "You have taught us that we do not want them, sir," said the native, "but we think they might be put to some good use. Could they not be melted down and formed into a bell to call us to church?" The hint was taken; they were sent to a bell founder and made into a bell, which now summons the native converts to praise and prayer.

#### Child of Many Nations.

When Camilio di Righini, the charming child of Mme. Ella Russell, was born, his parents were in great doubt as to his nationality, for he was born two days out from New York, on the Koniigen Louise, under the German flag. His mother is an American; his father, Count di Righini, a pure Italian. On the father's side Mme. Ella Russell's grandfather was Welsh and her maternal grandmother Austrian. To add to these complications, Camillo's birth was registered, according to law, at the first port of call, which happened to be Cherbourg, France. What was the nationality of this little Italian - American - Scotch - Welsh-Austrian - German - French - English infant? This profound problem for a long time perplexed all Mme. Russell's friends and acquaintances, until the singer at last had the good fortune to consult T. P. O'Connor, who without a moment's hesitation pronounced the verdict, "Why, av coorse, he's a son o' ould Oirland."

# THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

## INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMENTS FOR OCTOBER 16.

**Subject: Elisha and the Shunamite, II Kings, iv., 25-37—Golden Text, Rom. vi., 23—Memory Verses, 32-35—Commentary on the Day's Lesson.**

I. Kindness rewarded (vs. 8-17). Elisha in his work as a prophet and religious leader of the people traveled from place to place, on foot, with Gehazi, his attendant. There seems to have been public religious services on the Sabbath and first days of the month (v. 23). Elisha frequently passed by the village of Shunem, and was invited to the house of one of the leading families for refreshment and food. The lady of the house seems to have been much more intelligent and religious than her husband, who was wise enough to know it and to trust her, while she showed due deference to him. This woman was childless, which was a great sorrow in her life, and as a reward for her kindness Elisha promised that within a year she should "embrace a son."

II. Death in the home (vs. 18-24). In due time a son was born into the house. He grew up to be four or five years old. He could not have been much older if this part of the story took place during Jehoram's reign. But the story may have begun then, but run on to a later period. One morning the boy went out into the fields where his father was gathering in the harvest. In this valley which is to-day one of the richest wheat lands on the wide globe, he was taken suddenly sick. Considering the symptoms and the season of the year there is little doubt that a sunstroke was followed by inflammation of the brain. The boy was sent home to his mother, who held him till noon, when he died. She took him up to the little chamber by the roof and laid him on the prophet's bed. It was a strange affliction that God should take away the child He had given as a reward for her kindness to the prophet, while her kindness had been continued and increasing year by year.

III. Meeting the prophet (vs. 25-28). 25. "She went." The mother immediately hastened across the plain to Mount Carmel, sixteen or seventeen miles distant, in search of Elisha. "Man of God." That is, God's representative. So called, 1. Because of the integrity of his character. 2. Because he instructed the people in divine things. Ten times in this chapter is Elisha called by this title. "Saw her." From the hilltop looking down into the valley.

26. "Run now." This was a mark of courtesy, showing his great esteem. "Is it well?" "Is it peace?" "It is well." In the Hebrew only the word "peace" is used. She gives this answer to Gehazi's question that she may avoid more words; she has no thought of deception.

27. "Caught him by the feet." The attitude of humblest supplication. She humbly reasoned with him concerning her present affliction; she threw herself at his feet as one troubled and in grief, which she never showed until she came to Elisha, the one whom she believed could help her. "Thrust her away." In his officious zeal, angry at the slight toward him, or deeming her touch defilement, or her importunity excessive, or such liberties beneath his master's dignity. "Let her alone." A noble mind does not pass sentence before hearing the case. Elisha's gentleness was an evidence of his greatness. "Soul is vexed." Sympathy is penetrative. Cultivate earnestly the Christ-like talent of discerning the sorrows of others. "Lord hath hid." In reference to this point he had not the discernment of spirits. This and the gift of prophecy were influences God gave and suspended as in His infinite wisdom and love He was good.

28. "Did I desire a son?" She reminded him that she had not asked for the child, but that he had come to her as a free gift from God. Why should God, she argued, give her the child of His own will, only to take him away? Had she not besought the prophet not to mock her with a false hope? Thus did she reason.

IV. The servant's failure (vs. 29-31). 29. "Gird up thy loins." By tightening the girdle and tucking the mantle under so as to leave the legs free. "Staff." The badge of the prophetical gift which he had received from God, of might and strength. "Salute him not." In the East salutations are full of form and consume much time. The command showed the urgency of the mission and the necessity for the exercise of faith and prayer. 30. "Will not leave thee." After the heartless attempt of Gehazi to thrust her away she has no confidence in his ministry, even though he carry the staff of Elisha. Sacred vestments and a holy commission will not command the confidence of earnest souls unless they be associated with a true and tender heart.

31. "Neither voice, nor hearing." Why was Elisha's mission fruitless? Everything goes to show that at first Elisha did not intend to go to Shunem, but when he saw the persistency of the mother he changed his purpose. It was probably in consequence of this change of plan that no response was made to the first claim of faith by means of the staff. That appeal was in fact superseded the moment he resolved to go in person, the Lord thus reserving for the personal intercession of His prophet the honor of this marvelous deed.

V. A great miracle (vs. 32-37). 32. "Child was dead." This statement clearly forbids the supposition that the child had merely fainted or fallen into a trance. He was really, not apparently, dead. 33. "Shut the door." He prayed in secret and his Father rewarded him openly. "Prayed." The only remedy in such a case as this. The best things in life come through prayer. 34. "Lay upon the child." He used what means were in his power, though the means alone could never have brought the child to life. So James tells the elders to pray with the sick and to anoint them with oil (James 5: 14, 15.) "Put his mouth," etc. Elisha followed the example of Elijah as nearly as possible (1 Kings 17: 18-24). "Waxed warm." Returning life is slowly given, but the first signs of restoration must have strengthened his zeal and given fervor to his prayers.

35. "Returned." Left the bed. "Walked to and fro." His own animal heat might have become much reduced by absorption into the cold body of the child. Possibly, too, there was a struggle of faith in the mind of the prophet. "Sneezed seven times." When the nervous influence began to act on the muscular system sneezing would be a natural consequence, as obstructions must have taken place in the head, the cause of the disorder of which the child died. 36. "Take up thy son." Joyfully the child was returned alive to his mother. See the power of prayer; as it has the key of the clouds, so it has the key of death. See the power of faith. That fixed law of nature, death, shall be dispensed with rather than this believing Shunamite be disappointed. 37. "Fell at his feet." In overwhelming gratitude. When God has done great things for us, we should bow humbly and say, "Lord, I am not worthy." See Gen. 32: 10.

#### Mrs. Longfellow's Dinner.

Speaking of "company" coming reminds me of a story a Boston man tells of the poet Longfellow. Mr. Longfellow had a soul above sordid material considerations, and on one occasion he brought a guest home to dine without advising Mrs. Longfellow beforehand. The guest was a distinguished Englishman, who had just arrived with a letter of introduction. The day was Friday, and the cook being a Catholic the family had fallen into the habit of eating no meat at the Friday dinner. Mrs. Longfellow thought despairingly of the fish and then, realizing, I dare say, that dry bread would be a feast with Longfellow at the table, led the guest to the dining room with a faint heart. The fish was brought in. The distinguished guest glanced at it, and then he smiled at his hostess.

"I know Mrs. Longfellow will pardon me," he said, "if I decline the fish course."—Washington Post.

# CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR NOTES

## OCTOBER SIXTEENTH.

"The Power of Personal Influence."
—John 1:35-39.

**Scripture Verses.**—Rom. 14:7, 8; I Cor. 8:8-13; Rom. 14:13, 21; Matt. 28:18-20; 18:6, 7; 2 Cor. 3:2, 3.

**Lesson Thoughts.**

Show the influence good men have had in the world: 1. Moses; 2. David; 3. Elijah; 4. Paul; 5. Luther; 6 Washing.on; 7. Lincoln.

Our accountability extends even to the influence we exert unconsciously upon those about us; for it all results from our behavior before them.—"No man liveth to himself."

**Selections.**

Influence is as inseparable from character as the fragrance is from the flower, or the shadow from the substance.

"Lamp," said I, "how do you manage to give out so much beautiful light?" "I?" answered the lamp. "Why, I'm not giving anything, am I? I am all the time getting begging, sucking up oil through my hungry wick." That's it. Get fed within, obtain the oil of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, and I'll risk the light. Why, your face can't help shining then.

"The old archers," says Dr. Talmage, "took the bow, put one end of it down beside the foot, elevated the other end, and it was the rule that the bow should be just the size of the archer. If it were just his size, then he would go into the battle with confidence. Your power to project good into the world will correspond exactly to your own spiritual stature."

It is a great thing just to live a fine life. Think: everything noble that you do influences yourself. It may not influence another soul (it probably will), but you are sure that it will influence your soul. And you are to live forever. Forever. Isn't it worth while?

The serene, silent beauty of a holy life is the most powerful influence in the world, next to the might of God.

We are not done with life as we live it. We shall meet our acts and words and influence again.

# EPWORTH LEAGUE LESSONS

## OCTOBER SIXTEENTH.

### The Power of Personal Influence.
John 1. 35-39.

The universe is so constructed that events apparently trifling have tremendous influence down through uncounted ages. Righteous Abel "being dead yet speaketh." His simple obedience in the dawn of history has rung bells of encouragement in the far-away periods even to the present, and their stirring notes will peal on till the end of time. It is evident that in the common deeds of life there is a potency not always accorded them. If potent whence is their potency? Is it merely in the doing, as the falling of an apple from a tree? That cannot be: for while the falling of an apple may for an instant affect every atom of the earth, the disturbance thus caused will gradually diminish and ere long be ineffective in so far as we can judge. If the potency of deeds cannot be detected in matter, then it must be in mind. A subtle, hidden, invisible force imparts to them vital energy. Somehow our deeds exert power long after the hand that tossed them forth has gone back to dust. It is the personal power in our deeds that rings bells in the world through the long centuries.

The greatest of all the great deeds of John the Baptist was turning his followers away from himself to Christ.

It was the Christ-spirit in John which made effective his testimony to his Saviour. Whatever added to John's personal loyalty to Christ increased the effectiveness of his testimony for his Lord.

Here is an instance wherein John's testimony had more weight in convincing the people than would Christ's own claims have had.

It is not the amount we do, but the quality of our work, that determines the grade of music made. Consider a marriage ceremony in the Orient. The long ceremonials and processions are ended. The bridegroom, having entered the apartments of his bride, is allowed to lift the veil and for the first time behold the face of her who became his wife by bethrothal. If satisfied with her he passes to an outer door and announces his hearty ratification of the match that was made by his representatives. Women in waiting announce the joyful news. Everywhere it is greeted with satisfaction. The joy of many is full, but for the happy couple joy is fulfilled. The mission of the bridegroom's friend is completed. Harmonies of rare beauty are started through personal influence, and their music will continue "through the river's sweep of onward rushing time."

#### The Czar a Book Lover.

Here is quite a delightful confession from the Czar of all the Russias, whose heart must now be sorely troubled by the disasters of the present war:

"I love traveling, but only when I can do it in my own way. I never travel otherwise than at night, and spend my day visiting museums and quaint old streets, bazars when I am in the East, antiquarian shops when I am in the North. I am more of an Asiatic than a European in my tastes, and I have not only a vast collection of Indian curios and quite an army of Buddhas large and small, but also a library composed of books treating of Indiana subjects alone, and another of books dealing with Egyptian lore. Were I not—well, what I am—I should be the greatest bookworm in the world."

#### Story of Scotch Pawkiness.

A "positively true tale" of Scotch pawkiness is sent to us by a naval correspondent. He traveled up to Invenesshire with a Scotsman, on whose taciturnity he failed, after many efforts, to impinge. The Scotsman still stared dully, fixedly from the train.

At last intelligence began to show in his face, and grew to ecstacy, and he shouted in his excitement: "Look here, look here; that's whaur it was." His companion rushed to the window. "In yon wee town," continued the Scotsman, "I was charged saxpence for yin cup of coffee."—London Globe.

# The Sunday Breakfast Table

#### The Turning Point.

Sweet Saviour, in the midst of life
I rest me half-way up the hill;
Look back upon the fields of strife,
Look forward, Lord, to what you will
The past, what is and is to be,
I leave it all and come to Thee.

Thus far I've tried to walk alone
And many passed me on the way;
They followed where Thy love-light shone,
Passed on, and left me where I lay.
From out my life's Gethsemane
Sweet Saviour, now I come to Thee.
—Cy Warman.

#### Science Recognizing Its Own Limitations

There was a time when science seemed to have determined to eliminate God from the universe which He had created. It did so not modestly, but majestically. Materialism and mechanism in the opinion of this school explained everything. Intelligent being and doing had no part in creation. Professor Tyndall reached the high-water mark of the school when he delivered the presidential address of the British Association thirty years ago. Atomism, materialism, represented the long results of science, according to the latest and greatest master of the new cult.

Men have gone on thinking and inquiring from that hour to this, and the wonderful thing is that as knowledge has increased materialism has diminished. Scientific men find themselves unable to account for this great globe, and all which it inherits on purely materialistic lines, and the best of them are not afraid to admit their failure.

The latest exponent of the views of the British Association is Mr. Balfour, the Prime Minister. He is not, we admit, a practical scientist, neither is he a practical theologian. He does not claim to be one or other. All he claims for himself is that he is a plain, blunt man, with sufficient knowledge of science to understand its limitations, and sufficient knowledge of philosophy to understand its profound depths. To follow in all its detail his address at the opening of the British Association on Tuesday would be too laborious a task for our limited intelligence and limited space. It is sufficient to say that if Professor Tyndall in Belfast thirty years ago preached the cold gospel of materialism, Mr. Balfour cast out that gospel, and avowed that only in idealism could be found an interpretation and explanation of the marvelous phenomena of the universe.

Mr. Balfour did not carry his own ideas as far as we would have liked to see them carried. He did not say, as Lord Kelvin on a similar occasion declared, that all science led up to the grand and glorious idea of an intelligent Creator. But if he did not put that into language it was the spirit of his address. Idealism, as applied to the interpretation of the universe, involves mind, and mind involves being and intelligence.

Science and philosophy can go a certain length and then revelation comes in. Revelation does not exclude science, it upholds it. All that it complains of is that science sometimes, indeed oftentimes, goes beyond its domain and claims for its inferences the same authority as for its facts.

We hear a great deal about reason, and are often told that reason is the final arbitrator. The reason that explains the existence of the universe and all that it inherits as the outcome of blind chance may be reason to some unthinking minds. But to those who can reason it is surely more rational to attribute all we are and all we know to an intelligent Being than to blind force, mechanical action or the operation of laws which come into operation by chance. Lord Kelvin represents to us the highest development of modern science as it throws light upon the universe. And the more he knows and thinks the stronger is he convinced that there is a great personal Creator behind all.—Belfast (Ireland) Witness.

#### No One Without Talent.

Many Christians are failing to receive degrees of joy in God's service, and are not doing what they could easily do if they would throw away a false modesty or humility. "Oh, I can not do anything. I have no talent," or "I have only one talent."

Beloved, the Lord knows all about that. No one is without talent. And if you have only one be glad and use that one. The Lord will add to it if you use the one. He says to you and to me, "Bear much fruit." It is blessed the writer knows (by the grace of God) from long experience to use joyously and earnestly the powers one has in Jesus' service. It is blessed to meet those whom one has led to Christ.

No wonder Paul says, writing to the Galatians, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." And the more one is led by the Spirit the more of this blessed peace with God does he realize and the greater his joy in knowing that his life is made a blessing to others.—Alfred T. Scott.

#### The End of Life.

The end of life is not to do good, although many of us think so. It is not to win souls, although I once thought so. The end of life is to do the will of God.

How can you build up a life on that principle? Let me give you an outline of a little Bible reading:

The object of life: "I come to do Thy will, O God."

The first thing you need after life is food: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me."

The next thing you need after food is society: "He that doeth the will of My Father in Heaven, the same is My brother and sister and mother."

You want education: "Teach me to do Thy will."

You want pleasure: "I delight to do Thy will, O God."

A whole life can be built up on that one vertical column, and then, when all is over, "he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."—Henry Drummond.

#### The Power of Happy Thoughts.

How careful we should be to guard our thoughts. If they are pleasant we will have pleasant faces and kind ways. We will gain treasures for days of adversity, upon which we can draw when other sources of enjoyment fail. Old age will be happy through them, for they will be used as material from which to build homes of refuge wherein we find comfort and delight when the windows are darkened and we are forced to keep company most of our time with what is within us.—Presbyterian Record.

#### We Make Our Own Atmosphere.

Bear in mind that your happiness or misery is very much of your own making. You cannot create spiritual sunlight any more than you can create the morning star; but you can put your soul where Christ is shining. Keep a clean conscience. Keep a good stock of God's promises within reach. Keep a nightingale of hope in your soul that can sing away the dark hours when they do come. — Reformed Church Record.

#### Christian Reciprocity.

If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

#### Daughter Married by Mother.

A very odd wedding occurred recently at the residence of the Rev. Mary T. Whitney, in Boston, Mass. The groom was the Rev. Carl G. Horst, the pastor of the Second Unitarian church of Athol, Mass.; the bride was Miss Emily Aitken, of Boston, and the officiating minister was the Rev. Martha C. Aitken, mother of the bride. Cases where a father marries his daughter are not infrequent, but this is, perhaps, the only instance on record where a mother has married her daughter.

# THE GREAT DESTROYER

## SOME STARTLING FACTS ABOUT THE VICE OF INTEMPERANCE.

**Poem: Its Perfume Is Death—An Account of Successful Temperance Work in a Pennsylvania Sunday-School That Should Act as a Stimulus to Others.**

Touch the goblet no more;
It will make thy heart sore
To its very core.
Its perfume is the breath
Of the angel of death,
And the light that within it lies
Is the flash of his evil eyes.
For sorrow, sickness and care
All are there.
—Longfellow.

#### Sunday-School Temperance.

In a leaflet issued by the National Temperance Society, Mr. D. E. Small, superintendent of the Sabbath school of the First Church, of York, Pa., tells of the temperance society in that school. Hoping that it may prove a stimulus to other Sabbath schools, we reproduce part of his article.

The meetings are held monthly at the close of the school on the last Sabbath of the month, never taking more than half an hour, often only fifteen to twenty minutes, the superintendent of the school shortening his exercises on that day ten or fifteen minutes. The meetings are presided over by the president or one of the vice-presidents. The exercises are opened with singing a few appropriate verses and a short prayer led by one of the teachers. The pledge is then read by the secretary, some brief addresses, showing the evils resulting from the use of intoxicating drinks, and the importance of leading sober and virtuous lives. The secretary then proceeds from class to class, offering the pledge for signers, which are written in a book. (This is done at all the meetings.) This done, the meeting is closed with singing.

Now for the results: During the space of a little over nine years, seven hundred and fifty scholars, teachers, officers and visitors have signed the pledge. It rarely occurs that a new scholar, young or old, attends the school for three consecutive months, that his or her name is not voluntarily added to the pledge. We have no instance where scholars under twelve years of age ever broke their pledge, but we have the evidence of their being, without exception, pronounced friends of temperance; many having gone to reside in other places throughtout the country, carrying their abstinence principles with them, and putting them into practice by establishing associations similar to the one above referred to in Sabbath and public day schools at their new homes. Some of the teachers who were in the habit of using wine in their family and social gatherings and who never thought it necessary to pledge themselves, within six months after the organization of the association gave up the use of it, signed the pledge and have become earnest advocates of temperance.

In 1865 the school had about 150 scholars; in 1875 it had over 350. In 1865 the church had about 100 members; in 1875 it had over 300, a large proportion of them coming from the school.

It is a notable fact that when once a child takes its first step in the right direction openly, by its own free act, it is easier to take the next and more important step in a public profession of Christ. The total number of signers to the pledge February 26, 1901, was 1770.

And now, in view of this practical success, I appeal to all workers among the young. Will not you, dear pastor, teacher or friend of Jesus, look at this subject earnestly and give it serious thought? Why should any Christian hesitate a moment to commence work earnestly with the young, when it is such a clear duty, and when youth is the time of life when lasting impressions are made?—Presbyterian Banner.

#### Why Many Men Drink.

The dean of Rochester, writing to a horticultural correspondent recommends vegetable growing as conducive to temperance. Get a man to take pains with his vegetables, says the dean, and you will do more to keep him sober "than all the blue ribbons and pledges worn or signed." There is here the practical statement of a fact which extends far beyond the vegetable garden, and which is too often overlooked. Drinking for the most part is proof of nothing so much as a lack of interest in life, says the London Graphic. A workingman who has no resources outside his round of daily toil goes when it is over to the public house simply because there is nothing else for him to do to escape being bored. He is too tired to read, even if he cared much about reading, and he can scarcely be expected to sit wrapped in meditation. Hence, even if his wife be thrifty and his home well kept, the temptation is strong to betake himself to the public house, where at least he can meet and talk with his fellows. Give him a counter attraction—something that he likes and can take a personal interest in—and the public house at once begins to lose its compelling power. This has been demonstrated over and over again where workingmen have been supplied, or have supplied themselves, with machinery for rational recreation.—Detroit Free Press.

#### Alcoholism in Schools.

An interesting investigation on the prevalence of alcoholism among school children in Germany has recently been published, says Harper's Weekly. Its author, Dr. Goldfield, believes that the situation is serious, and should be brought to the attention of the parents by means of addresses at meetings and by the distribution of essays on the evil effects of alcohol. The investigator is medical officer of the public schools of Schoneberg, a suburb of Berlin, and his examination included 967 children, 470 of whom were in a boys' school and 497 in a girls' school. Of these, 496, or 51.3 per cent., were accustomed to drink from one to two glasses of beer daily, while 209, or 30.9 per cent., took spirits more or less frequently. The favorite beverage was malt beer, but all kinds of beer and various kinds of spirits were taken, the sweeter liquors being preferred by the girls. Dr. Goldfeld was informed by the teachers that the children addicted to the use of spirits were especially lazy, absent-minded and inclined to lying. Neither children nor parents heeded Dr. Goldfeld's warning.

#### Georgia Almost a Prohibition State.

"Georgia," said Congressman Livingston, of that State, "is almost a prohibition Commonwealth. Out of a total of 137 counties, 126 have voted that no intoxicants shall be sold within their borders. In the few remaining counties that voted 'wet' the saloons must close at 10 o'clock at night, and not reopen earlier than 6 o'clock in the morning. We live in a part of the Union where temperance is a common virtue and where the baneful effects of over-indulgence in liquor have been reduced to a minimum."—Washington Post.

#### The Crusade in Brief.

Bread is the staff of life; beer the stilts.

The safe side of a public house is the outside.

As labor becomes more skilled and better organized drunkenness is diminished. Employer and employe understand that the chances favor the sober.

The Russian Government estimates its revenue for 1904 from the liquor trade in the several provinces where the business is monopolized at over $358,000,000.

Queen Wilhelmina is a total abstainer; she is also a member of the Women's League, which has for one of its chief objects the suppression of drunkenness.

If you get the best whisky it will get the best of you.

The Prefect of the Seine having placarded Paris with posters describing the terrible effects of alcohol and absinthe drinking, the cafe proprietors each filed a damage suit against him.

Mrs. Margaret Sherman, of Menominee, Mich., has brought suit for $5000 damages against Joseph Scholz, saloonist, and his bondsmen, Ferdinand C. Nowack and Jos. Erdlitz, for selling liquor to her husband after being warned not to do so.

An anti-treating movement is making considerable headway in Montreal, Canada. Members of the league pledge their solemn word of honor not to accept and not to offer to others any intoxicating liquors in any public bar, hotel or club.

# Household Matters

#### Sour Cream Drop Cakes.

One cup sugar, one-half cup butter, one egg, one-half cup sour cream, one teaspoon of soda dissolved in a very little hot water, flour to mix soft. Drop from a spoon on greased tins.

#### Potato Souffle.

To two cupfuls of smooth, well seasoned and quite moist mashed potatoes add the yolks of two eggs. When a little cold stir in lightly the whites of two eggs beaten very stiff. Put the whole into a pudding dish and brown it in a quick oven.

#### Spinach Salad.

Boil and chop fine half a peck of spinach, mold it in six glasses and stand away until cold. Prepare six leaves of lettuce, put on each a square of cold boiled ham or tongue, turn out the mold of spinach on this and put on each a tablespoonful of French dressing.

#### Fried Cucumbers.

Pare and cut lengthwise three large cucumbers in slices about half an inch thick, soak them in ice water one hour, then wipe each piece dry, sprinkle with salt and pepper, dredge with flour or cornmeal and fry in one tablespoonful of butter on both sides until brown.

#### Tomatoes Broiled.

Slice six tomatoes half an inch thick, but do not peel them. Dip them in one tablespoonful of oil or melted butter, sprinkle with pepper and salt and broil them eight minutes on each side. Serve them with bits of butter sprinkled over them. Add one teaspoonful of chopped parsley.

#### Caramel Ice-Cream.

One-third cupful of thin cream or one-sixth cupful of each of heavy cream and milk, one and a half tablespoonfuls of granulated sugar, one tablespoonful of boiling water, one-quarter teaspoonful of vanilla, a grain of salt. Put sugar in a small saucepan; place on range and stir constantly until melted. Add water and boil until mixture is reduced to one tablespoonful. Add cream very slowly, vanilla, salt, then freeze.

#### Cheese Custard.

Butter a baking dish, put in a layer of bread cut in pieces one inch square with crust removed, sprinkle thin-sliced cheese over the bread, dust with salt and paprika, or a few grains of cayenne. Add other layers of bread and cheese, seasoning as before, using in all half a small loaf of bread, one cup of cheese and half a teaspoonful of salt. Beat two eggs slightly, add one pint of milk, and pour the mixture over the bread and cheese. Bake about half an hour in a moderate oven.

#### Cucumber Sweet Pickle.

Slice the cucumbers about one inch thick, and boil for one hour in weak alum water; take out and lay in cold water; let remain till perfectly cold; then boil again in fresh alum water half an hour; drain the fruit well; make a syrup of one pound of sugar to each pound of cider vinegar; boil the syrup; then put in the fruit and boil it till transparent. Add mace, and if the syrup is not thick enough continue to boil after the fruit is removed. When cold, sprinkle in some white mustard seed.

#### Oranges Filled With Jelly.

Take half a dozen oranges that are perfect; make a hole at the stem end about half an inch in diameter; take a teaspoon and remove the pulp, and then soak the oranges in cold water for an hour; then scrape with the spoon until they are smooth inside; rinse with cold water and drain on a cloth and put them in ice box. Prepare pink and clear orange jelly, with the juice of two lemons added. Fill half of them with the pink, the other half with clear jelly, and when they are set wipe clean and cut each orange in four quarters. Heap them in a pretty glass dish for the table.

#### From Cellar to Garret.

Potatoes will bake more rapidly if a pan of water is put into the oven with them.

To break ice