

THE PULPIT.

A SCHOLARLY SUNDAY SERMON BY DR. ROBERT J. KENT.

Theme: The World-Wide Vision.

Brooklyn, N. Y.—In the Lewis Avenue Congregational Church, Sunday morning, the pastor, the Rev. Dr. Robert J. Kent, preached on "The World-Wide Vision." He took for his text, Revelation 11:15: "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever."

"The World-Wide Vision" and the men who have been privileged to see it is my theme this morning. The power to see visions and to dream dreams is one of the noblest God has given to men. Men might be classified according to the scope and quality of their visions. There are those who cannot see beyond the narrow horizon of their own selfish interests, their own health and happiness, their own home and business. They are spiritually near-sighted. "God bless me and mine" is the burden of their prayer if they pray at all. Then there are those whose vision includes their village, their political party, their denomination. They dream of a glorious future, but of a future hemmed in by their narrow interests. They are like men who have climbed to some spur of the mountains where they get a splendid view, but it is only in one direction. Others there are who climb to the summit and get the inspiring prospect of a far-extended and unbroken horizon. Such men are thinking not only of their city, State, nation, but of the world; not only of their family, their clan, their social class, their race, but of humanity.

There have always been men who have thought and hoped and prayed in terms of the whole world. Their feet may never have crossed the boundary of their native land, but their love and hope and prayer have encompassed the earth. In the magnificent statesman-prophet, Isaiah, prince of preachers, whose messages we have been pondering Sunday mornings, stood on the summit and saw all nations walking with glad willingness in the light of the divine revelation that should shine from Jerusalem. And we hear the great prophet of the exile proclaiming in words that after all the intervening centuries still sound like majestic music: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and the thick darkness shall be upon the mountains; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen by thee. And the nations shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising." True, in the golden future that the prophet saw, Jerusalem was the center of the world; the world was world-wide. Nevertheless, it was a universal reign of righteousness, good will and peace.

It seems strange that anyone should be satisfied with anything less than a world-wide vision, who has vowed royal allegiance to Jesus and has pondered the Master's words. For in parable and prayer, in cheering assurance and in the final commission He spoke in terms of the world wide. You recall His familiar words, "The field is the world. The kingdom of heaven is like the grain of mustard seed that grows into the whole world. For in heaven that in time leavens the whole lump. When the Son of Man shall come to judge, all nations shall be gathered before Him. Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. When ye pray, say, our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on the earth as it is in heaven. All power in heaven and in earth is given unto Me; go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations." How significant in this connection is the title He assumed, Son of Man! As if merely to proclaim His mission as to-day in relation to the whole of humanity, and that His mission of love and life was to the whole world. That world-wide vision has been part of the heritage handed down through the Christian centuries. It set on fire the heart of Paul. He recognized no barrier to the conquering advance of the gospel. The world was divided into Jew and Gentile, and to both the gospel was the power of God unto salvation. That world-wide vision has given us our New Testament.

Never in the world's history have there been so many men and women who have beheld the vision as to-day. The increasing number of those who stand on the highest peak of hope and aspiration for humanity is an outstanding feature of our own day. It is a sign of the times. The young men who have visions while they prayed in the shelter of the haystack, the men who dreamed dreams while they worked at the cobbler's bench or in the mill, have been followed by a vast multitude, whose prayer is, "Thy Kingdom come," and whose song is "Christ for the world." This is the day of greatest consistency of the world, when the largest audiences in the city are needed to accommodate the multitudes who have seen the vision, but the largest gathering is but a very small minority of those who believe and pray that the kingdom of this world shall become the kingdom of Christ.

It is only when we consider the essential features of this world-wide vision that we appreciate the sublime faith and hope of which it has been born. It includes the establishment of the kingdom of God in this world. Men will believe in heaven; its faith is their comfort and support in bereavement and when life's evening shadows lengthen. Its songs inspire them with peace and joy. But they believe more than they ever did before in the future of this world, and that here the purpose and plans of God are to be worked out. Then the vision embraces the classes and conditions of humanity, separated though they are by differences of culture and caste, nationality and religion—far more serious barriers to union than are oceans and mountains. Moreover, it contemplates a complete fusion of mankind into one brotherhood. It means the regeneration and transformation of society. We are hearing a good deal to-day about a social salvation. It is a true and very significant note to strike in the effort to redeem the world. Not only must the heart be changed, but the customs and relations of men must be brought into conformity with the spirit of the Master. The heaven must work in city and village, in store and factory, in legislatures and courts, in the markets and bank, as well as in the home and church. The command of Jesus includ-

ed confession of one's faith. A long, patient process of Christian education was emphasized: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." That means the translation of the Sermon on the Mount into the life of the world. That takes time. The Laymen's Missionary Movement, which is interesting our city just now, the idea of uniting the energies of the denominations for a speedy conquest of the world is often mentioned. By all means speed the day when the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord and as the waters fill the sea. But let us not forget that the world-wide vision will not be realized until the sovereignty of Jesus is established over the life of the world. Consecrated men and money could, within a generation, doubtless carry the gospel into all the world, but it will take more than a generation before the nations of the multitude named in the apocalyptic vision shall be sung by a thoroughly Christianized humanity: "The kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ." Such is the scope and character of the world-wide vision. It is the hope of universal golden age. It is a hope of brotherhood embracing every tribe and kindred. It is the kingdom of God on earth.

Such a vision is proof either of sublime faith or folly. Folly it would be if it were not that we have confidence first of all in the purpose of our Father. That confidence in the Eternal justifies the vision. The trend of the ages is toward its realization. We cannot prevent the tides from rising and falling; we cannot change the course of the seasons; we cannot alter the planets in their orbits, but we could do so sooner than we could keep God from fulfilling His purpose. Then, too, we have confidence in the mightiest of all solvents—love. It is the miracle-worker of every age. In Zangwill's great play, "The Melting Pot," in response to a passionate assertion that in every land to which he has wandered or been driven the amalgamation of the Jew with other peoples has never been accomplished, he makes David respond: "You have tried hatred and failed; you have tried love. We have not forgotten the apostle's formula, 'Love which worketh by love.' The world-wide vision would be a colossal folly were it not for this mightiest of all powers in the world. Moreover, the heroic achievements of those who have caught the vision and have toiled and sacrificed to inspire firm confidence for the future.

They who see the vision are not visionaries. There is a difference between them. There are idle dreams and dreams that prompt to noble endeavor. The visionary is impractical, but among the world's most practical men have been those who have looked upon the splendid picture of a future golden age. They have toiled hard to make their dreams come true. The American Board, completing a century of activity and growth, owes its origin to the young seers of haystacks and men who have come to the Laymen's Missionary Movement are intensely practical. How to get and equip and support the men who will go forth to preach and teach; how to secure the funds necessary to support them from givers of large and small fortunes; how to organize and conduct their work in the most efficient manner possible, are taking hold of us in an earnest, business-like way. No one need have any fear that interest in the Christian conquest of the world will lessen his sense of obligation to support the work in his own land and his own church. There is no reason to believe that the distinction between home and foreign missions. The distinction between them is being obliterated. Foreign missions are at our very doors. Samuel J. Mills had the world-wide vision, but he was a faithful, intelligent worker in the home church. The people who pray and sacrifice for the redemption of the world are not the ones who neglect the work at home. Rather do they seek to make and to keep the church strong, that it may do its part in saving the world. No better surety could any pastor have that he will be supported by his flock, than the fact that they are devoted to the task of winning all nations to Christ.

I want you all to see the world-wide vision. I have no fear that it will lessen your interest in our own church. The people who pray and sacrifice for the redemption of the world are not the ones who neglect the work at home. Rather do they seek to make and to keep the church strong, that it may do its part in saving the world. No better surety could any pastor have that he will be supported by his flock, than the fact that they are devoted to the task of winning all nations to Christ.

I want you to see the world-wide vision for your own sake. It will expand your thought, enlarge your heart, enrich your life. It is education in the largest and noblest university in the world. One is brought into contact with whatever concerns humanity. Religion, civilization, art, government, the oldest and the newest, all have their bearing upon the great problem and in your effort to contribute to its solution you will find yourselves growing in knowledge, in interest, in sympathy. You become citizens of the whole world. Let us then offer the prayer the Master has taught us, Thy kingdom come, with a resolute determination to do more than we have ever done to make the kingdom of the world the kingdom of Christ.

Philippines' Best Fruit. Philippine mangoes, to the mind of many Americans and foreigners, would alone make many millionaires in this country if the fruit could be successfully shipped, or, better still, grown here, as the Hawaiian papaya is now being made to grow in the Philippines. Spaniards spent thousands of dollars trying to get samples of the Philippine mango to their late queen, but without avail. There is absolutely nothing to equal this fruit in the western hemisphere. Mangoes in New York could easily retail at from \$1 to \$1.25 a dozen, with the demand never fully supplied. One tree of enormous size is said to have produced 5000 mangoes in one season. The fruit in shape and general appearance resembles a huge pear flattened to a thickness of about one and a half inches. The skin is green and the meat pumpkin colored. The flavor can be compared to no fruit in this country; to appreciate its deliciousness one must eat a mango off of the tree.—The Bookkeeper.

The Sunday-School

INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMITMENTS FOR MARCH 6

Subject: Jesus, the Healer, Matt. 8: 2-17—Commit to Memory Verses 2, 3.

GOLDEN TEXT—"Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." Matt. 8:17.

TIME.—April and Midsummer A. D. 25.

PLACE.—Capernaum.

EXPOSITION.—I. Jesus Cleansing the Leper. It required much faith to come to Jesus for no leper had ever been cleansed by man, and as far as the record goes, Jesus had cleansed no lepers before this. He was dead in earnest, kneeling down and falling on his face (Mk. 1:40; Lu. 5:12). The leper's prayer was brief and to the point. "If thou wilt, thou canst help me." He displayed great faith in the Lord Jesus, faith that He was able to do what He would. It was, however, imperfect faith. He had perfect confidence in Jesus' ability, but doubted His willingness to help. Many to-day put the willfulness of Jesus to help. If there is any "if" in regard to a blessing sought of Jesus Christ, it belongs, not on His willingness nor power, but on our faith (Mk. 9:23, 24). Perfect as the leper's faith was, Jesus responded to it. He is just the same to-day. (Heb. 4:14). It was Christ's compassion, not the leper's unworthiness, that led Jesus to answer the leper's prayer (Mk. 1:41; cf. Matt. 14:14). Jesus exerted His healing power by a touch. That touch was an act of great compassion, for it would make Jesus Himself ceremonially unclean. He took the leper's uncleanliness upon Himself that He might make the leper clean (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21). There is many a moral leper to-day needing the touch of a clean hand. This "I will" of Jesus taken in its context proves His divinity (cf. Gen. 1:3; Job. 35:9; Mk. 1:33). The leper's faith in the cleansing was complete. Jesus, unlike modern healers, avoided publicity.

II. Jesus Healing the Centurion's Servant. 5-13. This centurion occupied a much higher social position than Jesus, but he recognized the infinite superiority of Jesus to himself (cf. Lu. 7:6, 7). If Matthew's Gospel contained the only account, we would get the impression that the centurion came at once himself, but he certainly did not until after he had sent the Jewish elders and his friends (Lu. 7:9). He did not send his personal unworthiness that kept him back from the personal approach to Jesus, though the earnestness of his desire for his slave and the thought that he was not worthy for Jesus to come under his roof sent him out at last. He was a man who had the trouble of coming further. His great care for the slave is only once mentioned in beauty to the simplicity and strength of his faith (cf. Lu. 7:2; contrast 1 Sam. 30:13). The case was desperate. The lad was at the point of death (Lu. 7:2). There was no one else who could help him but Jesus; but there is nothing too hard for Him, and we can always turn to Him when there is no other place to go. The centurion built his faith upon what he had "heard concerning Jesus" (cf. Rom. 10:17). He who witnesses for Jesus never knows what any other man could say for him but the testimony of the Holy Spirit. The centurion's prayer was short and definite. How gracious the Lord's answer. "I will come and heal him." Jesus said "I will come" because He was invited. He is always ready to accept an invitation to any home or heart (Rev. 3:20) and to do so in the most pleasing testimony concerning him by the Jewish elders (Lu. 7:4). "I am not worthy" was his testimony concerning himself. The man who thinks himself most unworthy is the one who is most likely to be thought worthy by others, and he is always the surest to get a blessing from God (Ps. 10:17; Lu. 18:10-14). The Roman soldier had got a glimpse of the deity of Christ. He considered sickness to be as absolutely subject to the word of Jesus as were his subjects to his own word. Thank God the centurion was right about that (cf. Lu. 4:35, 36, 39; Mk. 4:39; Mt. 11:43, 44). Jesus marvelled at the centurion's faith. He had met so little faith on earth that to find so great faith in such a quarter was astonishing. He not only wondered at the centurion's faith. He commended it (cf. Matt. 8:10). Faith is a very pleasing thing to Christ (Heb. 11:6; Jno. 6:29). In the two instances where Jesus commended faith it was a Gentile who was the believer. In this heathen's faith Jesus got a glimpse of the great coming day when the Gentiles would be gathered to Him (Mt. 23).

III. Jesus Healing Peter's Wife's Mother. 14-17. The family invited Jesus to dinner, and well were they repaid. It always does to invite Jesus to our homes (cf. Matt. 25:37, 40, 41). Jesus could heal at a distance, but He loved to get right to the afflicted one. He took the woman by the hand. Mark, who got his information from Peter himself, tells us that He took her by the hand and raised her up (Mk. 1:31). This, too, has a lesson for us. It is the hand grasp of a strong, well hand that the sick need, and it is the hand grasp of a holy, strong hand that the sinful and weak need. "The fever left her." Sickness as well as leprosy gives way before Jesus. She at once began to use her new-found health and strength in ministering to her healer. A wonderful scene follows. The people wait until the Sabbath closes at sunset. Then from every corner of Capernaum they bring to Jesus all the demon-possessed and sick. Oh, that we would bring all our devil-tormented and sick ones to Him! These people, however, were not as eager for spiritual healing as the sick ones. No, they are people to-day. But Jesus healed every one of them (Lu. 4:40). All this was a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy (Y. 17; cf. Isa. 53:4, R. V., marg.).

Every photographer knows that singular differences exist in the actinic action of light on succeeding days which, so far as general appearances go, seem to be equally favorable for photographic purposes. This may be partly explained by the discovery of Duclaux, of Paris, that the odors arising from vegetation and disseminated through the air diminish the actinic power of the solar radiations which reach the surface of the ground.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR NOTES

MARCH SIXTH.

Christ Our Guide. Luke 1: 76-79; John 16: 13; Rev. 7: 16, 17.

(Consecration Meeting.)

Lot's guide. Gen. 19: 13, 15-22.

The pillar guide. Ex. 13: 20-22.

Christ leads to truth. John 16: 7-15.

Christ leads to peace. John 10: 9-11, 12.

Christ leads to effort. 1 Cor. 15: 58.

Christ leads us home. Jude 24, 25.

Human guides must plod along in the dark, if the night overtakes them; but our divine guide brings the light with Him (Luke 1: 79).

Other guides must take the road as it is and lead us over it, but this Guide makes it a way of peace (Luke 1: 79).

The Holy Spirit guides us to truth because He brings us to Christ who is the truth (John 16: 13).

Lambs on the earth are guided, but in heaven the Lamb is the guide to all bills (Rev. 7: 17).

Thoughts.

Christ guides us as we guide others, and we cannot go far with Him without aiding others to go with Him.

We cannot know the way we are to travel, but we can know our Guide, and He knows the way.

Travelers in the Alps are fastened by a rope to their guide. Our rope is prayer, holding us to Christ.

The guide carries the food and the comforts for the journey. Our Guide is not only our Way, but our strength for the way.

Illustrations.

In traveling with a guide the rule is, Keep the guide in sight or he cannot guide you. "Keep Christ in sight!"

Sometimes the road is winding and we lose sight of the guide; but even then he keeps calling us, and we walk by faith as safely as by sight.

When we come to a dangerous place the guide goes back and forth several times, to show us that the way is practicable. So Christ has gone all our way before us.

Go over an earthly way often enough, and you can guide others in your turn; but the way of life you go over but once, and every man is in need of a guide for himself.

Epworth League Lessons

SUNDAY, MARCH 6.

Mixed Service—(2 Kings 17. 27-33.)

Conducted by the Mission Study Class on South America.

2 Kings 17. 27-33. Samaria was depopulated, its people being carried into captivity by Assyria. In their place the Assyrian king sent colonies from various parts of his empire, and after a little these colonies sought to "imitate" the worship of the former inhabitants, the Israelites. A priest was sent them, and they mingled the rites of Israel's worship with their own forms and ceremonies, the result being a sad jumble of truth and error, faith and superstition, monotheism and idolatry. And, of course, there was little morality in so confused a religion.

The situation in South America is in many ways a parallel to that of Samaria during the early years of the Captivity. There is an admixture of true Christianity with all sorts of superstitious and heathenism. Religion is largely a matter of form, of show, and of pretense. It does not touch the inner life or affect the moral conduct of its adherents. The chief result of this nominal Christianity is to make all effort at spreading sincere religion and the winning of men to Christ usually difficult and slow. There is no sufficient sense of need. And the awakening of South America to its spiritual need is the one great task of all Protestant missionaries.

Culture of Rice

GROWING INDUSTRY.

Production in the United States Has Risen to 608,000,000 Pounds in Recent Years.

The growth of rice production in the United States, from an average of less than 100,000,000 pounds per annum a few years ago to 608,000,000 in 1908, lends interest to a study just made by the Bureau of Statistics of the Department of Commerce and Labor of the markets offered for this particular commodity in the various sections of the world, and especially in countries commercially adjacent to the United States.

The production of domestic rice in the recent period greatly exceeds the consumption of both domestic and foreign rice in the earlier period, says the Cincinnati Enquirer. Imports of rice into the United States (including rice flour, meal and broken rice) ranged during the last twenty years from 100,000,000 to 200,000,000, while the domestic production about equalled the imports, making (after deducting the small exports of that period) an average annual consumption ranging from 250,000,000 to 400,000,000 pounds.

The world's market for rice, measuring this market merely by the imports of the principal countries of the world, amounts to from 150,000,000 to 200,000,000 pounds per annum. The world's rice crop is estimated, in very round terms, at 175,000,000,000 pounds per annum. Rice forms the chief cereal food of about one-half the world's population, and wheat the chief cereal food of the other half. Curiously, too, the quantity produced of these two cereals apparently differs but little, the latest estimates placing the world's wheat crop at 3,181,000,000 bushels, which equals about 190,000,000,000 pounds.

Of the 608,000,000 pounds of rice produced in the United States in 1908 52.8 per cent. was produced in Louisiana, 41.8 per cent. in Texas, 2.2 per cent. in South Carolina, 2.1 per cent. in Arkansas and the remainder in Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi and North Carolina.

Grateful Patient.

A new occupation for women is that of the "grateful patient." Well-dressed women are hired by unscrupulous men in Paris to sit in their waiting-rooms, enter into conversation with genuine patients, and hold forth in glowing terms on the benefits derived from the doctor's treatment.

RELIGIOUS READING

FOR THE QUIET HOUR.

THE LORD OUR REFUGUE.

Thou knowest, Lord, the weariness and sorrow

Of the sad heart that comes to Thee for rest

Cares of today and burdens for to-morrow,

Blessings implored, and sins to be confessed

We come before Thee at Thy gracious word,

And lay them at Thy feet; Thou knowest, Lord.

Thou knowest all the future; gleams of gladness

By stormy clouds too quickly overcast;

Hours of sweet fellowship and parting sadness,

And the dark river to be crossed at last;

Oh, what could hope and confidence afford To tread the path, but this—Thou knowest, Lord.

Therefore we come, Thy gentle call obeying,

And lay our sins and sorrows at Thy feet.

On ever-lasting strength our weakness staying,

Clothed in Thy robe of righteousness complete;

Then rising and refreshed we leave Thy throne,

And follow on to know as we are known.

—Jane Borthwick, in Pittsburgh Christian Advocate.

Think It Not Strange.

It is when God has signally blessed us and sealed us by His Holy Spirit's power that the adversary always seeks to assail us. He feels it is his crisis hour and he must challenge our high position and drive us back from the advanced ground or his control over our lives will be lost. Therefore, it happens after we enter upon the highest blessing we are always exposed to the fiercest conflict.

The new convert expecting to find a life of delightful freedom from the life he expected, and who has been plunged into the severest testings. The newly consecrated life, glowing with high hope and holy purpose, finds itself confronted by the most subtle forms of strange temptation, and the first impulse is to become discouraged and to feel a touch of bitter disappointment.

The real truth is we never feel temptation until we resist it. The man who is following his natural bent is unconscious of any opposing current, and his life is one of passive peace, but when he meets with the influence of evil within him and the adversary beside us, then we understand a little of what the apostle means when he speaks of withstanding in the evil day. It seems at such times as if all the Philistines had come up against us, and there was not a temptation in the category of evil which had not tried its hand upon our uncompassed spirit.

Let us not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try us as though some strange thing happened unto us, but let us remember that when we enter into the baptism of evil within us, then we understand a little of what the apostle means when he speaks of withstanding in the evil day. It seems at such times as if all the Philistines had come up against us, and there was not a temptation in the category of evil which had not tried its hand upon our uncompassed spirit.

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