

**THE PULPIT.**

A BRILLIANT SUNDAY SERMON BY THE REV. RAIMUNDO DE OVIES.

Subject: The True Religion.

Birmingham, Ala.—The following impressive discourse entitled "The True Religion" was preached in St. Andrew's Sunday morning by the Rev. Raimundo de Ovies. His text was: St. Luke xli. 3: "Of a truth I say unto you that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all."

Mr. de Ovies said: Because religion is a feeling, an intuition, an emotion, many well meaning people mistake other emotions and feelings for this one "divine stirring of the heart."

There are some minds that can never be led to believe that religion must become an ordinary, commonplace and everyday matter with the true Christian. They look for some remarkable display of feeling, something beyond and above the daily and hourly emotions of life, in order that they may feel certain of "having religion."

In other words, they look for romance, not commonplace.

"What?" we can hear them cry, "do you mean to say that when some powerful and eloquent preacher has stirred our hearts and made us realize the depth of degradation in which we have been living, until we turn with disgust from our past life, make unnumbered good resolutions and feel good all over, that we have not got religion? What more would you command?"

There is only one thing which we could ask of you, a difficult task, "keep the feeling alive."

No man is a Christian who must be converted and baptized once a year. Religion is for a lifetime, not a day, or a week, or even a month or two. There is nothing more deceptive than the enthusiasm resulting from magnetic, eloquent preaching. The politician, the lawyer, even the infidel, all exercise this compelling power over an audience, and in no case does it give religion. Religion comes into the heart from no man, it comes from God Himself. It is true, indeed, that God uses human means, but when a soul is truly converted religious enthusiasm wells from the heart in a deep, quiet stream, not in the bubbling, effervescent spring of some momentary exaltation.

Such periods of excitement do seem to lift us outside the ordinary routine of life, and they have in them a touch of the romantic. But what really is romance, after all? It is merely the commonplace viewed from a distance. If any incident which excites our fancy and appears to be romantic were taken from the pages of one of our thrilling novels and introduced into our own lives we should look upon it as trouble, and what a deal of grumbling there would be. Don't you see that this is true, and is not a romantic novel, simply the story of difficulties and trials overcome? There is this difference between a book and life: in a book petty details are left out and the exciting events crowded together, one upon another. In life the petty details are all retained, and (in many cases) the thrilling passages omitted. When some of us sigh in our youth for stirring scenes and a part to play on life's stage, which shall be full of thrilling adventures, such as we have read about in our favorite books, do we ever think about disaster to ourselves, and does the story not end happily? Yes, we all desire romance, but no trouble or hardship ever enters into the bargain. They are inseparable in the real business of life.

So we see that Christianity is romantic only in the true sense. It means trials and obstacles to be overcome.

The very first requirement of romance is courage, and here romance and Christianity agree. No coward was ever a Christian. There is no greater mistake in the world than to suppose that a Christian must be a milkop, a poor, meek, wishy-washy creature, without stamina and without manhood. Among the heroes of history none were greater, none more glorious and godlike than the Christian martyrs. They were not supported by ambition, by the praise of men, nor the fear of ridicule, but calmly and with eyes that saw, without flinching, their doom, died for a feeling, that mysterious thing, faith.

Pause a little, you who look with contempt upon the Christian life, and think which is the braver course, to float easily with the stream, to give unbridled way to base passions and weaknesses in our human hearts, to avoid the finger of scorn by joining the swelling ranks of the scoffers and the degraded, or that other path, to take the side of the minority, to battle against sin, to acknowledge the standard of honor and freedom of conscience? Whoever conquers his besetting sin is man indeed.

True religion, then, is brave as well as steadfast, but above all it is steadfast, it does not demand great sermons, it finds "sermons in stones." It does not ask for great deeds to do, it is contented with its opportunities. Who shall say what things are small? Newton saw gravitation in the falling of an apple, and Galileo, watching the lamp of a great cathedral vibrating from the movements of passing vehicles, gave to the world the division of time by means of the pendulum. Greatness lay in the minds of those two men who could grasp opportunity.

So it is not the outward circumstance but the heart which makes things great or small. There are abundant opportunities for our becoming heroic Christians. Oh, if we would only grasp them. We miss so much in this life, romance and beauty, and all because we lack courage to do our duty.

Duty is an ugly word at first, yet within it lie all the best things of life. It is under the spell of that wicked fairy, the world, but it becomes beautiful if we embrace it. Recall that story of your childhood, "Beauty and the Beast." You remember how ugly the beast appeared to poor Beauty. Still, for the sake of her father's life she embraced it, when, lo, a miracle, before her stands a handsome prince. So it is with

life, duty, the daily task, the commonplace routine, when undertaken in the spirit of Christian faith takes the form of that dear dream that lies in the heart of us all.

Who would imagine anything heroic in the act of that poor widow when she cast into an almsbox her two mites of copper? It took the gracious mind of Christ Jesus to point out to the world the beauty of that insignificant deed. Yes, and as long as the world shall last and while the gospel is preached to erring mankind, the greatness of a poor woman's heart, shall point out to the world a lesson of beauty and heroism that shall never die.

**Why He Cobbled Shoes.**

A characteristic story is told about Dr. Carey, the pioneer missionary in India, who, before he left this country, was a shoemaker, or rather, as he himself put it, a cobbler. He used to go about from village to village preaching, for his soul was filled with the love of God. One day a friend came to him and said, "Mr. Carey, I want to speak to you very seriously." "Well," said Mr. Carey, "what is it?" The friend replied, "By your going about preaching as you do you are neglecting your business. If you only attended to your business more you would be all right, and would soon get on and prosper, but as it is you are simply neglecting your business." "Neglecting your business?" said Carey, looking at him steadily. "My business is to extend the Kingdom of God. I only cobbler shoes to pay expenses."

**"The Iron in God's Sand is Gold."**

If one should give me a dish of sand, and tell me there were particles of iron in it, I might look for them with my eyes and search for them with my clumsy fingers, and be unable to detect them, but let me take a magnet and sweep through it, and how it would draw to itself the most invisible particles by the mere power of attraction! The unthankful heart, like my finger in the sand, discovers no mercies, but let the thankful heart sweep through the day, as the magnet finds the iron so it will find in every hour some heavenly blessings; only the iron in God's sand is gold.—Holmes.

**Winnowed Wheat.**

To enjoy prayer we must be single to it.

It is the mission of Christianity to enlighten.

What we make our trust in, God often makes our shame.

God's house is a necessity, not to Him, but to His people.

Prayer should be pillared on promises and pinnacled with praises.

Religion presents few difficulties to the humble, many to the proud and insuperable ones to the vain.

Good prayers never come weeping home. We may be sure we will receive either what we ask or what we should ask.

**Why Not Now?**

Now is the favorable time. For a duty no better time shall come. Delay may deprive us of power. "Indulge in procrastination, and in time you will come to this—that, because a thing ought to be done, therefore you cannot do it." Or, if we lose not power, the action loses worth. A child of fifteen was postponing acceptance of Christ; she brought some flowers for one who would have been gladdened by them, but was told to wait about giving them a few days until they had begun to wither.—Pacific Baptist.

**The True Education.**

A true education—what is it? It is awakening a love for truth; giving a just sense of duty; opening the eyes of the soul to the great purpose and end of life. It is not teaching to be honest because "honesty is the best policy," but because it is right. It is teaching the individual to love the good for the sake of the good; to be virtuous in action, because so in heart; to love and serve God supremely, not from fear, but from delight in His perfect character.—Wayland.

**That Which Endures.**

A gigantic tree, shorn of its branches—tall, straight, majestic—but torn and shattered at the top as by a mighty lightning bolt. In the distance it seemed like the ruins of an old, gray tower, and suggested some strong and kingly character whose life, stripped and blasted by some cruel blow, still stands in majestic loneliness—a witness to the glory of what has been and to the strength of patient endurance.—Ram's Horn.

**The Joy of Age.**

If the joy of youth has more form and sparkle, the joy of age has greater depth and substance. One is like the reflection of sunlight on the lumps of ore, where there is much dross mixed with the metal, the other like the glance of tempered steel which has been through the furnace and between the anvil and the hammer, and has come forth wholly fitted for the Master's use.—I. O. R.

**Use is the Test.**

It is not having that makes men great. A man may have the largest abundance of God's gifts—of money, of mental acquirements, of power, of heart possessions and qualities; yet if he only holds and hoards what he has for himself he is not great. Men are great only in the measure in which they use what they have to bless others.—Rev. Dr. Miller.

**The Key to the Soul.**

A clean heart makes a pure face, clear, calm eye, a strong hand, a restful soul and a cheerful spirit. The inside of a man will manifest itself inside of a woman. The inside contents of the soul will leak out through the face, eyes, tongue and hands. In the long run we will find out what is really within a man.—Ram's Horn.

**No Look Ahead.**

To most men experience is like the stern light of a ship, which illumines only the track it has passed.—Coleridge.

**Seeks to Improve Race**

On the estate near Perm, in north-east Russia, of a wealthy man named Reshetnikoff, a singular marriage took place recently. The bridegroom, Vasilieff, was a handsome peasant, the bride a beautiful girl of 18. M. Reshetnikoff gave them a large wooden cottage and a plot of land, and at the wedding breakfast greeted them as the second generation of his nurslings "who are to make of holy Russia an earthly Olympus peopled with Apollons and Hebes." At the time of the Russo-Turkish war M. Reshetnikoff, struck with the inferior, ill-nourished physique of many recruits, set aside annually out of his large fortune 10,000 rubles for the purpose of eliminating the unfit by encouraging marriage only between young people of exceptional beauty, health and intelligence. He employed as workers on his estate only the handsomest

and healthiest villagers. These he encouraged to enter upon matrimony by grants of land, payment of marriage fees and an annuity of fifty rubles a year for every child born. He removed from his estate all deformed and sickly persons and attracted handsome giants from all parts of the province by granting them valuable privileges. Those who refused to marry the partners he selected were unceremoniously deported. Since the institution of his scheme forty marriages have taken place, and over 100 children have been born, nearly all of them being immensely superior to the average Russian peasant children in strength and beauty. Vasilieff's marriage was celebrated with exceptional display, he and his bride being the first couple both of whom sprung from unions arranged by M. Reshetnikoff.

**The Origin of "Kickers"**

"I believe that the origin of the expressive bit of slang 'kickers' may be found in the very lowest form of occupation any member of the human race follows," Mr. W. M. Robinson states.

"Between Wormsley's and St. Helen's in Cornwall, is an underground canal connecting the lower levels of the coal mines at Wormsley's with the surface station at St. Helen's, which saves a great deal of money for the mine owners in handling the coal, which is simply loaded on the barges in the mines and transported by the canal under the mountains to the harbor at St. Helen's. When the canal was devised, however, how to provide for locomotion for these barges was a problem.

"Mules couldn't be used, and there were circumstances which made steam impossible, but an inventive genius finally solved the riddle by sug-

gesting that cross pieces of timber be placed along the roof of the canal, which was very low, and men could lie on their backs on top of the loaded barges and 'kick' the vessel along. After the barge was once started this was found to be feasible.

The men could easily keep the load in motion by the means suggested, and it has ever since been in use. There is no question about the low grade of this sort of work, and even the men who follow it are constantly 'kicking' around the villages where they live. They were known at the mines officially as 'kickers' because of their work, and their vocal complaints continually indulged in, caused every one at Wormsley's or St. Helen's, no matter what their station or employment, who indulged in complaints to be called 'kickers.' I presume that the origin of the word, as we use it, is just what I have suggested.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

**Melon Was a "Peach"**

Gustam is truly a connoisseur, and the culinary feats he can perform upon a two-burner gas stove in his apartment is the wonder of his friends. He has been on the lookout for delectable delicacies potent to cool and refresh. The luxury that tickled his palate most was a watermelon that had been doctored with rum and claret and cooled to the freezing point.

Inspired by this work of art, Gustam forthwith planned a surprise for a few of his friends. He procured a huge watermelon, the necessary rum and wine, and, in accordance with the recipe, stirred up a mixture, plugged the melon, poured in the liquid, inserted the plug and set the whole in the refrigerator to cool for two days. Then, summoning his friends, he cut the melon.

Before taking a bite himself, Gustam proudly awaited laudatory remarks and exclamations of praise. His friends ate in silence. Upon tasting his slice Gustam could detect but the faintest flavor of rum and wine. What had become of the two quarts of

liquor he had put in? Much mystified, he explained the circumstances, but all the comfort he got was the accusation that he had been "stingy with the booze" and the admonition "to put more in next time." As it was, however, they got away with half of the melon and then Gustam called the janitor and gave him the other half.

An hour or so later the janitor's wife knocked at the door, and as she faced Gustam and his guests she began with a great show of righteous wrath: "Misther Chus (hic) tum, wot did yez put (hic) in thot malon? Me ould mon (hic), me ould mon—me ould mon (hic), ish down there yellin wid (hic) th' jimjams! Oi wanta know whash yez put (hic) in thot—in thot malon! Ish ut a joke (hic) —a joke thot yez put up (hic) on um? Oi wanta know (hic)!"

The truth dawned upon Gustam. By reason of the melon lying two days in one position the rum and wine had all settled in the lower end and he had given that end to the janitor.—New York Press.

**Odd and Fanciful Idea**

An odd and fanciful idea is advanced by Zona Gale, writing for Outlook, in which she gives her reason for her "discovery" as "the coming of Semiramis." Now Semiramis is evidently a cute, furry little kitten, and so the owner of this dainty feline says:

"It has long been my belief that fairies are the little souls of something. At first I was puzzled to know of what, but since the coming of Semiramis it is quite simple. Her mysterious amber eyes and lithe little body of furry silver have taught me the truth; fairies are the souls of all little kittens. And let only him deny this who can cast the first proof to the contrary!

"I say let 'him' deny it; for what-

ever is fragrant to believe and pleasant to preach about the kittens of the world, every woman is fain to accept and to repeat. How gladly, then, will she welcome such a fair doctrine as this concerning the kittens that have left the world! And if her own 'little lion, small and dainty sweet,' be still her daily companion, she has only to sit with it in her arms for an hour some night when the moon is full, to understand that to all strange, sweet influences and potent, hidden presences the reticent, eerie little creature is akin. Especially will she feel this if, as I trust every woman who loves a kitten knows, it has been named for some beautiful dead queen."

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