

piece of work, in which the abstract idea, which properly belongs to philosophy, would be primary, and the concrete illustration, which is the distinctive creation of art, would be secondary. On the other hand, when a great artist like Shakespeare deals with the problem, he creates a marvelously distinct personality like Macbeth, so real, so individual, so instinct with life that in the very perfection of his flesh and blood, the reality of his relation to the world about him, he becomes forever after an incarnation of the passion which masters him. In the very narrowing of the general idea into the limits of a genuine, breathing human spirit its depth and reality are finally disclosed with almost overwhelming impressiveness. Vague generalizations have no power to inspire the artist; success in this highest and most permanent of all forms of expression depends on definite, clearly realized, strongly marked types; and the more perfect the type the wider and more complete the revelation of the general truth which is made through it.

This law governs not only in the world of art, but also in the world of mind and character. Original, creative persons do not attain power and influence by the method of aggregation, by adding knowledge to knowledge; they attain full self-unfolding by developing what is germinal within them along natural lines; they grow by the expansion which comes from appropriating that which vitally relates itself to them. The vocabulary of such persons is not made up of generalized words; it is in the highest degree specialized; it is so completely individualized that the stamp of ownership is visible on every sentence. The words are grasped close to the roots where they are most succulent and fresh. This is the secret of picturesque, vivid, first-hand style, which is never composite or derivative, but always simple, immediate, and intensely personal. It is the peculiar peril of this age that there are so many things to obscure the working of this law. The opportunities of study and travel are so great that the age tends to a fascinating but unproductive eclecticism in education, philosophy, and religion rather than to a high and fertile originality. Active minds, full of curiosity and eager to explore the round world in quest of the new, the fresh, and the unknown, waste and debilitate themselves by endeavoring to take into themselves that which is not related to them and which they cannot assimilate. They add to their knowledge, but they do not add to their power. Their minds are like many houses into which one goes at this end of the century, which are furnished from the scourings of the globe, but are without harmony or individuality of taste, order or ornament—private museums, filled with fragments and survivals of civilizations, odds and ends of the centuries. This, it need hardly be said, is not home-making; it is not the fruit of the art spirit; it is simply collecting, which is a very different matter.

The universal range of the mind, without definite aim, indiscriminate, omnivorous, excited, does not secure education, freedom, power, or originality. It is a vicious method, it results in a derivative instead of a creative life of the mind, and it involves a slow decay of individuality. Men and women who fall victims to this temptation to waste their force over a wide field, instead of intensifying it by concentration, become, at last, vague generalizations of the vital principle rather than clear, powerful, and commanding types. In their endeavor to grasp all, they forget that truth comes, not by searching, but by growing; that it cannot be gathered here and there by the tourist, but must be patiently absorbed and assimilated. The capacity for truth is exactly measured by the capacity to incorporate it into character. Beyond the limits of that capacity it is impossible to go, strive and struggle as we may. We can take in only that knowledge which is vitally related to us. We may go on indefinitely adding facts, knowledge, ideas, which are not related to us, but we are neither enriched by them, nor can we command them. They do not belong to us; they often encumber and smother us. In electing to be original and creative, to make any real contribution to life, or to secure the fullest development which life affords, one must elect to pass by a great deal of knowledge because it is impossible to absorb it. The tree, which lives by an infallible instinct, if such a phrase is permissible, takes out of the

soil and the atmosphere those things which feed it, in quantities which it can absorb. In like manner, a human soul can take out of life only those elements which belong to it by reason of affinity with its type. It must leave other elements alone; they belong to other types of mind and character. One may be *either* an Oriental or an Occidental, but one cannot be *both* without a confusion of fundamental ideas which goes to the very bottom of one's nature; and yet this is precisely what a great many people are trying to be to-day. If one wishes to have a complete and rounded personality, and to avoid being a heterogeneous collection of unrelated and inharmonious parts, one must understand his own type and appropriate those things which are vitally related to it. The artist, the man who strives after perfection, is revealed, as Schiller says, quite as much by what he discards as by what he accepts. Rejection is quite as important as selection in a fully developed and productive life.



Prayer as an Offensive Weapon

By the Rev. H. L. Wayland, D.D.

It is well known that there was not between Manning and Newman that oneness which might have been expected between two great dignitaries of the Church which claims for itself, above all other bodies, the distinction of unity. The two were strangely unlike in character, and, while their intercourse was characterized by decorous courtesy, they at times, in the language of Dr. Fairbairn,¹ "fell into amenities of the feline order." If they had been worldly laymen, they would probably have had it out with each other—if gentlemen, with words; if costermongers, with fists; but, they being ecclesiastical dignitaries, it took the form of praying for each other. In declining the proposal of Manning for a conference in which all their differences might be explained away and replaced by oneness, Cardinal Newman wrote: "I propose to say seven Masses for your intention and for the difficulties and anxieties of your ecclesiastical duties." Cardinal Manning, not to be outdone in courteous severity, retorts: "I shall have great pleasure in saying one Mass every month for your intention during the coming year." (I presume that "for your intention" is a technical expression meaning "for your benefit.") All this illustrates the fact that cardinals and archbishops are but men, that the scarlet cap and the purple robe do not change the head or the heart which they cover.

Those who have had much experience of the differences of opinion prevailing among the good must have been struck with this noticeable fact, that where a secular antagonist calls you a fool, and prefaces the word with a very strong past participle, the good man, especially if he is a philanthropist, expresses the intensity of his detestation of you and your views by saying, "I will pray for you." He uses a certain inflection which cannot very well be expressed in type, which seems to say: "Every other expedient is exhausted; your criminal obstinacy and malevolence are beyond the reach of human remedy, and I must ask God to take hold of your case. I *hope* that he may be able to reach you, though the hope is hardly justified by wisdom or warranted by faith." When we consider the sentiments that are half veiled and half revealed by the expression, "I will pray for you," one can hardly wonder at the reply of a gentleman who, when some one said to him, "I will pray for you," replied, "It will be taking a great liberty if you do."

I was once present in a religious assembly (at least somewhat religious) when the subject of practical measures for the suppression of intemperance was under discussion. Some brethren, taking their lives in their hands, expressed a doubt as to whether a complete remedy was found in the advocacy of prohibition. A truly excellent brother thereupon took up his parable and offered prayer, asking to this effect: "O Lord, grant that all these brethren who are so fond of the saloon may have a saloon put right next to their

¹ "Contemporary Review," March.

own doors, so that they can see how good it is." One felt disposed (after this effort to prejudice, if I may so speak, the Divine Mind) to rise to a question of privilege and to move that the other side be now heard in prayer.

I observed recently that a clergyman had prayed for the actors who were appearing in town, asking that they might no longer be engaged in demoralizing and ruining the youth of the place, but that they might be led to devote such talents as they possessed to better purposes. Thereupon one of the actors brought a suit against the clergyman for libel. The case was novel; I shall await with great interest the final judicial decision. May we consider that prayer, like the deliverances of the confessional, constitutes a privileged communication? It will be a somewhat dangerous precedent if it is judicially ruled that a man may say what he please about his neighbors if only he throw the accusation into the form of a prayer, and address his remarks ostensibly to the Divine Being. But then, on the other hand, the view might be taken that, if the person who prays is sincere and is a Christian, he has prefaced his petition with the prayer that God's will may be done, and if so, he is perhaps seeking that his prayer may not only be unanswered, but be turned back on itself and made a plea for the other side. Perhaps there is something to be said under this head in favor of the liturgical churches, where, although the hearer may interpret the prayer on the one side or on the other, yet he cannot very well prove anything that could be made a ground for a libel suit against the officiating clergyman, since emphasis and intonation and expression could hardly be brought into court.



Christ's Teachings on Social Topics

IX.—Christ's Standard of Values¹

By Lyman Abbott

Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?—Matthew vi., 25.

There is only one answer to that question. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. This, then, states Christ's standard of values. Things are made for men, not men for things; and success is to be measured by the development of character, not by the accumulation of wealth.

And yet, though this seems a self-evident proposition, it is practically denied, and has been from the foundation of the world. The old political economy, if it does not actually deny, at all events entirely ignores it. Political economy is the science of accumulating and distributing wealth. It concerns itself simply with wealth. It has nothing to do with the effect on men of the process of accumulating or distributing that wealth. "Political economy," says John Stuart Mill, "is concerned with man solely as a being who desires wealth, and who is capable of judging of the comparative efficacy of means to that end." Again, "Political economy considers mankind as occupied solely in acquiring and consuming wealth." And yet it is supposed that the study of political economy is the study which is to teach us the relations between labor and capital. Its standard of values is wholly material. That is the best system which accumulates wealth the best, or certainly the best system which accumulates and distributes wealth the best. What is its effect on individual men, whether it is making them wiser, better, happier, truer, nobler—that it has nothing to do with. Society is a machine, and the machine that grinds out the greatest material grist is, according to political economy, the best machine. If it does not affirm this, at all events this is the only aspect of life that it concerns itself with. And yet political economy is the science which is supposed to teach us the relations between labor and capital.

On this assumption of political economy, that man is solely occupied in accumulating wealth, our mercantile standards are based. Of course, here on a Sunday even-

ing, under this great roof and during this sacred service, your measurements of life will be somewhat different, but to-morrow largely they will be mercantile measurements. The successful man is the man who has made wealth. The man who has lost wealth has failed. What is this but to say that the standards of life are material standards? The newspaper that can advertise that it has the largest circulation and takes in the greatest receipts for advertising and the greatest receipts for subscribers, and can have some affidavits to prove it, and some able and learned men to testify that they have examined the books and are satisfied that it is the case, flaunts its flag of great prosperity. It is not the question what the newspaper is doing to make men wiser or better or happier or more virtuous, but how much money it is making. That is the measure. Colleges are, to a considerable extent, measured in the same way. What is the college's endowment? How large are its buildings? How much money has it in its treasury? Even churches and ministers are measured by this yardstick. Is the church a rich church? Are all its pews rented? Does it pay a good price to its minister, and a good price to its choir? What is its financial standing? The Nation is tested in the same way. We are told with jubilation that in twenty-five years the wealth of America has increased from fourteen thousand millions to forty-four thousand millions, and these dollar-marks are given as the best evidence of the Nation's prosperity. And then details are given. We are told how many million dollars the agricultural products were. We are told that one-third of the gold output of the whole world comes from the United States. We are told that in ten years' time the United States built, on an average, sixteen thousand miles of railroad each year—enough to go two-thirds around the globe. We are told that private capital, without any proclamation, has built in a single year more miles of railroad than Russia is proposing to build in its famous railroad from the Siberian frontier to the Pacific coast. These facts—the amount of our corn crop and our cotton crop and our manufactured products and our railroad-building and the increase of our general wealth from fourteen thousand millions to forty-four thousand millions—are the tests and evidence of the greatness of our Nation. The tests are material tests.

Now, Christ says that is not the test. The test is character. The railroads, the shipping, the banks, the gold, the corn crop, the cotton crop, are for men, and the question is, What sort of men are you making? And that is the only question. More than that. Political economy defends itself in putting the material standard to the front, for, it is said, you must make money before you can spend it, and the first thing to do is to attain the material prosperity. When you have gotten your money, then you may build schools and churches, you may print newspapers and books, you may serve the spiritual and intellectual ends of mankind; but first get your money. Christ says, No, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Character comes first. When you have the character, when you have the men produced—men of integrity, men of uprightness, men of divine nature—then wealth will be added. Man first, wealth afterwards, says Christ. Wealth first, then man, says political economy. Wealth the standard of value, says political economy. Man the standard of value, says Christ.

All things in life are to be measured by this standard. The life is more than meat. The body is more than raiment. By this you are to measure religion and religious institutions. That community is not the most religious which has the most splendid cathedrals, the most gorgeous ritual, the most beautiful music; it is that which has the best men. Not in Italy, with its splendid St. Peter's, not in Spain and France, with their magnificent cathedrals, centuries in building, in which nations you find the greatest proportion of illiteracy, but in Puritan New England, with its plain school-houses and its plain meeting-houses, in which in the olden time every man and woman and child could read, is the greatest and the best religious life.

By this you are to measure government. Not that is the greatest government which governs the best to-day, but that which by the very process of government is developing the best manhood for to-morrow. It may be that

¹ Sermon preached at Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, Sunday evening, February 16, 1896; reported stenographically by Henry Winans and revised by the author. For the previous sermons in this series and two sermons introductory to the series see The Outlook for January 4 and 18, February 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29, March 7 and 14, and April 4.