

and preserve his own reputation. I have in my possession a letter which he wrote to me concerning an attack that a reader of *The Outlook* had made upon me for an opinion I had expressed. It was written in March of this year. My father wrote:

All my life I have made my enemies serve me. For I have assumed that prejudice is often more keen than friendship, and that a hostile critic will often discover a fault which a friend or even a judicially-minded reader will fail to observe.

The natural product of such a life was poise, freedom from harassing worry, a peaceful mind. Anxiety not infrequently troubled him; but he never was anxious about the things which he could not help, and about the things that he could help he was anxious only concerning the rightness of his own judgment. And not even his anxiety was disturbing enough to shatter his sense of humor. He was more anxious, for instance, about the health of others than he was about his own. In the fall of 1919 he was anxious about me, as I can now see by re-reading his letters at the time, but he made his humor serve his concern, and he wrote to me the following letter:

Thanksgiving Day
1920

My dear Ernest:

Can't you get from the office away
For a day,
Or more
Say four:
Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday
Then you'd be good for something
Monday.
I've been told
And learned of old
That for a cold
The best
Cure is rest
Stay in bed
When your head
Feels like lead
And you cough
Fit to joggle it off.
Drop your work
Learn how to shirk
'Twill be no loss.
Your boss.

Is it any wonder that a man who can write of his anxiety for others in this way looked forward to his own departure from this world with placidity? All that he dreaded as old age advanced was the pain that might accompany the losing of his physical vitality. Among the papers that he left after his death is the following memorandum, which came into the possession of one of my sisters shortly after my father's eighty-fifth birthday:

Old Age. Some Reflections—Fragmentary.

As I grow older current themes interest me less, and I feel less capable of dealing with them. Partly because I cannot complete them; partly be-

cause the younger generation are more competent to *understand* them and to act concerning them.

My eighty years of experience shows me that we are progressing. If, for example, we could solve the slavery problem in 1860, we shall be able to solve the labor problem in 1920.

My greatest difficulty is to leave the current problems in the hands of the rising generation and have faith in them.

I study less, reflect more; retire more within myself. Gradually my hold on this life lessens, my anticipation of the future life grows more vital. Can I not say that my delights are fewer, my contentment greater; my pleasures fewer, my happiness, if not greater, at least more uniform? I used to take care of others; I am gradually learning to let others take care of me.

LYMAN ABBOTT.

Even in his last few hours his fragmentary and sometimes scarcely audible conversations with his children were turned with pleasantries. He was thoughtful for those whom he was about to leave, but he was not looking back. As he had been throughout his life, he was still standing in the bow of the boat.

As I stood beside his bed and told him how much he had meant to his children and grandchildren, he smiled and said, in a voice that hesitated for weakness but not for any search for words:

"I want for them the object and purpose in life that I have had. 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.' I have fought a good fight—though I have had defeats. I have finished my course—finished my course—though I have sometimes faltered and turned aside. And I have kept the faith—in spite of doubts and perplexities—such doubts and perplexities as every one must have who rests his faith on things that are invisible."

ERNEST HAMLIN ABBOTT.

DR. ABBOTT AT WORK

PROBABLY the first time the name of Lyman Abbott became known to me was over forty years ago. I had read something about the synoptic Gospels, was ingenuously surprised to learn that there was such a discussion, and sent some question to the query column of the *"Illustrated Christian Weekly."* I was soon again surprised to find my inquiry honored by being taken as a text for a long editorial signed Lyman Abbott. What impressed me then was what later, when I came to work with and under Dr. Abbott, impressed me in all Dr. Abbott's writing, the clarity and simplicity of style and the fairness to those with whose views he did not agree. This was admirably

expressed in an article about Dr. Abbott written many years ago for the *"World's Work"* by his associate Hamilton Mabie, when he said: "He is a born truth-lover and truth-seeker, with remarkable working power, remarkable faculty of assimilation, and a natural gift of clear, persuasive statement." And I particularly like a phrase used in this same article, "So engrossed is he in what lies before him that he carries no luggage of self-consciousness or self-satisfaction."

Few literary workers can accomplish more in a given time and make less fuss about it than could Dr. Abbott. When he was at his desk, he worked smoothly, steadily, and rapidly, without the slightest nervousness or sign of excitement. I have heard many stenographers say that he was the best possible giver of dictation because he did not hurry nor hesitate. When one looks at the long list of books he wrote and recalls the vast number of editorials, reviews, addresses, and sermons he prepared, one might suppose him a slave of work. Not a bit of it; he was a slave to nothing. He was an incomparable manager of his time and effort. He once said that in his work he had two governing principles: "First, not to do anything himself which he could get any one else to do; second, to take his rest as a preparation to his work, and not as a restorative after it." The first clause must be taken semi-playfully, though he certainly did know how to utilize assistance; the second is eminently characteristic.

Serenity, tranquility, courtesy, fair-mindedness—those were the qualities that have impressed me during the thirty-five years and more I have watched Dr. Abbott at work and heard him discussing public questions and policies in editorial conferences. I never—never once—knew him to lose his temper, and I doubt very much whether any one else did. Indignation at things that were wrong, disapproval of measures injurious to the country, he had, but personal antagonism or hatred of individuals was not in his nature. Twice I have heard him say, in effect, "Do not let that man's name ever appear in the paper," but in both cases the man was guilty of personal moral delinquency against home and family, and was at the same time posing as a leader or teacher.

Many people have called Lyman Abbott a prophet. It would be an interesting study to compare his early utterances with the actual advance of the world toward liberalism in religion, industrial relations, and political progressiveness, and to see how closely his quiet, intellectual exposition of truth and justice long ago hit marks since reached and passed. Thus he was one of the first to use the phrase "industrial democ-

racy," the growth of religious tolerance was more than foreshadowed in his editorials fifty years ago, and he recognized the broad import of evolution in all branches of life and human endeavor, when the word was almost "taboo" among the conservatives.

In speech and in writing Dr. Abbott was the more convincing because he never "showed off," as the boys say. It has always been most refreshing in editorial conferences when a subject has aroused proponents and anti-ponents, to hear from Dr. Abbott a clear-voiced summing up of both sides, untouched by partisan feeling, with a final opinion perhaps beginning, "Now, as I see it, the real *principle* involved is," thus and so. That was why an observant Canadian writer in the "Welland Tribune and Telegraph" in an editorial about Dr. Abbott pays The Outlook the very great compliment of saying: "As a fighter it has been brave and fearless, but in its pages we have never seen a line that was harsh or bitter." That assuredly describes Dr. Abbott's spirit, and the writer truly adds: "As a preacher Dr. Abbott dwelt so much on love that he had no room for hell-fire, and his editorial policy was fashioned after his theology." Moreover, his hopefulness was always based on reason. A writer in the Portland "Oregonian" says: "Dr. Abbott was not only always an optimist, but he was convincing and not fatuous in his optimism because he was able to put his finger on the reason for his faith in the capacity of his fellow men to solve their own problems."

No one knew Dr. Abbott, whether at work or at play—and he loved both—without finding out sooner or later how much of himself he gave to others in kindness, helpfulness, and friendly remembrance. While he ordered his time and did not allow bores and faddists to impose indefinitely upon him, he never fobbed off coldly those who really wanted advice and sympathy. If the members of the several staffs of Outlook workers should compare notes, I know that there would be an astonishing number of cases where men and women have received spontaneous and voluntary letters of recognition of service or of sympathy in personal trouble, carefully handwritten in Dr. Abbott's best chirography—he used to say that he had three handwritings—one that everybody could read, one that the printers could read, and one that no one could read but himself.

Among ourselves here at the office, we often speak of The Outlook family—sometimes meaning the large body of readers who sympathize with the paper's ideas and have a home-feeling for it, sometimes meaning the group of work-

ers who help carry on its journalistic life. In either sense the "family" has looked to Lyman Abbott as its father, guide, and teacher. I believe that his influence is an abiding one.

ROBERT D. TOWNSEND.

AS A BOY KNEW HIM

LYMAN ABBOTT was almost as much a part of the world of my childhood as my own father and mother. The devoted friend and loyal associate of my grandfather, Lawson Valentine, he belonged as unquestionably in our family circle as those who owed place there to birth. He was an accepted fact, like the coming of morning and the warmth of the sun.

My memory of Lyman Abbott covers the last thirty years of his life. As I look back, it is not a memory of particular events, but rather a gradually growing comprehension of his towering spirit. I do not mean that I understand or can define that spirit. Even the astronomer who talks of light years cannot reach out and grasp the distant stars.

In that memory there are some things, however, which I should like to share with Lyman Abbott's friends. Placed before those who have listened to his voice for many years, perhaps they will not seem too intimate and personal for the printed page.

A child's life is like a spring welling up in a rolling plain. No power on heaven or earth can make the water of that spring flow otherwise than in accord with its inherent nature. In its course it must follow the laws of its being, but that course may be changed and deflected by the guidance of those who know the ways of wandering streams.

Thirty years ago I went with my father and mother to Lyman Abbott's Brooklyn home. There was, if I remember correctly, a service at Plymouth Church, a family dinner, and then an afternoon of friendly talk. Perhaps there was not much for a child to do; perhaps I manifested that restlessness not unknown to children of half a dozen years. I do not know. I only remember that Lyman Abbott left the circle of grown-ups, reached down to me, and said: "I am going for a walk. Would you like to go with me?" He took my hand in his and we went out on the street together. Down from Brooklyn Heights we walked and across to Brooklyn Bridge, spanning the East River with its tendrils of steel. I remember that when we came to a certain place on the Bridge he took a pin from his coat, stooped over, and thrust it into the roadway. When we returned to the

spot, perhaps half an hour later, the change in temperature had so worked upon the steel structure that the expansion plates had pushed the tiny pin aside. It was a direct demonstration of natural forces—a demonstration which Lyman Abbott explained to me in words which even my child's brain could understand. He did not talk down to me, he merely employed the method of explanation which he used all his life to give to others the fruit of his reason.

Out of the thousand things that must have touched me that year this only remains in my memory. It remains perhaps because it marked a turning-point in the development of my mind, the awakening of a new and eager curiosity concerning the world of which I was a part. It was a simple thing for Lyman Abbott to do, simple and natural. Probably he never thought of it again or dreamed for a minute that it might have any more significance than any momentary kindness.

Eight years later I found myself at boarding-school. I was beginning to discover for myself something of the world of letters and to grope rather blindly, as children do, for a way to express the dreams whirling through my mind. Sketches and poems for the school paper appealed to me as eminently more worth while than books which were not of my choosing. I fed myself unbalanced rations of Fiske and Carlyle, reading "Sartor Resartus," I remember distinctly, under a canopy of bed-clothes by the aid of a prohibited electric light. Books and the inevitable melancholy of extreme youth were my closest companions.

One day I found an envelope in my mail. It contained a five-page handwritten letter from Lyman Abbott. That letter is still in my possession, and I quote from it here:

I have just returned from a week's visit at Houghton Farm, where Mrs. Abbott and I had a capital time. I found in the Lodge some numbers of the Echo and having leisure read some of your contributions to it. . . . It seems to me that your writing gives promise of successful work in some form of literary career, and if you care for it, I would be glad to put the results of my experience at your disposal. I always hesitate to offer unasked advice, but perhaps if you felt inclined for it, an hour's talk with a friend might clarify your own ideas a little and that is the main thing. And I owe so much to your Grandfather that I should be very glad to feel that I had expressed my obligation by even a slight service to his grandson. All this is a long preliminary to asking you if you feel inclined to lunch with me at the Union League Club, at 39th Street and Fifth Avenue, on next Thursday, August