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The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

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"CATHOLIC" GOVERNMENT

First Paragraph of Quebec Speech From the Throne

The third session of our 23rd legislature is being opened at the beginning of a particularly noteworthy month because of two memorable events which are bringing much happiness to the people of our province. On November 1, our Very Holy Father the Pope defined the dogma of the glorious assumption of the Mother of God. In a few days' time, he will declare beatified the Venerable Marguerite Bourgeoys, an outstanding pioneer of education in Canada and the founder of a distinguished religious order which carries on its admirable work with great success. The Catholic government of the province of Quebec fittingly delegates two members of our executive council to these impressive ceremonies in the Eternal City.

—From *The Toronto Star*, Nov. 10, 1950.

(For comments on above document see article on page 3.)

50,000 ITALIAN R.C. IMMIGRANTS FOR CANADA?

THE English language press of this Dominion has recently given some space to publicizing the plans of the government to bring out some 25,000 immigrants from the British Isles. A Montreal paper, *Le Devoir*, now discloses in a brief note the additional information that 50,000 Italians are to be brought from Italy. We translate the following excerpts:

An Italian paper of Montreal has just announced that 50,000 Italian immigrants will be brought to Canada next year, as a result of an agreement reached between Canadian immigration authorities and the de Gasperi government. The news is likely enough.

This policy will not be displeasing to us. Of all the immigrants who have come to Canada in considerable numbers, the Italians turned most gladly toward us and have been integrated most easily among the French in Montreal and elsewhere.

It remains to be seen where our Ministry of Immigration will find the other 100,000 recruits which it needs to attain its objective.

The late Hon. Ernest Lapointe once remarked that the stock trick of Canadian politicians was to say one thing in French to Quebec, another in English to the rest of Canada. Here we have another example of the old game of those who curry favour with Roman Catholic Quebec: That province is now informed that 50,000 Italian Roman Catholic immigrants will be brought out to swell the Romanist vote in that province, which of course will be automatically deducted from the votes now controlled by English-speaking Canada in the House of Commons. The rest of the Dominion is informed only that Ottawa is seeking to bring 25,000 British immigrants, though we are not told that a fair proportion of them also will probably be Roman Catholics.

The birthrate of French-Canadians is already about double that of the rest of the citizens of this Dominion, and they now enjoy a special government subsidy on their large families, provided at the expense of the rest of the country in the form of Family Allowances, popularly known as "Baby Bonuses". According to the above news item, the Roman Catholic political machine is now to be aided with still another form of special governmental favour in the form of reinforcements by immigration from Italy, and we are sure that the Canadian government will take special pains to see that the Italians it accepts include only ardent Roman Catholics. Of course it will not put the matter in this fashion, it will say that it is taking special measures to screen out the Communists who so greatly trouble the papal church on its home soil. We too object to the slaves of the Kremlin entering Canada, and for the same reasons we object to the slaves of the Vatican being brought here as pawns in the game to win this Dominion for the pope.

We noticed the other day that Prime Minister St. Laurent, with a great show of toleration, unveiled a monument to a former premier who was an English-speaking Protestant and an Orangeman. This makes good reading for the front page to deceive the unwary, but the real news is to be found in the inside pages of the French-language organs of the Hierarchy where it is disclosed that the government of Mr. St. Laurent is occupied in importing contingents of future Roman Catholic voters from Italy.

—W.S.W.

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A SEMINARY GRADUATE IN FRANCE

Mr. Wilfred Bauman, a member of last year's graduating class writes as follows:

Paris, France,
le 8 novembre, 1950.

Dear Mr. Whitcombe,

I want to say a hearty thanks for the letters received from the French Week-end. I, too, was sorry that the Atlantic separated us. I will also enclose a note for the students who last year shared with Guy Appéré and me the joys of the week-end at Bobcaygeon.

It has been a particular joy for me to spend some time with the different pastors and churches of the French Association. I spent about a week in each of the churches at Bienne, Court, and Tramelan in Switzerland and in Montbéliard, Valentigney and Mulhouse in the East of France. Last Sunday morning I visited the church at "rue de Naples" and in the evening the church at "rue de Sèvres" in Paris. To-night I plan to attend the prayer meeting at Colombes, Paris. It is a rich experience to feel the spiritual pulse of these New Testament churches which are, as you said, "so close to our heart". It is indeed a privilege for Canadians to be able to help such faithful people worthy of our whole-hearted support. In spite of inadequate equipment in some quarters the spiritual programme is no less fervent. For instance, the group at the "rue de Naples" meets in the rented hall of the YWCA. The hall was unheated and the two co-pastors, Georges and Fernand Guyot, conducted the service in their overcoats. This did not, however, in any way hinder the warmth of the Christian atmosphere. The church of the "rue de Sèvres" is comfortably housed in a small newly decorated auditorium, made possible by the sacrificial labours of the members.

Bien affectueusement en Christ,

Wilfred Bauman.

QUEBEC, THE POPE'S CANADIAN PROVINCE

By W. S. Whitcombe, M.A.

ON THE front page of this issue is to be found an official document, the like of which it would be difficult, if not impossible, to discover in any other place in the world outside of Quebec. It is the first paragraph of the speech from the throne read last week at the opening of the legislature of that province. The first words which the Lieutenant-Governor, officially the representative of the King, spoke to the elected members of this democratic body were words of abject submission to a foreign prince, having to do with strictly religious sectarian matters in the sphere of dogma. Such an address would have been fitting for a cardinal-archbishop in welcoming his bishops to a solemn ecclesiastical conclave, but in a legislative assembly of a British Dominion it was utterly out of place, especially as the Province of Quebec includes a large minority of Protestants to whom the dogmas mentioned are utterly abhorrent. We doubt whether the Roman Catholic government now in the saddle in Italy would have dared to have flouted this new papal dogma before the Italian Parliament with such fine disregard for the strong Communist representation that opposes it. The sort of political piety which exploits religion for the sake of retaining office belongs to Spain or Portugal not to North America where religious freedom has flourished.

Special Privileges for Rome

We thank *The Toronto Star* for reproducing this glaring example of Romanist intolerance and disregard for the rights of the minority. Even without comment, the unadorned translation of this Quebec speech from the throne cries aloud to tell the world that here on Canadian soil, the oldest Province of Confederation proclaims itself as the private estate of the pope. It is indeed more Catholic than the pope himself, though it gives lip-service to democratic forms of government. It is not only in the first paragraph of the speech from the throne that Romanism shows itself but in almost every paragraph of the text. For instance, under the heading of "Health and Youth", the Quebec government asserts its concern for the religious welfare of its people: "... it is persuaded that bodily health is incomplete without spiritual health . . . It will help our young people in obtaining sane education and formation, respectful of eternal principles . . . It will always be agreeable to my government to contribute generously to the success of education in all its degrees, and to give full respect to the rights of parents and to those of the Council of Public Instruction . . ." The latter board is dominated by the members of the Hierarchy who take their place there *ex officio*. So that the last statement is a further assurance, in effect, that the people of Quebec will pay their taxes and then hand them over to their Lordships the Bishops to spend as they see fit on Roman Catholic education. And it will be noticed that this statement covers education, "in all its degrees" that is, not only at public and high school levels but in classical colleges and seminaries where priests are trained.

The Infamous "Padlock Law"

Further care is taken to assure pious Roman Catholics of our sister province that there will be no slackening

of the infamous "Padlock Law" by which any building may be locked up on the order of the Attorney-General, and against which no court action may be taken. "With a wise foresight," says the speech from the throne, "that other countries envy, my government has long carried on the fight against atheistic Communism which is the enemy of democracy and the spiritual values which make the wealth of our Christian civilization. The anti-communist fight will be pushed with more vigour than ever, if possible. It is a sacred duty which in no way endangers true liberty, that of decent people. . . ."

The Padlock Law endangers the true liberty of "decent" people neither one whit more nor one whit less than the Medieval Inquisition endangered the liberty of decent people in that epoch. It is necessary to add, however, that the "decent people" in both cases are the submissive members of the Roman Catholic Church. In Quebec, anybody and everybody who is opposed to the rule of the priests is at once labelled a "Communist" and treated as an outlaw. We know that "Plymouth Brethren" have been named as Communists. Baptists also share in that sobriquet, as do so-called "Jehovah's Witnesses", and all others whom the Hierarchy would like to get rid of by giving them a bad name. The Padlock Law simply erects into an instrument of law this vile prejudice and renders it possible to accomplish by legal procedure, the ends of mob-rule without recourse to the courts. It is the ancient principle of the bloody Inquisition embodied in a modern law passed by a Canadian legislative assembly: arrest, and punishment without trial. Little wonder that Communists are stronger in Quebec than in any other province in Canada, just as they are stronger in Italy than in any other land outside of Russia.

While the Duplessis government boasts of its loyalty to the pope, Baptists in Quebec languish in jail for having dared to preach the doctrines of the Bible on the street corner. A few months ago a mob wrecked the meeting-place of some law-abiding "Plymouth Brethren" in Shawinigan Falls, not far from the home town of Premier Duplessis, and the police stood idly by while an organized mob vented its hatred on Bibles, hymn-books, and other property within the meeting-house. Our friends the "Plymouth Brethren" did receive some financial compensation for damages and undertook to forget the matter on that condition. But we are not bound by any such agreement and therefore dare to mention this brutal example of Quebec's mob-rule in dealing with minorities. Hundreds of "Jehovah's Witnesses" have been arrested in Quebec and the trials drag out their weary length. All this is the principle if not the actual enactment of the Padlock Law and of the Speech from the Throne of the Pope's Private Canadian Province.

The Weakness of Priest-ridden Governments

And yet despite Mr. Duplessis' protestation of love and loyalty to the pope, vice abounds in the metropolis of Canada, as the present judicial inquiry being conducted reveals, and that with the full knowledge of the police force. Mr. Duplessis boasts of his love of Romanism and his tender regard for the French language, that "guardian of the faith", yet the natural resources of the province are largely under the control of large English-speaking companies, and Mr. Duplessis seems to find no obstacle either in his religion or his politics,

to favouring these huge corporations. Is the Quebec government's loyalty to the pope merely a "front", a fine veneer on the outside, while the inside of the cup, like that of many a political party, is "full of extortion and excess . . . of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness"? As a warning to Quebec and especially to Mr. Duplessis and his nationalist clerical followers, we quote from a Belgian priest's discussion of clerical government:

As we read history again, we see that in the Middle Ages what was called Christendom was the source of terrible ambiguities. Carried away by the ideal, noble in itself, of the constitution of a social state in accordance with the requirements of the gospel, the men of the Middle Ages established inextricable confusion between temporal society and the Church. The states called themselves Christian and the Church was made jointly responsible, not only with what was truly Christian in the state, but also with the political form represented by the states and even with the person of their princes. . . .

Let us suppose a government that protects religion. What is meant by that? Not a government which by its attitude gives a striking demonstration of the value of Christianity by instituting, for example, a régime of perfect social justice, but a government which recognizes the Church by granting it an official place to its Pontiffs, making religious instruction obligatory in its schools, paying the salaries of the clergy, aiding the Church to undertake the work that seems necessary to it. All these are immediate religious values. Catholics will feel a very strong sympathy for a government of this sort, and will be inclined to wish it to remain in power, hence to support it.

But this government may, in other respects that we call indirectly religious, be violent and unjust. It may perhaps neglect the welfare of the people, be cruel towards its opponents, restrict the most legitimate liberties. Catholics will be inclined to consider all this as of secondary importance, even according to the measure of their fervour, confident that if the Christian life develops without hindrance, these little failings will disappear of themselves. Indeed, if good Christians favourable to the Church tolerate these disadvantages, is it not for reasons beyond their control which they alone, perhaps, know? In short, Catholics reason like Communists when they are faced with the cruelties and the injustices of the Russian Soviet. . . .

Lip-service Paid to Democracy

In view of the slavishly abject devotion expressed to the papal totalitarian dictator in the Quebec Speech from the Throne, English-speaking Canadians will regard the following excerpts with suspicion:

"In the Old Capital . . . representatives of each of the eleven governments of Canada gathered—a historical event of the highest significance—to lay the foundations of a new constitution that would be essentially Canadian, made in Canada, for Canadians and by Canadians. . . . It is evident that our Province is profoundly attached to democratic principles and to responsible government for the establishment of which our ancestors fought memorable battles. . . ."

Is it not a little more than strange that a party should speak thus that bows in supine lowliness before the papal throne, vaunting its implicit obedience in the infallibility of a foreign prince who claims to be an absolute tyrant in both the religious and political spheres? Does it paraphrase of Lincoln's words, as the Quebec address puts it: "A new constitution. . . essentially Canadian, made in Canada, for Canadians and by Canadians. . . ." do not these words clash most horribly with its cringing, fawning attitude to the pope? For Protestants the contradiction stands out, as current speech has it, "like a sore thumb". But many Roman Catholics, we are persuaded, are not aware of the clash, for the simple reason that they do not

understand and appreciate the real aim and design of their own church. Their ignorance does not do away with the real danger, indeed, in many respects it intensifies it by enlisting some genuine friends of democracy in the ranks of the papists, and at the same time in closing the eyes of some democratic people to the dangers of the Roman Catholic Church. They do not realize that this slogan of "Canada for Canadians" may be nothing other than a front behind which totalitarians may do their deadly work.

GEORGE WILSON

In 1830 George Wilson, in Pennsylvania, was sentenced by a United States court to be hanged for robbing the mails and for murder. Andrew Jackson, as president of the United States, pardoned him. Wilson refused the pardon and insisted that it was not a pardon unless he accepted it. That was a point in law never before raised in the United States of America. The Attorney General said the law was silent on the point. The President was urged to call upon the Supreme Court to decide the point at once, as the sheriff must know whether to hang Wilson or not. Chief Justice John Marshall gave the following decision: "A pardon is a paper, the value of which depends upon its acceptance by the person implicated. It is hardly to be supposed that one under sentence of death would refuse to accept a pardon; but if it is refused, it is no pardon. George Wilson must hang." And he was hanged.

Who was responsible for his death? No one but the man himself. The law said he must die. The President stepped between him and the law, and the man refused the pardon.

Indirectly the Supreme Court of the United States decided that the truth of the atonement of Christ in making provision for the salvation of the whole world is beneficial only to those who receive Him as their own and accept the provisions of redemption.—Selected.

ON KEEPING ONE'S SIGHT CLEAR

There is always a direct connection between the condition of the heart and the character of the sight. We cannot be careless about our heart and yet retain the accuracy of our vision. As is the heart so will be the eyes. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." That is the supreme example of the law, but the law has a hundred negative applications, and every one of them proclaims that a defect in the heart will be registered in a corresponding defect in the sight. If there is moroseness in the heart there will most certainly be perversity in the outlook. If the soul is soured the vision will be veiled, and the veil will be as a tinted lens which confuses the natural colours of all things. Suppose you look at the world through a yellow pane of glass. Why, then you have a yellow world. Suppose you look through a dirty pane of glass. Why, then everything is defiled. Suppose you look at everything through the yellow pane of jealousy, or the red pane of envy—why, then you disfigure everything. And if you look at things through a soured disposition you will not see anything that is lovely or sweet. The cynical heart has a charmless world.

—J. H. JOWETT

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

The Story of the Dying Thief—A Stupendous Miracle of Grace

A Sermon by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, November 12th, 1950
(Electrically Recorded)

"And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, 'If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, 'Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.'—Luke 23:39-43.

THERE is, I think, nothing more interesting and profitable to the true child of God, than a re-examination of the riches of His grace. I believe there is only one real heresy in the ultimate analysis of things, and that is the substitution of human effort for Divine grace; the presumptuous attempt on the part of man to do that which lies exclusively within the Divine prerogative, and can be accomplished only by the sovereign grace of God. And yet how little in these days do we hear of the grace of God. I remember speaking with a man, who was not without quite an extended experience as a preacher, who said to me, "I think I preach the grace of God, although I must say I do not use the word." How any man can proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ without the use of the word "grace," I do not understand. I have said to you a thousand times I think, that it is the biggest word in any language; it is wide as the East is from the West; it is as deep as Hell and as high as Heaven. It is a word which defines the operations of the Divine Spirit in the soul of a man. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." And this familiar story of the salvation of the dying thief is a conspicuous illustration of the immeasurable grace of God. I know you have heard of it a hundred times, you have thought of it much, and even if I should have no new thing to say whatsoever, it will do us good just to think of it again.

I once went to hear a great preacher preach. He did not say one thing that I had not heard a hundred times; he gave me no information that I did not already possess, and coming out from that service I met another minister, who said rather a significant thing. He said, "He told us nothing new, but he just took the old truths, the jewels of the Gospel, and held them up to the sunlight that they might be glorified." That is all I can do.

I.

Now to our story. There is in this story THE CONFESSION OF ONE WHO WAS OBVIOUSLY A TRUE AND SINCERE PENITENT. It is well to think of him a little in contrast with the other malefactor who was also hanged upon the tree. The other Evangelists tell us that both the thieves that were hanged with Him railed on Him. That being so, then the penitent thief must have received some special illumination, which changed his whole attitude, even after he had been nailed to the cross.

But look at the other man. He also addressed the Lord Jesus, but he joined in the chorus of those who mocked the suffering Son of God. They had brought him to the cross religiously, for claiming to be the Messiah, that is, the religious world had demanded His death; and the civil power had been invoked to inflict the death penalty, because it was alleged that He had called Himself a King, in competition with Caesar. Now that He was nailed to the cross, the high priest and others said, "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." The impenitent thief said, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." His idea of salvation was merely to be saved from the physical suffering, and all the shame and humiliation that was involved in crucifixion; he asked for a physical and temporal salvation, which was the only thing in which he had any interest. And as for the religious leaders of the day, who were even then smarting under the Roman yoke, they said, "If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him." Both of them wanted a salvation without a cross, and a salvation that was merely temporal and carnal, applying to the physical and not to the spiritual. Apparently they had no consciousness whatever of the conflict of moral and spiritual principles which was taking place at the cross, where principalities and powers were defeated, and where the suffering Saviour triumphed over them.

And there are a great many people in our day who ask for a religion without a cross. The offence of the cross has not ceased. There is nothing the devil and his votaries hate so much as the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. You may preach Christ as an exemplar of moral principles; you may represent Him as an idealist who died for His dreams; you may present Him in many aspects of His marvellous character without offence, so long as you do not preach Christ crucified. Oh yes, you may preach Him crucified if you contend His crucifixion was but the culmination and climax of a life devoted to an ideal; preach Him as a martyr, but do not preach Him as the Lamb of God, the One who died in your room and stead, and my room and stead. That is a most offensive Gospel.

I remember many years ago preaching in Winnipeg in a large Opera House. There was a great crowd of people, and at the close of the service (I had preached on the cross) a lady came to me and said, "Do you like

to make people angry?" I said, "No, I do not. If of course they become angry with the truth, that is not my responsibility." She said, "There was a man in one of these boxes who went out furiously angry to-night. He said that sort of thing was an insult to modern intelligence; that doctrine of the slaughter house was inexpressibly obnoxious to anyone of refined sensibilities." I said, "I shall not lose any sleep over his fulminations." Some time later I received a letter from a mother. She said, "When my son went away from home I gave him a Bible; I wrote his name in it, and the date on which I made the gift. Recently I received a letter from him in which he said that he had written in the fly-leaf of his Bible this note: 'Converted in Winnipeg Opera House under a sermon preached by Rev. T. T. Shields, on such a text.'" Some years later I got a letter from a man who was president of some student organization in one of our Ontario colleges. He said, "I would like you to come and speak to the students." I went, and he met me, and introduced himself to me; I have forgotten the name. He said, "I think my mother wrote you some years ago, telling you of my conversion," and he related the circumstances of the case. I said, "I am delighted to have the opportunity of meeting you." So he introduced me to a large body of students, giving his testimony, how years ago he had been saved by hearing a sermon on the blood.

This impenitent thief did not want anything like that. He had no appreciation whatever of the significance of that central cross. "Let him now come down from the cross."

That is the voice, very largely, of modern organized religion; that is the voice of the World Council of Churches. They want a social gospel; they demand that Christ should come down from the cross, and they will believe. Indeed, the alleviation of temporal ills, the ministration of the Gospel to our economic system, the present social order—that is to be the test, upon the grounds of which they will accept it. Yes. "When we see the Gospel making this world a paradise we will believe it." You will never believe it then. Once they would have put a crown upon His brow when He had fed them with loaves and fishes. You feed people, and they will crown you. And the modern church is devoting most of its energy, as perhaps I have said to you before, in trying to get the prodigal a better job in the far country, but they would leave him there; it is quite unimportant that they should bring him home. Is that the condition upon which you rest your acceptance of the Gospel?

The penitent thief discerned by some means in the word of the impenitent thief an entire lack of Godly fear. He said, "Dost thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?" "We are all alike here."

If you are going to make that the test of the acceptance of Christ, what follows? Look at Russia; look at Germany, and all of Europe; all of Asia; all of India; Europe, including Britain, with its bread and butter Socialism; look at America; look at Canada. We are in the same condemnation; there are crosses everywhere. We cannot escape, apparently, these physical disabilities and deprivations, even intense suffering. What of it? "Well," said the penitent thief, "as far as we are concerned we deserve it all." Don't you think this wicked world deserves just what it is getting? A clergyman in England during the war said something like this. I quote from

memory, it is not his exact words: Our people in the summertime preferred the seaside and the beaches to the house of God; now we are debarred from the seashore by barbed wire entanglements, and every kind of fortification; we were unwilling to sacrifice any of our pleasures in order that we might serve God, and now we are rationed in everything that enters into the comforts of human life. He said, We violated the Sabbath, and would not honour God's day, and now we must be on guard all day and all night Sunday, scanning the heavens for the messengers of death. I love England, but Godless England asked for all she received.

I read the other day an appalling description of things in Germany, perfectly dreadful. My friends from New Zealand, to whom I referred this morning, who were here last Sunday, had motored through Germany, and I know not where else—they told me, too. I said, "On humanitarian grounds, I suppose we ought to sympathize with them, but they asked for everything they received." What of ourselves? The bombs did not fall on us, but we dug graves across the sea; they did not fall on the United States, but they lost hundreds of thousands. The world that mocked at the sending of missionaries to preach the Gospel, is bowed almost into the grave with the weight of taxation, which everyone must bear, to pay for the fruit of human folly the world around. We are in the same condemnation, all of us, and we are far from being through with it.

I become weary reading the reports of religious assemblies, where it seems to me they have nothing to talk about but ministers' salaries, and the bread and butter question in some form or another everywhere, all of them saying, "Come down from the cross and we will believe you." But my dear friends, He will not come down from the cross; He came to this world to die, and die He did.

It is worth noticing that *this man acknowledged that crucifixion was his just dessert*. He was suffering just as Jesus was suffering; he was in very truth "crucified with Christ," and he said, "I deserve it," and to the other thief he said, "You deserve it too; we receive the due reward of our deeds." That is true repentance. When we see sin to be that abominable thing that God hates, that thing that can be atoned for only by death—only when we come to the place where we have to acknowledge "I do not deserve to live at all, that is the due reward of my deeds, the cross; I see it in Him who became sin for me." I believe true repentance offers no excuse for sin, makes no allowance for it at all. When you find a man excusing himself, justifying himself, you can be sure that the Spirit of God has something more to do in that man's heart, for when he is ripe, if I may so say, to receive salvation, he is at the end of all excuses, and he says, "I deserve all this, and nothing less."

Now he must have observed, too, *the sinlessness of the Lord Jesus*, for he said, "This man hath done nothing amiss." I do not suppose he had entered into the philosophy of the thing, but in that fact there was a tremendous problem. Here was a Man in an ordered universe dying, receiving the wages of sin, Himself being without sin. That tremendous fact argues either the failure of the moral government of the universe, or else its inexorable precision, one or the other. Once we see that He was our substitute, that He stood in our place, in our room and stead, then we can understand how the spotless Lamb of God could die. But on any other ground

a God of justice must have abdicated His throne, and laid His sceptre by, and permitted the reward of sin to fall upon someone who had never merited it. 'Oh, don't you see, dear friends, the conclusion is inevitable, and perhaps this man at least understood that in some strange way the sufferer on the central cross was dying in his room and stead.

II.

Lët me go back a moment to remind you, as we come to AN ANALYSIS OF THE PENITENT'S PRAYER OF FAITH, that the record says that he joined with the other thief in railing upon Jesus. It is said that, "The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth." "If you want us to believe you, come down from the cross." Apparently he had said it too. Why then does he now call Jesus Lord? I wonder, it is only a fancy, but I wonder if he had seen and heard Jesus somewhere before; had he been at some time one of the multitude who heard Him when He spake as never man spake? Had he been within hearing when, again and again, He said to those who came to Him, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven"? Had he been among those who heard the music of that wondrous invitation uttered in such a voice as earth had never heard before: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"? Perhaps some word of the Prophet of Nazareth had entered his mind, and had entered into the sub-conscious. He had not immediately profited by it, but it may have been there. Oh, this I know, that the seed of the word does not always germinate over night. I have heard of people being converted by the revival in their memory of some text of Scripture which they learned as a child. The seed was there, and after a while the Sun of Righteousness poured His rays upon it, and it began to germinate—first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear.

I do not know whether that was true—it might be—but I rather think *it is more likely that it was the demeanor of Christ at and upon the cross which impressed this man.* He was different from the others. The nails were just as painful, He only of the three did wear a crown of thorns, and all the mockery and railing were directed against Him, and not against them. They were just common malefactors, unworthy of any special attention. I wonder, did he begin to ask himself, "Who is this Man? He goes to the cross as though He were ascending a throne." "(He) through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God," and as God the Holy Ghost wrought in Him as He laid down His life, so He wrought, at least in that thief, and he saw something in Him which led him to call Him Lord. Can you call Jesus Christ Lord upon the cross? Anybody can call Him Lord upon the throne, persuaded of the actuality of it, but to see Him on the cross, stripped of all His royal robes, with five bleeding wounds, His precious body crimsoned with His own blood—can you look upon Him and call Him Lord there? If you can, and if you do, you will be saved. Lord!

It may be, you know, that he had heard *something of the Messiah*, if indeed he had not heard it before, he heard it upon the cross: "If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross," they said. He knew from the lips of His enemies that He had been called a King. He called Him Lord, and he knew that He was possessed of a Kingdom. But lest anyone should presume, I dare not say emphatically that this man had

ever before had an opportunity of directly addressing the Lord Jesus. Perhaps it was the first time he was ever near enough thus to pray. Don't you dare to say, "Oh well, the dying thief you know was saved at the eleventh hour." It may have been the first opportunity he ever had; you have had hundreds. Do not postpone it, and presume to hope that you may pray and find salvation as he did.

What was his prayer? *It was not a long one.* The most effectual prayers in the Scriptures were short prayers: "Lord help me," "Lord save me," "Lord, that my eyes may be opened," "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean," "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Very simple, very direct. This man hadn't time, perhaps he hadn't strength for an extended prayer. Three things he said, "Lord, I know Thou art Lord, and I know that Thou art coming into Thy Kingdom, and when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom remember me." You do not need to ask God to do any more than that—just to be remembered, that is all. That is all He asks of us—"This do in remembrance of Me." This is Remembrance Day, when multitudes in all the free countries of the earth have been remembering the heroes of two wars. But to the believer every day should be a day of remembrance, we should ever remember Him, and ask Him to remember us when He comes into His Kingdom.

Oh, I think often of the mockery and the raillery of those who profess and call themselves Christians; they hold this Book up to contempt, mock at the vicarious sacrifice, and make light of the Deity of Christ. My friends, it will be another story when He comes into His Kingdom, a very different story then. I think this dying thief had come to the place where he said, "Earth is just slipping away, I do not care what anybody thinks or does, but Lord, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom remember this poor sinner." What a prayer! That is the way to pray.

III.

Just a word or two about THE SAVIOUR'S ANSWER. He *promised him immediate salvation.* There are those who say, "You must not expect to be saved right in a minute." Why not? "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." I rather think this thief was surprised. He dated it on into the future when he said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. I do not know when that will be," and Jesus, I think, astonished him by saying, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." No need to wait for by and by. Now, now, now is the time, sitting where you are, if you are not a Christian. You do not need to move from where you are. To-day, this hour, we may be saved.

What did the Lord do? He did not touch him. Reverently may I say it, He could not; His hands were nailed to the tree. There was one thing He could do: he was saved by *the Saviour's word.* He who hung upon the central cross was identical with Him who said, "Let there be light, and there was light"; "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist," or hold together. It was He who said, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." I do not think he needed anything more than that. Surely the word of the suffering Saviour was enough to assure

him of his salvation. Never mind your feeling. I wonder if the dying thief felt anything. He was suffering, suffering terribly; crucifixion was designedly a painful death, and if you had asked him after that, if it had been possible, "How do you feel?" I think he would have said, "Don't talk to me about feeling; I have heard the word of life, and that is all I want." "To-day shalt thou be with me."

My dear friends, that is salvation—just to be with Jesus. I do not wonder that the man, out of whom the devils had been cast, coming to Jesus "besought Him that he might be with Him." "That is all I ask," he said. "Let me be with Thee where Thou art."

I value the church, I value its ordinances, I value Christian fellowship, and the ministry of Christian teachers and preachers—the Lord be praised for it all, but not one of them is necessary to my salvation. "None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good." He can do it, He will do it, He longs to do it.

"To-day shalt thou be with me . . ." *Where?* He was to be buried, and He would not rise until the third day. He did not say, "Thou shalt be with me after my resurrection." No, He said, "To-day shalt thou be with me . . ." In purgatory? No. There was no intermediate purgatory for this dying thief. Of course there is no such place. I always pity a Roman Catholic priest when he is called to minister to the dying, or when, after death, he may be called to minister comfort to the bereaved. What can he say? "The soul of your departed husband or wife or child or father or mother or friend, has now gone to purgatory, and is in purgatorial flames, but you can alleviate the pain of it by the saying of masses, if you pay for them, by penances and good works." Oh my friends, what a horrible doctrine that is, isn't it?

A High School boy came here to see me one day. He was a Roman Catholic, and he wanted some literature. We talked together, and he said, "Well, evidently you know something about it." I said, "I think so; I probably know a little more than you do, but you have been instructed; so I will ask you some questions: You believe in purgatory?" He said, "Yes." And I said, "You believe in hell?" He said, "Yes." I said, "What is the difference between the two?" "Well, hell is eternal and purgatory is not. Purgatory is where we suffer temporal punishment, punishment for a time, where we atone for sins committed since baptism." "Yes," I said, "but purgatory is not a very comfortable place is it?" "Oh no," he said, "the flames of purgatory are hotter than the flames of hell we are taught, only of course they do not last forever." I said, "No, but I read somewhere in one of your works, that somebody had estimated, by what means he knew I do not know, that the soul of a certain bishop had already been six hundred years in purgatory." I said, "Don't you think that is rather an extended sentence for such a place as that? Do you want to go there?" If that is all I have to offer do not ask me to go and comfort anybody who is bereaved; if I have no other message than that. No, this is my message—To-day the redeemed soul has departed to be with Christ, which is far better. Paradise? Yes, an intermediate state of some sort. I believe that those who depart this life are with Christ; I believe they are in a state of inexpressible enjoyment and delight, but they have not come into their own yet. I think there is Scripture for believing that those who die in their sins pass to a place of punishment, but even they have not "tasted death" as yet. On the

one hand not until soul and body are reunited, the Bible says, and they suffer in soul and in body the pains of the damned, whatever they may be. Conversely, those who have been redeemed are in a state of inexpressible bliss, but there is still something better in the future. The choir sang this evening, "Come on the Wings of the Morning," and He is coming, He is coming down from heaven, and when He comes He will change the bodies of our humiliation, that they may be fashioned like unto the body of His glory, and then we shall be able, yes with our hearts, in all the realm of the affection, we shall be able to enjoy the bliss of the redeemed, and with our intellects we shall be able to understand all mysteries, and even our bodies, like unto the body of His glory, will enter into the ineffable bliss of that ultimate state. But I shall be quite content with paradise for a while, won't you? That is good enough until the new Jerusalem comes down from heaven, as a bride adorned for her husband. Whatever it may be, this we know, that to die is gain, to depart is to be with Christ. "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." What a salvation that is, isn't it? Why don't you say Hallelujah? Sometimes I wish I had a congregation like a coloured man in Pittsburgh, whose services I used to listen to on the radio, on Sunday nights about midnight. He did me good. He was a good preacher, and he had a congregation of people who sang, and they clapped their hands too. I did not object to that. Sometimes I thought I could hear something like the stamping of feet, but in the midst of his sermon, when he would just soar away and talk about the glories of heaven, he would pause to say, "Can I get an 'Amen' for that?" Then there would be a chorus of it—"Amen, Amen." He would go on again, and then he would say, "Can I get an 'Amen' for that?" and they would say "Amen" again. I wish some of you would get your mouths open. Why don't you say "Amen"? I remember hearing of a Welsh preacher, who was preaching away, and labouring terribly, the engine was not working. He was doing his very best to get warmed up, but the people sat there stolidly. By and by he reached the crest of the hill, and he got into "high." Then he began to soar away, and then in the Welsh language they began to exclaim, "Hallelujah, Hallelujah." "Keep them to yourselves," he said. "Why didn't you shout them when I was coming up the hill? I do not need it now." Well, my dear friends, I feel very often like my dear late friend Dr. W. B. Hinson. One time I was presiding at a great meeting in Seattle, Washington, and our speaker for the afternoon service for some reason did not get there. I looked about to find somebody to fill his place, for it had been a great preacher that we had expected. I saw Dr. Hinson, and I said, "Dr. Hinson, I want you. Our preacher has not come, and so I am going to ask you to fill his place." I can see him now as he walked up the aisle, came up to the platform, and he said, "Well, I have no objection; I have a few sermons I like to preach to myself, just for my own profit, so I am just going to preach to myself this afternoon, and if you like, you may listen in. We listened in, and he carried us away into the heavens somewhere. Ah yes, dear friends, sometimes the preacher has to preach for himself. That is what I have done to-night. "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." What do I care what anybody says? What do I care what anybody thinks? I do not care what you say, as long as I have Christ as my Saviour, and know I am saved by His abounding grace. I believe I could even imitate Billy

Sunday, and laugh at the devil himself. Hallelujah, what a Saviour! Let us pray.

Lord, we thank Thee for this measureless grace. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are Thy ways higher than our ways, and Thy thoughts than our thoughts. As far as the East is from the West, so far hast Thou removed our transgressions from us. We thank Thee for that cross in the sky; we thank Thee for these fore-gleams, these pre-intimations of the infinite, of which by grace we are made heirs. Lord, give us a taste for heaven while we are still upon earth; help us to set our affections upon things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Bless our simple meditation this evening, help us just to rejoice in Thy salvation, for Thy Name's sake, Amen.

A SOUTH AFRICAN CONTRIBUTOR

WE introduce our South African Correspondent this week by two articles from his pen. One is a sermon on The Ignorance of Wisdom, and the other is a News Letter, giving us information of the aggressions of Rome in South Africa.

We made the acquaintance of Rev. John Poorter through Dr. John Wilmot, who visited Durban, South Africa last summer, and who, while there, worshipped in Mr. Poorter's Church, and ministered somewhat in his Berean Bible School. Dr. Wilmot speaks most highly of Mr. Poorter. We are, indeed, very grateful that he has consented to send us occasional contributions from South Africa. There will be News Letters and occasional articles. The two published in this issue, being samples, we are sure that our readers will welcome articles from Mr. Poorter's pen.

We venture a comment on Mr. Poorter's News Letter: It is the same old story everywhere: the battle for Evangelical principles against Modernism, and for the principles of the Protestant Reformation as against Rome, is not in danger of being lost on account of the superiority of the enemy, however superior in numbers. The enemy is gaining, let us say it plainly, by the contemptible, compromising, attitude and surrender of weak Evangelicals, and of Protestants who are Protestants only in name.

A PROTESTANT versus ROMAN CATHOLIC FLARE-UP IN SOUTH AFRICA

By REV. JOHN POORTER, B.A.

The Gospel Witness South African Correspondent

(See Sermon In This Issue)

A PROTESTANT conference which met at the end of October in Pretoria, administrative capital of the Union of South Africa, passed resolutions which caused an immediate anti-Protestant outburst throughout the country. Headlines, followed by indignant protests and repudiations, appeared in all major newspapers. Details of the resolutions were somewhat confused to begin with, but eventually emerged as follows:

The conference urged the Government to strengthen the Protestant element of the country through its immigration policy, by asking that when considering immigrants it should be borne in mind that South Africa was by constitution a Protestant country.

It was also resolved to make representations to the Government to ensure that no diplomatic representative should be sent to the Vatican, nor any Vatican diplomat be admitted to status in the Union.

These and other resolutions on the subject of State subsidies to Roman Catholic schools, provoked widespread anti-Protestant sentiments throughout the country. Within a few hours some Protestant leaders were repudiating the decisions of the conference, alleging that their representatives at the conference were merely observers, or "holding a watching brief". Newspaper articles "deplored the bigotry and intolerance", as they thought, of the conference, while private correspondents wrote of "Spanish inquisition methods" and "bitterness and hatred" being stirred up.

Chief target for the press was the Dutch Reformed Church, divided into one very large and two smaller groups (on minor doctrinal differences) on whose combined initiative the conference was called. The following of the Dutch Reformed Church, for all races in the country, is about two and a half millions, easily the most powerful religious group here. Baptists, and a small body known as the "Church of England in S. Africa",—a protest against Anglo-Catholicism, are the other two main supporters of Protestant enterprise.

The co-ordinating body for Protestants is the Protestant Association of South Africa. A. H. Jeffree James, its secretary and lecturer, alleged that Rome was making "a dead set" at the native population of the country—more than eight millions. The native love of pageantry and ritual is fruitful soil for Romanism. He accused Rome of attempting to gain political influence by lobbying for diplomatic representation. Rome's Apostolic Delegate, he said, a person with no diplomatic status, already travelled regularly with the Diplomatic Corps. He referred to anti-Protestantism in Canada, and to persecution in Spain, and accused the English press in S. Africa of being over-deferential to Roman Catholicism by its silence on such matters.

Various Anglican, Methodist, and Congregational leaders were in haste to dissociate themselves from the conference decisions. A leading Methodist minister made a public apology to the Roman Catholic Church. "I blush with shame and humility" he said, "to think that so un-Christian an attitude could have come from any conference of Christian ministers." All of which is the saddest possible commentary on the apathy of Protestantism in a country which gave shelter to the Huguenots!

Whatever one's view of Catholic immigration may be, there is no doubt whatever that the weak and compromising attitude of denominational leaders has done more harm to the Protestant cause than all the propaganda that Rome could have put forth. At the same time the controversy has thrown into sharp relief the issues involved. Liberal doctrine confounds compromise with tolerance, and it is clear that in the name of such "tolerance" Rome will thrust herself to a position of greater influence where ultimately tolerance and liberty will be known no more.

South Africa has every reason to awaken from her attitude of "I see no danger". Within the last five years Rome has added 100,000 adherents, mainly from among the native population. In Basutoland, which is a large protected reserve within the borders of the Union, she has literally poured in money and manpower since World War II ended. By erecting churches, schools, hospitals, and a Bantu University College she threatens to dominate the whole territory. The Paris Evangelical Mission, which has been established there for more than 100 years,

is now being forced by Government regulation to compete in terms of improved buildings and facilities. Most of the present buildings are old. Rome is planting new schools and churches cheek by jowl with those of the P.E.M. A great sum of money is needed to effect such improvements as will meet the Government's requirements, otherwise the Mission may lose the fruit of a century's labour.

The Roman Catholic infiltration which is taking place in Basutoland on a big scale is being done mainly by fanatical French Canadian Roman Catholics who are being sent by scores to staff the missions which Rome is establishing there.

I have before me as I write an official Roman Catholic statistics map, which shows the growth of her interests in South Africa over 25 years. Whereas 25 years ago

she had approximately 2,900 priests, brothers, and nuns here, the number has now risen to nearly 7,000, with proportionate increases in churches and institutions. These facts make complacency absurd.

The Dutch Reformed Church has undoubtedly been the main bulwark against an even more rapid spread of Romanism. The Baptist churches are for the most part strongly Protestant, but most of the other English-speaking denominations are pro-ecumenical in ideal and practice, and variedly liberal in doctrine, so that convinced Protestantism is logically impossible to them. To some of them any form of Protestantism is stigmatized as "rabid", and is anathema.

The lesson is almost too obvious. Inclusivism weakens even the best intentions, and makes them eventually subservient to the interests of Rome and the Papacy.

WISDOM'S IGNORANCE

A Sermon by Rev. John Poorter, B.A.

Pastor of Central Baptist Church, Durban, S. Africa

"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

—I Corinthians 1:21.

THE old and godly minister of the Gospel at whose feet I once sat to learn the secrets of public speaking, used to say: "When you look at a text first, try to find the big words in it, and let your thoughts be built around them." He didn't mean the longest words either! The big words. The words that are big with meaning to the Scripture passage you have before you.

It is a good plan to do this. Here we have one of the best-known verses from Paul's first letter to Corinth. We're looking for the first big word, and here it is: WISDOM. At any rate it was a word that was pregnant with meaning to the Corinthians. Theirs was a city celebrated for many things; for its *commercial activity*, for one thing. It stood on the isthmus that formed a highway of trade between Italy and Asia. It was notorious for its *immorality*—a place where the social currents of the age met in a vicious competition of sin, gilded by a licentious heathen religion. And Corinth was celebrated, too, for the reputed *mental vigour* of its inhabitants. For these, therefore, the word WISDOM would be a big word. Not that they necessarily thought that wisdom was the same as learning, but it was certainly characteristic of the Greeks that they conceived of learning as the infallible road to wisdom.

I.

Observe, first of all, here is A SEARCH WITHOUT RESULT.

Wisdom! Wisdom! Greatly to be desired! Such was the theme of the centuries of time wherein the thought of the Greeks dominated the world. Just as the big word of the Jew was RIGHTEOUSNESS, and that of the Roman was POWER, so the idol of Greece was WISDOM. Attractive word, isn't it? Attractive ideal! And how they strove to reach it! If ever any civilization is to be given pride of place for its attempts to build a Tower of Babel by the exercise of the intellect, then you must give that place to the Greeks. They had something, from the human standpoint, believe me. Someone has remarked that wherever you may go in the realms

of human knowledge you will find Socrates on his way back. He's been there already! And it's largely true, too. You and I may read the learned tomes of modern philosophers until we marvel at the ingenuity of the human mind. We say to ourselves: "These fellows have forgotten more than I ever knew." And then, if we have the patience, we turn to those books that were written three thousand years ago, and we see it all there! Truly, there is nothing new under the sun.

But now, you must not think that I am extolling the virtues of the ancients, or praising the knowledge of Socrates. On the contrary, I am trying to show you the force of Paul's argument in this statement he made to Corinth long centuries ago. "The world through its wisdom knew not God."

The Futility of Wisdom.

But I hear someone say, "Isn't wisdom a most desirable thing? Do we not read in the Book of Proverbs 'Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom'? And is not the Scripture full of counsel to make us wise?" Yes, indeed, my friend, wisdom is a heavenly treasure, and we cannot contradict Solomon in this. But look at the text again, and you will see that when Paul speaks of wisdom he is referring specifically to "the wisdom of this world". (1 Cor. 1:20). He also says in the next verse, "the world through its wisdom knew not God." Again in verse 26 he refers to "wise men after the flesh"; and in chapter 2:4 we have the phrase "man's wisdom". So that the wisdom here spoken of refers really to something which is *the product of human effort and enquiry*. It is something achieved. Quite clearly this is not a quality conferred or received, but a state attained. And between these two there is a great gulf fixed!

We may put Paul's thought here expressed into words something like this: "Look at your wise men! Look at your skilful debaters, with all their mental gymnastics. Have they been able to redeem the world or restore its sanity? Can they stem the tide of moral corruption?"

No. On the contrary God has purposely made all their efforts come to foolishness, to show them the utter futility of their own vaunted wisdom."

Too strong, do you think? Not a bit of it. Remember his theme, the FUTILITY OF MAN'S WISDOM. He is writing to a people whose environment has taught them to revere man's wisdom above all else. Some from among them have been born of the Spirit into the heavenly family, and as babes in Christ they have yet to learn that in the realm of the spiritual the wisdom of man is simply a broken cistern that can hold no water. This is a reversal of the widely accepted human standard, and it arouses enmity. Part of the reproach of the Gospel is that "no flesh shall glory in His presence." Proud man stumbles at that. He must have somewhat wherein to glory.

But, Paul, why do you rule out human wisdom as utterly foolish? Why do you say that God has made it foolishness? After all, Paul, you must concede that when you sum up his total efforts man has made some noble attempts, which even his failures do not altogether annul. Don't you think, Paul, that it is a lofty idea to strive, and to go on striving, through the dignity of man, for a salvation for all, and that in doing so we are fulfilling our destiny of improvement?

Who's that speaking? Mr. Optimist and Miss Ignorance. They make a well-matched pair who will live happily ever after, I'm sure. And they will produce such a brood of offspring as you hardly thought possible. Mr. Optimist's point of view has millions of supporters in the world today. In spite of catastrophic wars, in spite of flourishing vice, in spite of the grim object lessons of history, "hope (hope in man) springs eternal in the human breast." All that Mr. Optimist says about lofty ideals and noble strivings might be summed up as *ignorance of man's true nature*. He is leaving out of his reckoning the damning fact of human sin. He is ignoring the basic fact in the doctrine of man—the foolish darkened heart which has resulted from the fall, the heritage of the sons of Adam.

In theory, of course, there are many who agree that man is a fallen being. But by some queer twist of the same darkened heart they imagine that man is slowly rising from his fallen state; that he is capable of a gradual self-deliverance. By degrees, so they think, man will exorcise the devil of rebellion within him, and he will purify the bloodstream of its deadly infection.

I have sometimes told a little child some story, to be asked at the end of it: "Is it true?" Ah, that is it, my brothers. Is it true? We are not to ask ourselves whether the tremendous structure which human wisdom has built is imposing, or noble. We must ask, is it true? Is it built on the truth? If not, why waste our time admiring the structure that God will bring to a heap of rubble? "Say, mister," said the newsboy to the reporter who was looking round the ruins of San Francisco after the big earthquake, "it took men a long time to put all this up, but God tumbled it over in a minute."

"For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."

Human Wisdom Doomed

This is it, then. Man's wisdom is doomed because its source is corrupt. Can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit? And can the devices of man produce a sal-

vation for him? It is like lifting yourself up by your own ankles. The upward effort is folly, for the downward pull annuls it.

If only men would believe what God says about them. It is not merely a case of "I can't see it". It is "I will not see it". Men hate to think it. They prefer to believe a lie, because that lie is a flattery of human nature.

Just the other day a certain diplomatic representative was making a speech to a number of College students in South Africa. "Don't be persuaded by the prophets of doom", he kept saying. "Don't let them make you believe the world is in such a mess, and that there's not much hope for humanity. It all depends on you. In ten or fifteen years you can make the world a safe and happy place for all. It all depends on you."

And so on, ad nauseam! This sort of drivel is not new, of course, and I quote it merely to illustrate the fascination that self-deliverance has for man. How he will dream! "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh."

Human wisdom is a term which is not merely restricted to mental speculation. It includes the whole range of those activities by which man hopes to ACHIEVE. Perhaps you remember the celebrated instance of Bishop Horsley and Dr. Cyril Jackson, who, late one night, debated the question as to whether God was best reached through the exercise of the intellect or the emotions (heart). The bishop retreated step by step throughout the argument. At last he said, with a gesture of despair, "If He is not to be found through the mind, then my whole life has been a mistake."

Not in man's thoughts, nor in his plans, nor in his ideals, can God be found. All the search of the philosopher, and the scientist, and the historian, is in vain if he would find God thus. "Canst thou by searching find out God?" No. Paul has been speaking of a *search without result*. "The world by wisdom knew not God." The broken columns of the ruins of the Forum or the Parthenon are symbolic, somehow, of fallen man's failure.

But now, all that we have been saying about this text so far has been centred around one word, wisdom; man's wisdom. Thank God it does not end there. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." We have had a search without result.

II.

Here is A METHOD WITHOUT MISTAKE! THE FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING.

"The foolishness of the preaching" is perhaps a more accurate rendering. A strange phrase, you say? Perhaps so, but you will see why it is put that way. First notice what the phrase does *not* say. It does not say "by the foolishness of preachers". In other words, the emphasis is most certainly not on the human vehicle which is involved in this Divine method. The emphasis falls rather on *the preaching*—the substance of which is not *discovered* by man, but *revealed* by God. You see, friend, there is much talk to-day of "re-discovering" the Christian faith, and of "re-thinking" Christianity in the light of modern problems, and so on. All of which is totally foreign to the New Testament teaching that the message of reconciliation is one which has been "delivered (as a finished revelation) to the saints."

Secondly, notice that the text does *not* say "by the preaching of foolishness". It speaks of "the foolishness

of the preaching". The distinction must be observed and understood.

Preaching is the Divinely appointed method by which the message of reconciliation is to be communicated to the world. And not only "preaching", but "the preaching". That is, a word already complete in its content, already revealed by the Holy Spirit, already written in the Book. Men think lightly of this method: to them the method seems weak and ineffective—foolishness.

They think lightly of this method mainly for two reasons: First, because of the poor instruments which God is pleased to employ in this work—a work which might have been delegated to angels, but has been committed to weak and fallible men. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." That is reason enough for me. The very fact that preachers are weak, according to the flesh, magnifies the grace of God and His sovereign call.

For another reason men despise the divine method, and it is this: Because of the evident simplicity of the proclamation itself; not a complicated, worldly-wise, and philosophic message which appeals to pride, but one which brings all men to a common bar of judgment, and demands a universal submission of heart and will. This is the reproach of all true preaching.

The men and women of our day and generation (to their great loss) have a lower estimate of the true dignity of preaching than our forefathers had. This decline is reflected both in the pulpit and the pew. For example, the modern Christian minister is often honoured as a good showman, a capable social welfare officer, a religious promoter: anything but as a preacher of the Word!

Where a man has stepped down from the holy office of an ambassador of the Eternal to be the prancing circus performer that some folk want him to be, he has become useless to God or man! Let us beware of placing a lower value on the office of preaching than the New Testament allows. The method is by no means incidental. "It pleased God (mark that!) by the foolishness of preaching to save . . ."

When, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, the continent of Europe lay under the cloud of darkness, and in the bondage of Romanism, there was virtually no preaching in the accepted sense. It is an observable fact of church history that wherever preaching declines in importance, there the spiritual life correspondingly declines. The Reformers with whom we would claim spiritual kinship were insistent upon the prior place of

preaching. To them preaching was God's gift to the world, and the responsibility rested with the church. The Reformation which gave us the open Bible brought with it also the *centrality of the pulpit* as the means whereby the Bible was unsealed.

The reformers revealed this centrality in the very style of architecture of the churches they built. Not the "altar" so-called, but the pulpit assumed a central significance. Whenever men begin to push the pulpit out of the picture, ignorance and superstition follow swiftly.

Let me quote some doggerel verses once used by Dr. Christie:

They were a people
Kind and cold;
Weekly they list to the story old,
Told by the preacher of scholarly mould,
Gowned and stoled—
They were a people
Kind and cold.

One morning as the preacher took
His golden text from God's good Book,
He wore a wondering, wildered look.
The people from their cozy nook,
Had passed up word, as to a cook;
The polished preacher-prophet shook.

The "passed-up word" was "Cut it short!"
The "shake" was of the wrathful sort;
But wisely keeping from retort,
He cut his sermon into half—
Kept out the wheat, and gave them chaff;
And thus evolved
The sermonette.

The congregation grew in size;
All praised the preacher to the skies,
But wiser folk saw with surprise
That he who used to make them think,
Began, by leaps and jumps, to shrink.
And thus evolved
The preacherette.

And so, while folks filled every pew,
The souls of saints no fatter grew;
For sermons short brought shorter view
Of faith and hope, and love, and peace,
Of Cross and Crown, and sin's release,
And thus evolved
The people-ette!

Ichabod! In the same way, from many a once glowing company of the saints the glory has departed! Unspiritual men have preferred neat little essays, models of precision and literary perfection, rather than "the foolishness of preaching". I have very little patience with the man whose comment on preaching is to the effect that "there are no souls saved after twenty minutes". By succumbing to the modern vogue many of our ablest men have been misled into an altogether unworthy conception of their office. What did the apostle Paul say? "I magnify mine office." That is, I make it big; I count it a high and holy vocation; I cannot think of it in lesser terms than God does. I will not stoop and debase my office by yielding to the fancies of men who are the puppets of nice words or phrases.

But now, having gone so far with Paul, we have one more question to settle, according to the text before us. Remember, we have talked of (1) A Search without result: "The world by wisdom knew not God." (2) A Method without mistake: "The foolishness of preaching." Here is the last thought which the passage sug-

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gests, namely, what is the thing preached? Preach, yes, but preach what?

III.

Look at the twenty-third verse, and there you have it. "We preach Christ crucified." We shall call it A MESSAGE WITHOUT COMPARE.

"Christ crucified." Many, many years ago Thomas Carlyle and Emerson went for a walk together over some long sloping Scottish hills. They talked, among other things, of immortality, and then Carlyle pointed away in the distance, saying,

"Christ died on the Tree,
—and that built Dunscore Kirk yonder."

Christ crucified is the unshaken foundation of the Church.

Again we come across that word foolishness in connection with the central message of redemption. "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness." But, my brothers, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men."

We are living in a world which judges a message by its so-called effectiveness; by the outward and visible effect it has on men. And so, without regard for whether it is God's message, a hundred errors have been propagated with effect. Our first question with regard to preaching is not "Does it work?" but "Has it authority?" Christ crucified is the only message that bears the hallmark of heaven.

And it does work! Praise His name, it works! "The dynamic of God unto salvation to every one that believeth". It is not a pretty set of lessons in morality; not a correspondence course in how to behave better, or how to be good boys and girls. It is *news!* It is a message of something that has been done already.

A week or so ago I was in a committee meeting which was planning a certain evangelistic gathering. When dealing with the subject of the expected enquirers after salvation, someone said, "Can you recommend a helpful tract to be used by the personal workers?" First this and then that booklet was suggested, until one brother said quietly: "Brethren, let's find a booklet that doesn't talk so much of what the new convert has to do, and more of what Jesus has already done for him." Amen, my brother. Let us preach about the finished work. Let us sing of the perfect atonement. Let us rejoice in His present intercession and glory, and look forward to His sure triumph.

What other message can compare with this one? A thousand others have been devised, but none can cleanse the heart or wash away the filth of sin. Dr. Chalmers, "the most illustrious Scotsman since John Knox", before his conversion preached morality to his people for eight years. There was no change or improvement. People remained as bad as ever. No drunkards were made sober, no impure persons were made chaste and holy. Then came the great yielding of his own spirit to the truth as it is in Jesus. What happened? The miracles began. The liars received lips of truth; the sot became sober.

John Berridge preached morality at Stapleford "till there was hardly a moral man left". The same results followed his own enlightenment and surrender to the great truth of "Christ and him crucified".

And so we might go on if we wished, multiplying

instances of the impotence of a message which is merely good advice, and not good news. Yes, my brothers, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men". The way of salvation is not some intricate metaphysical problem which you have to solve in order to be saved. "This do and thou shalt live" has been put aside for "This is done that thou mightst live". Done. Done. Eternally done. *Once* He came forth from the "courts of everlasting day". *Once* He lived as man. *Once*, too, and once only, He died as a ransom for many. *Once* He rose, snapping like threads the shackles of death and hell. And *once* He entered the holiest of all, having obtained an eternal redemption for us. Oh, the wonder of it! To your knees, people of God! Sink down, overcome by the splendour of eternal wisdom and grace which shine from the pages of the Book.

O God of our salvation, we bless for Thy wisdom as revealed in the eternal plan for our redemption. As we have been thinking of that plan, and opening Thy Word, our hearts have been kindled to new adoration and praise.

Now do Thou help us ever to cherish Thy holy Word, and to see its truths in right proportion to one another. We have no confidence in the flesh, and our reliance is wholly upon what Thou hast accomplished for us in Jesus Christ. Strengthen every holy thought that has been awakened within us, and so build us up in our most holy faith, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

"THE DEFINITION" OF THE DOGMA OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

FROM THE GOSPEL WITNESS, May 29th, 1947

(Extract from a Sermon by the Editor on "Why the Ottawa Marian Congress?")

THE doctrine of the *Immaculate Conception*, that Mary was conceived without sin, does not mean the immaculate conception of Jesus but of Mary. It pushes sinlessness back another generation, and insists that Mary was conceived without sin. Here are the words of the Pope announcing, and defining the doctrine of the *Immaculate Conception* which, while generally believed, was not defined and promulgated as a dogma of the church until 1854. Pope Pius IX had this to say:

"Wherefore, after we had unceasingly, in humility and fasting, offered our own prayers and the public prayers of the Church to God the Father through His Son, that He would deign to direct and conform our mind by the power of the Holy Ghost, and having implored the aid of the entire heavenly host, and invoked the Paraclete with sighs, and He thus inspiring to the honour of the holy and undivided Trinity, to the glory and ornament of the Virgin mother of God, to the exaltation of the Catholic faith and the increase of the Catholic religion, by the authority of Jesus Christ our Lord, of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, We declare, pronounce, and define, that the doctrine which holds that the blessed Virgin Mary, at the first instance of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace of the omnipotent God, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind, was preserved immaculate from all stain of original sin, has been revealed by God, and therefore should firmly and constantly be believed by all the faithful. Wherefore, if any shall dare—which God avert—to think otherwise than as it has been defined by us, they should know and understand that they are condemned by their own judgment, that they have suffered shipwreck of the faith, and have revolted from the unity of the Church; and besides, by their own act, they subject themselves to the penalties justly established if what they think they should dare to signify by word, writing, or any outward means."—Excerpted from *The Tablet* of 27th January, 1855.

That is part of the papal Bull proclaiming the dogma of *The Immaculate Conception* of the Virgin Mary, for which there is not one word of scriptural authority.

The Assumption of Mary

The assumption of Mary means that when Mary died, her body did not see corruption, but was "assumed" into heaven. Cardinal McGuigan in Rome, at the time of his investiture, was reported to have expressed the hope that the Pope now "reigning" would see fit to define as a doctrine of the church, the long-believed doctrine of the assumption into heaven of the body of the Virgin Mary; that her body, not seeing corruption, but like the body of Jesus Christ, was assumed into heaven.

Here is a quotation from *The Breviary*:

"Not only is the assumption of her body into heaven made to parallel our Lord's ascension, but that body itself is stated, like our Lord's, to have been miraculously preserved from corruption. On the fourth day of the week after the assumption (for a whole week is devoted to the honour of that event), a lesson is read, in which it is declared, that 'at the time of her glorious falling asleep' (her death), 'all the Apostles who were employed in their holy mission through the whole earth, for the salvation of mankind, were in a moment carried aloft through the air, and brought together to Jerusalem:—while they were there, they saw a vision of angels, and heard the hymns of hosts of heaven, and so with *Divine glory she delivered her soul into the hands of God*. But her body was taken amidst the songs of angels and of the Apostles, and deposited in a coffin at Gethsemane, in which place the melody of angels continued for three days. At the end of those days, the Apostles opened the tomb, to enable Thomas, who alone had hitherto been absent, to fulfil a wish which he felt to *adore that body which had borne the Lord*. On opening it, the body was nowhere to be found, but only the grave-clothes in which it had been wrapped; and from them issued an ineffable odour, pervading the atmosphere around. So wonderful and mysterious an event astonished the Apostles, who could draw from it but one conclusion, that it had pleased the Word of God, that her immaculate body (by which he was incarnate) should be preserved from corruption, and should be at once translated to heaven, without waiting for the general resurrection of all flesh.'

"In the service of the next day is the following lesson:—"But who is sufficient to conceive, how glorious on this day was the progress of *the Queen of the World!*—with what transport of devout affection the whole multitude of the heavenly hosts went forth to meet her!—with what hymns she was conducted to the throne of glory!—with how placid, how serene an aspect!—with what Divine embrace she was received by her Son, and *exalted above every creature!*—with that honour which became the worth of so great a Mother, and that glory which befitted so great a Son."

An Ingenious Parallel Contrived

Observe how ingeniously these fable-mongers contrived the absence of Thomas to parallel his absence when Jesus appeared to His assembled disciples, and the opening of Mary's coffin for Thomas' especial benefit, even as our Lord showed Himself to Thomas "after eight days." Notice, too, the alleged miraculous transportation of the apostles being "in a moment carried aloft through the air, and brought together at Jerusalem."

How many of you have read the New Testament through? (Many hands were raised.) Well, did you ever read a word of that? No! But Cardinal McGuigan, whose present residence is just up Sherbourne Street, on Earl Street, I really supposed to be a man of intelligence, believes all that nonsense, and expressed the hope

that the present Pope would define that as a dogma of the Church, so that all the "faithful" must believe it, or incur the penalty of excommunication.

From the same sermon quoted above:

"Di Loreto"

Here is the story of a house now in Italy in which Joseph and Mary lived, where Mary was born, where she still lived when the archangel Gabriel informed her that she was to become the mother of our Lord! That house was then in Palestine, and it was built of stone, but it was transported by angels through the air from Palestine. It was let down—I don't know whether the angels got tired or not, and had to rest—but it was brought down to earth, and there it stayed for a little while. Then it was lifted up, and carried a little further, and by three separate migrations, at last this actual holy house, in which Mary was born, and where she heard the annunciation of the angel, that house is now in Italy—a sacred shrine, a shrine visited by the faithful, approved by the church, and said to be true!

From the Catholic Encyclopaedia

Here is Volume Thirteen of the Catholic Encyclopaedia. If I were to say this you would not believe it, but here it is with the imprimatur of the church, approved as an authoritative word, on questions of Roman Catholicism—

Santa Casa di Loreto.—Since the fifteenth century, and possibly even earlier, the "Holy House" of Loreto has been numbered among the most famous shrines of Italy. Loreto is a small town a few miles south of Ancona and near the sea. Its most conspicuous building is the basilica. This dome-crowned edifice, which with its various annexes took more than a century to build and adorn under the direction of many famous artists, serves merely as the setting of a tiny cottage standing within the basilica itself. Though the rough walls of the little building have been raised in height and are cased externally in richly sculptured marble, the interior measures only thirty-one feet by thirteen. An altar stands at one end beneath a statue, blackened with age, of the Virgin Mother and her Divine Infant. As the inscription, *Hic Verbum caro factum est*, reminds us, this building is honoured by Christians as the veritable cottage at Nazareth in which the Holy Family lived, and the Word became incarnate. Another inscription of the sixteenth century which decorates the eastern façade of the basilica sets forth at greater length the tradition which makes this shrine so famous. "Christian pilgrim," it says, "you have before your eyes the Holy House of Loreto, venerable throughout the world on account of the Divine mysteries accomplished in it and the glorious miracles herein wrought. It is here that most holy Mary, Mother of God, was born; here that she was saluted by the Angel, here that the eternal Word of God was made Flesh. Angels conveyed this House from Palestine to the town Tersato in Illyria in the year of salvation 1291 in the pontificate of Nicholas IV. Three years later, in the beginning of the pontificate of Boniface VIII, it was carried again by the ministry of angels and placed in a wood near this hill, in the vicinity of Recanati, in the March of Ancona; where having changed its station thrice in the course of a year, at length, by the will of God, it took up its permanent position on this spot three hundred

years ago (now, of course, more than 600). Ever since that time, both the extraordinary nature of the event having called forth the admiring wonder of the neighboring people and the fame of the miracles wrought in this sanctuary having spread far and wide, this Holy House, whose walls do not rest on any foundation and yet remain solid and uninjured after so many centuries, has been held in reverence by all nations." That the traditions thus boldly proclaimed to the world have been fully sanctioned by the Holy See cannot for a moment remain in doubt. More than forty-seven popes have in various ways rendered honour to the shrine, and an immense number of Bulls and Briefs proclaim without qualification the identity of the Santa Casa di Loreto with the Holy House of Nazareth. As lately as 1894 Leo XIII, in a Brief conceding various spiritual favours for the sixth centenary of the translation of the Santa Casa to Loreto, summed up its history in these words: "The happy House of Nazareth is justly regarded and honoured as one of the most sacred monuments of the Christian Faith: and this is made clear by the many diplomas and acts, gifts and privileges accorded by our predecessors. No sooner was it, as the annals of the Church bear witness, miraculously translated to Italy and exposed to the veneration of the faithful on the hills of Loreto than it drew to itself the fervent devotion and pious aspiration of all, and as the ages rolled on, it maintained this devotion ever ardent." If, then, we would sum up the arguments which sustain the popular belief in this miraculous transference of the Holy House from Palestine to Italy by the hands of angels, we may enumerate the following points: (1) The reiterated approval of the tradition by many different popes from Julius II in 1511 down to the present day. This approval was emphasized liturgically by an insertion in the Roman Martyrologium in 1669 and the concession of a proper Office and Mass in 1699, and it has been ratified by the deep veneration paid to the shrine by such holy men as St. Charles Borromeo, St. Francis de Sales, St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Alphonsus Liguori, and many other servants of God. (2) Loreto has been for centuries the scene of numerous miraculous cures. Even the sceptical Montaigne in 1582 professed himself a believer in the reality of these (Waters, "Journal of Montaigne's Travels", II, 197-207). (3) The stone of which the original walls of the Santa Casa are built and the mortar used in their construction are not such as are known in the neighbourhood of Loreto. But both stone and mortar are, it is alleged, chemically identical with the materials most commonly found in Nazareth. (4) The Santa Casa does not rest and has never rested upon foundations sunk into the earth where it now stands. The point was formally investigated in 1751 under Benedict XIV. What was then found is therefore fully in accord with the tradition of a building transferred bodily from some more primitive site.—*Vol. XIII, page 454.*

Let me remind you that Archbishop Vachon said in an apostolic letter that he was thrilled when he celebrated mass in the very house in which Mary was born, and the archangel Gabriel made the annunciation to her of her coming Son. And Archbishop Vachon has been a

professor, and has several degrees in science to his name. Can superstition go further than that?

THE DOCTRINE OF PAPAL INFALLIBILITY, 1870

Vatican Council, Session IV. cap. 4. *Collectio Lacensis* vii. 482 sq. Denzinger, 1832 sqq.

(The decree aroused much opposition in the Church, notably that of Döllinger of Munich, who refused to submit and was excommunicated. Some of the opponents united to found the "Old Catholic Church".)

We (i.e. Pope Pius IX), adhering faithfully to the tradition received from the beginning of the Christian faith—with a view to the glory of our Divine Saviour, the exaltation of the Catholic religion, and the safety of Christian peoples (the Sacred Council approving), teach and define as a dogma divinely revealed: That the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra* (that is, when—fulfilling the office of Pastor and Teacher of all Christians—on his supreme Apostolical authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the Universal Church, through the divine assistance promised him in blessed Peter, is endowed with that infallibility, with which the Divine Redeemer has willed that His Church—in defining doctrine concerning faith or morals—should be equipped: And therefore, that such definitions of the Roman Pontiff of themselves—and not by virtue of the consent of the Church—are irrefragable. If any one shall presume (which God forbid!) to contradict this our definition; let him be anathema.

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 15 Fourth Quarter Lesson 9 November 26, 1950

OLIVE L. CLARK, Ph.D. (Tor.)

NEHEMIAH'S ADVERSARIES

Lesson-Text: Nehemiah 4:1-17.

Golden Text: "Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night."—Neh. 4:9.

I. Opposition from Without: verses 1-9.

Nehemiah had scarcely arrived in Jerusalem on his mission of reconstruction when his enemies made their first protest (Neh. 2:10). An active spiritual work for the Lord is certain to incite to activity our great Adversary, Satan, who ever seeks to frustrate the will and purpose of God (Matt. 16:21-23; 1 Thess. 2:18). Ezra in his day was called upon to face adversaries, and these were for a time successful (Ezra 4:1-6, 23; 24).

Who were these adversaries? We know little of them except their names—Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite and Geshem the Arabian (Neh. 6:1-5, 12-14; 13:28), but the inspired historian has given us clear portraits of their characters and activities. They have their counterpart in the men and women of our day who are inspired of Satan to hinder the progress of the cause of Christ.

Amidst the general enthusiasm, as Nehemiah encouraged the Jews to commence rebuilding the walls, these enemies, who had heard the challenging call of the Jewish leader, commenced their scornful laughter (Neh. 2:19, 20). They despised the godly Nehemiah and tried to bully him, but he declared his faith in God and his determination to proceed. A courageous stand must be made against such detractors (2 Tim. 3:8, 9; 3 John 10):

As the building progressed, the adversaries continued their harassing tactics (vv. 1-3). Sanballat, with the army at his back, began to mock the faithful Jews. He called them weak and feeble, and accused them of preparing for war and of

planning a sacred sacrifice to cover up their secret designs of rebellion. Then he mocked them for attempting what he described as an impossible task. Tobiah alleged that even a fox could easily break through their slender wall (Lam. 5:18).

Ridicule is a powerful, albeit at times a cruel weapon (1 Sam. 17:44), and many who will courageously resist a frontal attack cannot stand up to such subtle persecution (Prov. 17:20; 25:23; Isa. 36:4-20; 37:8-13). Nehemiah took his cause to the Lord in prayer, pouring out his heart before his merciful and powerful Father (Isa. 37:14-20). He prayed with confidence, knowing that these men became enemies of the Lord the moment they fought against His servants (Psa. 35:1; Isa. 37:23; Zech. 2:8; Acts 9:4, 5). In answer to prayer the Lord renewed the courage of leader and people, so that they went on with their work for a time with enthusiasm and vigour. Such opposition can be overcome, when the people have a mind to work.

When the walls were nearing completion, the enemy renewed their attack. This time they attempted to overpower the Jews by the sheer force of their anger. They announced their intention of engaging in actual combat against Jerusalem. To meet this new threat, Nehemiah and his company again resorted to prayer, while at the same time they set men to watch day and night. We must continually watch and pray, lest the enemy of our souls should gain an advantage over us (Matt. 26:41; 2 Cor. 2:11; Eph. 6:18). Cromwell used to say to his soldiers, "Trust in God, and keep your powder dry."

"Watch, as if on that alone,
Hung the issue of the day.
Pray that help may be sent down,
Watch and pray."

II. Opposition from Within and Without: verses 10-17.

The water of the ocean is powerless to sink a ship, so long as that water remains outside the ship, but woe betide the vessel when the water gains an entrance into the inside! The adversaries were easily kept at bay, until there appeared a weakness in the ranks of the Jews themselves (Numb. 11:4). The church is impregnable, so long as there is victory in the hearts of the spiritual builders, but once they have yielded to defeatism, the enemy may quickly overpower them (Josh. 7:5-9).

The Jews faltered through discouragement, which is one of Satan's strongest and surest weapons against the saint in our day (Josh. 1:6-9; 2 Cor. 4:1, 16; Lk. 18:1). To complete their task appeared well-nigh impossible; the workers were weary, and the rubbish was mounting. Had their eyes been upon their goal, which was actually within sight, and upon their Master, instead of upon their dreary circumstances,

they probably would not have fainted (Matt. 14:28-30; Phil. 3:13, 14; Heb. 12:1, 2).

Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem were quick to seize the opportunity afforded them by the slackening of effort on the part of the Jews. Their plan was to enter the city by many paths.

Nehemiah met the danger of invasion by first counselling the people not to be afraid (Gen. 15:1; Numb. 14:9; Deut. 1:21; Matt. 28:5). Fear makes cowards of us all, but confidence gives courage and strength (Isa. 30:15). In the Christian warfare we must ever remember that greater is he that is with us than he that is in the world (2 Kings 6:15-17; 2 Chron. 32:7; Psa. 55:18; 1 John 4:4). The Jews could conquer fear and conquer the foe, only as they remembered that, the mighty God was with them and would fight on their behalf (v. 20; Exod. 14:14; Deut. 3:22; Psa. 35:1; Hagg. 1:13; 2:4).

The Jews were to remember God, have faith in Him, and then fight. We must oppose evil with all our might. God would fight for them, but they must also fight for themselves. Moody used to say, "God begins when we begin." It is ever true that "God is ready to do business with those who will do business with Him."

Thus were the schemes of the adversaries brought to nought by the power of the Lord and through the co-operation of the people. Faith and consecrated energy are both necessary to victorious living. From henceforth the Jews used two tools in their building: the sword and the trowel, emblems of two aspects of the Christian servant's ministry, the sword of the Spirit to convict, and the trowel to cement together the living stones of the spiritual temple of the Lord (1 Pet. 2:5). The great C. H. Spurgeon recognized the aptness of the symbolism by designating the periodical containing his weekly sermons "The Sword and Trowel."

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

- Nov. 20—Our Chief Adversary and Our Full Defense
Eph. 6:10-20.
- Nov. 21—The Adversary and Ridicule
1 Cor. 1:18-30; Heb. 11:36.
- Nov. 22—The Adversary and Force of Arms
Acts 12:1-4; Heb. 11:36-38.
- Nov. 23—The Adversary and Fear
Psa. 55; Psa. 27.
- Nov. 24—The Adversary and Our Foolishness
1 Pet. 4:12-19.
- Nov. 25—The Adversary and Prayer
Acts 4:23-31.
- Nov. 26—The Adversary Defeated
Gen. 3:15; Lk. 4:1-13; Rev. 1:17, 18.

SUGGESTED HYMNS

Fight the good fight. Am I a soldier of the cross? Christian, seek not yet repose. A mighty Fortress is our God. Firmly stand for God. Stand up, stand up, for Jesus.

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