

Rev. J. P. Holman

THE LUTHERAN VISITOR.

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Original.

For the Lutheran Visitor.
Encouraging.

Read the following list of bequests of the late Charles A. Morris, of York, Pa., and see if you do not think it encouraging:

To Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, \$20,000; to St. Paul's Lutheran church of York, \$7,000; Orphan's Home at Loysville, \$2,000; Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, \$1,000, and the same amount to each of the several Boards of Home and Foreign Missions, Education, Church Extension, and Publication; to the Aged Pastors' Fund, \$1,000. He also willed \$5,000 to the Children's Home at York, and \$2,000 in trust to supply a Sunday-school paper to each family whose children attend the Sunday-school at St. Paul's Lutheran church. To his brother, Rev. J. G. Morris, D.D., of Baltimore, he left \$25,000, besides some valuable lots in Lutherville, Md.

We think that encouraging. Sum it up, and you find \$42,000 given to religious and charitable objects, nearly all of which are connected with the Lutheran Church. What a precious legacy to leave behind! Though dead he yet speaketh. The good works perpetuated through his christian manhood will tell his praises—his churchy devotion—to the coming ages. The \$20,000 at Gettysburg will doubtless speak for him as the Morris Professorship. The children in the Orphan's Home and Sunday-school will pronounce his name with reverent gratitude, and thank God for such a benefactor. Churches, and church enterprises, strengthened and advanced by his large-hearted liberality, will be but a part of the enduring monument which this good man erected to himself. And such monuments "speak better things" than are often said by grateful heirs over the very wills which bestow entire estates upon them.

We rejoice over this record of Charles A. Morris. We rejoice at every evidence of devotion to our church and its institutions, whether from North, South, East or West. We are all brethren of one household. If in the South we have no fire, let us borrow from those who have. If we lack the spirit of benevolence, let us treasure up the examples of the liberal hearts of other sections, until our own hearts swell beyond their ordinary limits of selfish contraction. If some dwell on the text: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel," let them remember that the apostle had no reference whatever to *hoarding wealth* in order to leave rich heirs. May it not be a *worse infidelity* to hoard through long lives, amassing property for "those of one's own house," and forgetting during life, and in making the last will and testament, that the church of Christ and its institutions have a claim upon those whom God has blessed abundantly in the things of this world? How does it happen that so few Lutherans leave bequests to their church institutions? Not because they have not property. May it not be that they are not reminded of their christian duty by our papers and their pastors? In various portions of our Southern church we know men who are able to endow each of our State Colleges, and still have enough for those of their own household. Our Colleges must be endowed, at least in part, to keep step with the educational progress of the age. And yet in our Southern Lutheran Colleges, not a single chair is endowed, and they all depend, more or less, on the patronage of other denominations for their support. The church certainly does not appreciate the wants of these institutions, or there would be some general efforts to relieve them. Our Seminary, too, needs funds. We need several Professors in the Faculty, and the Chairs should be permanently endowed, so as not to burden the church annually with the payment of salaries. But the ladies are moving, and the men must move. We state plainly; they "must move." The ladies are mighty in our country. They move the machinery of the church. When they call for money, they must respond.

And now while all denominations are endowing their Seminaries and Colleges, in amounts varying from \$100,000 to \$2,000,000, the question is: Will the church of the Reforma-

tion in the South be behind all others in such liberality? We trust not. We expect our church papers to write and talk on the subject. We expect our ministers to preach on it. We expect the ladies to move in the matter, and then we expect the men to send in their checks and subscriptions of thousands. It will not be done this side of the last day by fractional currency subscriptions.—Men must think, and give in *hundreds and thousands*, and then the work will go right on to a grand and encouraging success. Remember Charles A. Morris, of York, Pa. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." PROGRESS.

Selections.

Not All Over with Him.

A young man was fishing from a raft which was floating in deep water. It happened that one of the logs, which should have been fastened to a staple to the chain that bound them all together, was loose; and as he stepped upon it, it rolled over, opened a passage between the logs, and the allan on their surface caused them to slip from his grasp, and he fell through—the logs closing above him.

There were but few persons about, but, providentially, one man saw the accident. Seizing the boat-hook, he ran to the raft, wedged the logs apart, and watching when the boy should rise, drew out the frightened angler, and placed him in safety. The whole affair happened so quickly that little damage was done. After shaking himself, and resting a little, the young fellow was able to walk home without help.

On the following day, feeling far from well, he stayed at home, and then sent a polite note to his preserver, asking that he would visit him at his house. The man readily went. Shaking hands with him, the young man said, "I have sent for you, Mr. —, to tell you plainly the very great obligation I am under to you, and to beg that you will let me know in what way most agreeable to yourself I can show my sense of it. You see I do not want to shirk the matter. I am quite sure that but for your prompt help, it would have been all over with me."

"I can not agree to that," said the other.

"Nonsense; I tell you I should have been a dead man in three minutes more."

"Most likely."

"Well, then, my good friend, what do you mean by not agreeing with me?"

"I mean that it would not have been all over with you. After death comes judgment."

The young man was silent, and turned away his face. At length he said, without looking around:

"Are you a preacher?"

"Yes, and so are you."

"If I am anything but that."

"Pardon me; all men preach by their lives and conduct; a good life preaches life, and an evil life preaches death; and thousands who may never hear sermons may be led by the preaching of our lives."

"Ah, that is all very true, of course; but the question now is, what can I do for you? let us come to business."

"I am coming to it. I have but one wish in respect to the life I have saved through God's providence—it is that henceforth that life may be given to his service. If you would reward me for the trifling pains I have taken, do so by earnestly seeking your own salvation. Can you promise me that?"

"Well," said the youth, "you are really most unselfish; and I will promise you one thing, at any rate, with all my heart—I will think seriously about it."

"Be it so; I accept that for my reward. Good morning."

"Well," said the youth to himself, when the good man was gone, "since I am pledged to think of this matter seriously, I may as well begin at once." He took down his Bible, and read and read, and thought day after day. The reading of God's word brought him to his knees. From praying for repentance and faith, he grew in time to bring forth the fruits of the one, and to do the works of the other; and he lived not only to profess the religion of Christ, but to commend it to others by his example.

How the Lord Guides.

Israel in the wilderness was led by the pillar of cloud and of fire. That is to say, the general movements of the whole camp were directed by this mysterious symbol. Excursions of detachments, in pursuit of pasture for their immense flocks, quelling the main body for a time, must of necessity have been of frequent occurrence. In these as in other details Moses availed himself of the superior knowledge of the geography of the country, possessed by his brother-in-law, Hobab. This is what we are to understand by his request, Num. x: 31, "Leave us not I pray thee, forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes." The miraculous did not entirely supersede the necessity of exercising the judgment, and of using the means requisite, under ordinary circumstances, for the conduct of a host of men, women and children, through an inhospitable desert.

Assuming, what Scripture teaches, that God guides his people still, although not as of old in a pillar of cloud and fire, it is an interesting inquiry, how does He do it now? It may be answered,

1. Unconsciously, i. e., to themselves.

Often, when we are not thinking of God, and in matters in which we feel no particular need of divine direction, and think it safe to trust our own judgment or the advice of friends, He secretly influences their wills and ours, and leads to the right decisions. At other times, in great perplexity, we carry some matter to God, again and again, in prayer, and get no light. The time for action comes, a decision can no longer be postponed; and it is made in doubt and hesitation; when lo! in the sequel, it is found that we could not have acted more wisely, if all the future had been before our eyes at the moment, as it was before the eyes of our guide. Again, in temporal or spiritual matters, the paths we would pursue are strangely closed against us, and we chafe and fret and beat our breasts against the barriers, until at last in despair we take the only course left open to us, and behold it turns out that the Lord Himself had closed all other paths, that ignorant we might pursue despite ourselves the right one. In all this God "leads the blind in a way that they knew not."

2. Consciously. By this is meant that his hand is so plainly manifest at the time that the believer is satisfied that the Lord is leading him. God's providences towards us are at times so remarkable and significant that we can not doubt their meaning. When light is shed on a perplexing question in evident answer to prayer, we seem to hear a voice behind us saying almost in audible tones, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

3. Mediatly. That is through instrumentalities and agencies, which he creates and uses. The principal of these are the Word and the Ministry, although there are others. The Bible is the christian's guide-book. There is no question in respect to duty for which it does not yield to the prayerful searcher an answer.

"Thy word," says the Psalmist, "is a light to my feet, and a light to my path." Led by it, we are guided by its author. Ministers are spiritual guides. "Remember them which have the rule over you, (margin, "who are your guides") who have spoken unto you the Word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever." They are commanded not only to preach the word, but to be examples to the flock, and in both respects they were intended to act as guides to the Lord's people. God uses other instrumentalities and agencies, as parental training, christian counsel, and pious examples of private christians, upon which it is not intended now to dwell.

4. Immediately. That is, directly, or without the intervention of any agency or instrumentality. We read in the Word that believers' bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost. He permanently abides with the church and in each consistent christian. It is stated by the same authority to be a characteristic "of the sons of God" to be led by the Spirit of God. If then the Holy Ghost dwells permanently in the believer and as his guide, it were hard to believe, that with such intimate access to his soul, he in every instance restricts himself to the circuitous method of

operating through earthly instrumentalities and agencies. No new revelations indeed are given; nor the necessity of testing every inward movement by the written word removed; the believer enjoys nothing akin to inspiration, but there seems to be no good reason to doubt that the indwelling Spirit does sometimes secretly and powerfully, yet immediately, move upon his will, and thus shape and determine his outer life.

Unconsciously or consciously, mediately or immediately, the unerring Lord is guiding his people. Surely they can not then say their way is their journey toward the heavenly Canaan.—S. W. Probsthorst.

Three Old Questions that are Still New.

It would seem remarkable that after eighteen centuries of discussion, we should be thrown back perpetually upon the principal question, Have We a God? Have We a Bible? Have We a Saviour? Yet to any one acquainted with the spirit and progress of our times, it is obvious that, upon these three great themes, the personal existence of God, the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, and the supreme divinity of Jesus Christ, the thinking mind of the world is now intensely turned as upon its chief theological centres. We have not only more books and more discussions on these points than ever before, but more than on any other subject. Theology, instead of being dead and obsolete, as some imagine, is the most vital interest, and the most universal force of the nineteenth century. All the forms and all the efforts both of belief and unbelief gather around these centres; on the one side to establish them, on the other to destroy; the one, to give us a God, a Saviour, and a guide to heaven; the other, to bring the world to the blank and cheerless negations—no God, no Bible, no Saviour.

These problems are not new. They have been the interest with each generation; but the truths themselves are as old as christianity. On them christianity makes her existence from the beginning, when her first apostles said, "We have not followed cunningly-devised fables." In defence of them she has been fighting her battles for eighteen centuries—first, with the partially instructed but scoffing Jew, then with the philosophical and incredulous Greek, then with the arrogant world-conquering Roman, then with the wild, ferocious barbarians of Northern Europe, then for three hundred years with the rationalism, infidelity and atheism that followed the revival of learning and the Reformation of the sixteenth century, and now, last of all, with the skeptical free thought, the materialistic philosophy and the searching scientific investigation which mark the civilization of the present century. After a conflict so long, so fierce, and so widely extended, it would seem that some things ought to be regarded as settled, even by those who are described as "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

It would be well for the disciples of doubt and unbelief, in our day, to consider what would be gained by the rejection of christianity and the adoption of this negative creed of the scientists and the philosophers. It is pertinent to ask beforehand what we shall lose—and what we shall have left in this fancied elysium of unbelief—a world without a God, nature without a teacher, man without a Saviour, sin without atonement, and death without immortality. Some of these things they can obliterate from their creeds, and from the minds of men. But others there are which will not vanish at bidding. The world is still here. Human nature is here. Sin is here. Suffering and sorrow, disease and death, are here, fixed and irrevocable. Faith in christianity gone, the hope of heaven gone, the light of immortality gone, the peace of God and the consolation of the Cross all gone, and in their place atheism, materialism, fatalism, sensuality, selfishness, annihilation and despair holding universal jubilee! What would it be but to anticipate before the time the doom of a world that had forever perished? Yet this is the goal, to which the almost idolized leaders of modern scientific free thought would bring us in their attempt to subvert the fundamental facts of christianity.

Christianity is the only religion which speaks with a voice of absolute authority and assurance on these

great problems. All other answers are ignorance, guilt and woe. Thus the system stands together in all its wondrous proportions, in all its perfect adaptations, self-supporting and self-justifying, and commanding, as it has done now for eighteen centuries, the profound admiration and homage of the most gifted and the most cultivated minds.

On the other hand, the rejection of one of these involves and necessitates the rejection of the others. For if we have no personal God, then an inspired revelation and a divine Saviour are words without meaning. If, again, we have no Bible given by inspiration of God, then we are left in ignorance and uncertainty, not only as to the character of God and the possibility of salvation, but on the whole problem of immortality and future state. If, further, we have no divine Saviour, no Immanuel, then we are thrown back into utter darkness as to any adequate remedy for sin, or antidote for death, or hope of life beyond the grave. A madman or a fool may scatter fire-brands, arrows and death, and say: "Am not I in sport?" but what are we to think of our great men, the popular and much applauded oracles of our latest science and philosophy, who through every avenue of authorship—the book, the magazine, the daily press, the quarterly review—and even in the pulpit and lecture-room, are contributing belief and main to rob mankind of belief in God, belief in the Bible, belief in Jesus Christ? Have they, in fact, taken up the lost cause of Hebraism, and, like Julian or Hypatia, are they working for the return of the "Immortal Gods"—a re-inauguration of the old classic mythology, and the apotheosis of every human lust, passion and appetite? It would seem so. And if so, we ought to know it.

New the only antidote that has ever been found for a skeptical mind is faith. It is not science. It is not argument. It is not any process of reasoning, but the simple faith of childhood. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." This is the requirement of the great Teacher. Let us not deny or conceal, or in any way modify this essential truth, that in things pertaining to God and eternal life, man must live by faith if he lives at all. Faith is essential to the soul and nothing on earth can supply its place. The faith of childhood is not more important to the child, than the faith of manhood is to men, in all its intercourse with God. Not by reasoning, but by believing is he born again. Not by reasoning, but by believing does he enter into the kingdom of God. Here is the precise province of faith, where sight and sense and science fail. And this faith is as essential to the man of science, with all his gifts of intellect and knowledge, as it is to the little child. If he can't believe, then he can not be saved. Hence, the greater need for him to pray: "Lord, increase our faith." "Lord, help thou our unbelief." There is but one law for all who enter this kingdom. "Except ye be converted, and become as this little child, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven." Faith is the cure, the only cure of the great Physician. All other fail. All others leave the soul in sin and darkness.—Earnest Worker.

SORROWING WITH CHRIST.—There is something very precious in being permitted to sorrow with Christ. That we should be allowed to walk in the track of His pain and to touch the footprints of his grief is an exalted privilege. Sorrow is forever sacred, inasmuch as He felt it. Our burden seems lighter when we think of his, and the clouds that overhang us are not so black when we know of the darkness of God that surrounded him. That we should be weary with an inward woe is nothing to the heart-sadness of him who may fitly be styled the Great Sorrower of men. Sorrow glistened in his eye, spoke in his words, was the breath of his atoning spirit, and the incense that ascended to God with his prayers. We lose much because we allow our griefs to be so earthly and so full of self; thinking more of the pain which they cause, than of the Saviour to whom they should lead us. To suffer and to serve with the crucified, is to live. If Christ had not sorrowed, man had not repented with tears. Penitence is a passion-flower which grows only beside the Cross.

Never think that which you do for religion is time or money mispent.

Taking Thoughts for To-Morrow.

The real ills of life, it is true, are many and hard to bear; yet it is doubtful whether, on the whole, they cause as much suffering as those imaginary evils we are continually apprehending. Nothing is truer than that happiness depends far more on the mental than the physical condition; and however comfortable and pleasant our present surroundings may be, if our minds are disquieted by anxious cares and dreary forebodings for the future we can not be happy. Past troubles give us little concern, for we know that we are done with them forever, and time is so great a healer that under his magic touch the deepest wounds cease at last to pain. It is seldom that our actual present condition is too grievous to be borne with equanimity, or even cheerfulness. If, then, we could but divest ourselves entirely of all anxiety and apprehension for the future, how much happier we might be.

The very uselessness and folly of this anxious thought for the morrow, these cowardly forebodings of coming ill, ought to put our philosophy, or want of philosophy, to the blush; for even if the contingencies we dread were certain instead of possible, all our puzzling and planning would be powerless to avert them; and how suicidal to sacrifice present comfort and peace to anxieties for an uncertain future—a future we may never see, or which may be more prosperous and happy than we dream of!

But while such forebodings shame philosophy, how greatly do they outrage religion! Even nature through the flowers of the field, which neither tolling nor spinning, wears a beauty beyond the royal robes of kings, and through the blithe songsters, that having neither storehouse nor barn, are fed from the granary of the great Father, rebukes such a want of faith. But how very much stronger and tenderer are the rebukes of revelation! Besides all that precious Old Testament history of God's wonderful and gracious dealings with his people, behold the overwhelming assurance of His love and care for us, evinced in the gift of his Son! Could there be greater love than this? "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

His love is unquestionable. His ability equally so, for "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," and his knowledge of our condition and circumstances extends to the numbering of the hairs of our heads. Still we are afraid to trust him from day to day for sustenance, guidance, and protection. We think if houses or lands were ours we could feel sure of comfort or ease in coming years; and we fancy that if certain human agencies and instrumentalities were granted to us, we would possess a guaranty for future support and safety. "O fools and blind!" Do we not daily see rich men beggared; their vast wealth, in a few hours, wasted by flood, consumed by flames, or swept away in some great financial crisis? Do we not see high positions suddenly lost by some turn in fortune, and high talents suddenly blighted by disease? Do we not see fathers, husbands, brothers, in a moment snatched by death from the families for whose comfort their labors provided? How then can we trust in wealth, intellect, or friends? And why will we not trust in our powerful and covenant-keeping God, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning? "The same yesterday, to-day and forever."

Mindful of our comfort, he has forbidden us to take anxious thought for the morrow; and he has given us the most precious and glorious promises for that unknown future we are weak and wicked enough to dread. In his service we need not dread poverty, for "no good thing will be withhold from them that walk uprightly." He is "a very present help in time of trouble." In his keeping we should not fear danger, for "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them." Under toll and struggle we shall not faint, for "the Lord will give strength to his people." Temptation need not appall us since he has promised "My grace is sufficient for thee." Bereavement need not overwhelm us, for in him we have "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother," and he has declared himself "the father of the fatherless and husband of the widow." Whatever convulsions, so-

cial, political, or physical may shake the earth, we are assured that "All things work together for good to them that love God."

Let us "only believe," and anxious cares for the morrow will no longer disquiet our hearts; but hope, which is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, will gladden our present and brighten our future. Would we walk bravely and joyously along the hidden path of life, let us lean entirely upon our heavenly Father, and hourly pray, "Lord, increase our faith!"—Earnest Worker.

Business and Religion.

Active business men are among our most efficient church workers. We know of brethren full of worldly cares and enterprises, taxed incessantly with business pressure, yet they have time for an hour in the weekly prayer and class meeting, and are ready to strike strong blows in time of revival. Such men bring life, and power, and energy into the work of the church. The sacrifice they make for the cause of Christ is seen and felt. It carries conviction to men.

The world almost altogether overlooks the fact that wealth is one of God's great provisions for men. He meant it for a blessing. The Gospel of His Son is calculated to increase its faculties and multiply its benefits. He has put its growth and development under positive law. The true attainment of wealth is not a grab game. It is a grand business process under a great practical law, which, if observed, brings its great general results. Fortune building may be a religious work; more, it should be such. Consecration to God entire is no drawback to a business man; it may be the means of his more rapid success. The prayer meeting brings no danger to the business man. The true christian will find time in the pressure of daily life to honor God, and to love His cause.

Consecrated business life is one of the great needs of the church. It is an age of business. The business man is really the prince of our times. From business ranks come most of our public men. They make good congressmen and senators. Our practical age has need of them everywhere. So the church needs her business talent brought into earnest consecration to Jesus. We need our business men at our altars, we need them in our Sunday-school, teachers' meetings, at our missionary gatherings, and in every place where strong hands, vigorous brains, and warm hearts may give help to our christian work.—Northern Christian Advocate.

Thy Word Giveth Light.

This should be the last dying advice which I would give to the dearest friend on earth: Read your Bible, and read it till you love to read; pray over it till you love to pray, and rest not, until you have imbibed the spirit of it into the very constitution of your soul, and transcribed the precepts and example of Jesus into every part of your daily deportment in life.

Through the best aid of Him the Comforter, the Scripture is the only cure for woe. That field of promises, how it flings abroad its order o'er the christian's thorny road! The soul reposing on assured relief, feels herself happy amidst all her grief, forgets her labor as she toils along. Weeps a tear of joy and bursts into a song.

No one believes how mighty and strong prayer is, and how much it can do, save he who has tried it. But it is a great thing, when any one feels great need pressing on him, if he can pray.

Perhaps you can not say a word when you pray. Never mind, God does not want to hear; he knows what you mean. Here, says the Lord, is a child of mine in prayer. He says not a word, but do you not see that tear rolling down his cheek! Do you hear that sigh?—O mighty God, Thou canst both see my tears and hear my sighs! Thou canst read desire, when desire hath not clothed itself in words.

God is the God of love—christianity is a religion of love. Jesus Christ was an incarnation of love. He was love, living, breathing, speaking, amongst men. His birth was the nativity of love; his sermons, the word of love; his miracles, the wonders of love; his tears, the melting of love; his crucifixion, the agonies of love; his death, the sacrifice of love; and his resurrection, the triumph of love.