

have often shown towards new movements, a tendency which has sometimes resulted in serious divisions. But the experience of the divided bodies themselves has emphasized, as nothing else could have done, the inestimable services which episcopacy has rendered to the causes of unity and truth.

If I have not misinterpreted the Anglican idea of the order, it does not involve the un-churching of those national Christian societies which have discarded the office or broken with its historic continuity ; we do not dispute their right so to decide, however we may question the wisdom of their decision ; it does not involve the validity of their orders, nor of the orders of those bodies who live side by side with us in separation ; but in the latter case it denies their regularity ; it leaves room for the full recognition of God's working in and through them, though it declares unhesitatingly their unfaithfulness to the ideal of Christian unity.

Such an idea of the office as this, which tries to cover all the facts, which stands with confident appeal to the triple judgment of Scripture, of history, and of experience, is, I believe, in the long run likely to bring men back to that outward and visible unity which is unquestionably involved in the belief in the Lord, not merely as the Saviour of individuals, but as the founder of One Society in which the saved should work out their own salvation.



Restricted Horizons : A Plea for Breadth.

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THERE are very few men who are really alike in this world, even though they be brothers. Superficially there may be resemblances, but, when you get below the surface, divergencies begin to crop out in a surprising fashion. There are differences of disposition, of mental texture of angle, of

temper, of tact, of manner, of powers, and a thousand other things. You may have to live with men to find out these idiosyncrasies, but there they are, no matter how twinlike they may seem. It is a bit of life's variety, to prevent undue monotony, and to fill up the world's space even to the odd corners. It takes a good many people to make a world, ordinary and queer. It is hard on the odd man, but very picturesque.

Amidst the distinctions which mark us off from one another there is one which goes to the very depths of the man, and that is the stretch of his horizon. How far can he extend himself, and what distance does his personality carry? Is he a man broad or narrow in his outlook? Is his horizon near or far, restricted or expanded? I have an idea that if we cared to analyze ourselves on these lines, we should make larger discoveries concerning our being than by any other principle of investigation. For the reach of our horizon is not a mere incidental detail, but one which enters into the very essence of our personal build.

Take the ministerial man of the world, and you will still find traces of him more than here and there if you look hard. He is a minister for his own sake, pure and simple. All he wants is a good fat living, and nothing to do that calls for special exertion. He preaches bought sermons, and looks well after the shekels. Now this man has no breadth of horizon at all. He is a point, with no extension outwards. He is just a black speck.

Or take the parochial minister, whose vision stops at that little rivulet which divides his parish from his neighbour's. His sympathies are rigidly confined to his own side of the parochial boundary, and on principle he chops off every stray tendril of concern which wanders over the fence. His parish is his one and only sphere of duty, and he knows no other interests. He and his people agree that no money should go out of the parish, and that there is quite enough there to absorb all their energy and sympathy. This horizon is a wider one certainly than that of his man-of-the-world neighbour, but it is nevertheless rather a contracted one. He is a white speck.

The ministerial Imperialist goes farther afield, and reaches forth to the remotest bounds of the Empire, upon which he reminds us that the sun never sets. His sympathies go to Canada, to Australia, to New Zealand, South Africa, and similar Imperial spots. He is keen on the white man's salvation, and lends a ready hand to forward his advantage. This is decidedly better than mere parochialism, for his horizon is pushed much farther away. His restriction is "No foreigner need apply."

But the larger man, I take it, is the missionary enthusiast who has pushed his horizon out to the edges of the world, and embraces white and black, colonist and stranger, tame and savage. He believes in the greater Imperialism, the Divine Imperialism, for his heart goes out to the world at large. He loves human nature. "Homo sum : humani nihil a me alienum puto."

Partisan restrictions and expansions operate in a similar way. Some horizons stretch to the boundaries of our own party and no farther. Like the old rival factions in the Roman games, we are whites or reds or blues or greens, and while to one of these we stretch out our hearts, to the others we extend our fists. There is nothing but good in our own colour ; nothing but error and evil in the others. All who repeat our party shibboleths we draw to our hearts, and embrace with more or less effusion according as their blue is true blue or fancy blue, genuine or suspect ; the rest we send to Coventry or Botany Bay, or consign them to quarantine for a while. It is quite to be expected that amidst the extremes of party there should be many shades, but, as a rule, most men hang on, as fringes, to one or the other. Oddly enough, the hottest warfare is to be found amongst the closest shades of colour, just as brothers and sisters, when they disagree, are the fiercest fighters. Sometimes they combine, and lay aside their mutual animosities to attack the Broad and Latitudinarian. But the coalition is not prolonged unnecessarily. Fortunately, we are not called upon to decide whose horizon is the most contracted amongst these parties,

except that we may say that where charity is the broadest there is the widest horizon.

Perhaps we ought, in dealing with ecclesiastical horizons, to hint at another limitation and restriction which exists amongst ministers and people when dealing with Dissenting brethren. While one will contend that they are God's true ministers, another will insist that they are ministerial frauds. One would consign them to a bottomless pit; another would lift them to an equal heaven. Now, undoubtedly, ecclesiastical feeling can be very bitter and very unjust, and can, moreover, seal over the eyes to the good work of those who differ from us, and if our love to our own Church makes us unjust to others, love is too contracted, and needs to have its horizon pushed out a little. Religious fences are not made in heaven.

Then there are social restrictions which confine and crib men's sympathies to the special class they fancy, to the exclusion of all besides. Those who dearly love a lord cannot abide the unwashed mob, and those who love the slums and the slummers have but little sympathy for the moneyed and the select. It is all very superficial, and we recall the fact that the Master, while he dined willingly enough with the Pharisees, also ate and drank with publicans and sinners. Classes and masses are not religious divisions. It would be easy to multiply specimens of narrow horizons, for we all stop somewhere and cry, "Halt." At some point, near or far, we freeze up, draw in our tentacles, and cry, "Avaunt!"

Now, there are certain perils connected with restricted horizons which demand careful consideration. There is the peril of self-sufficiency and complacency. The narrow man is always positive. No doubt it is a very comfortable feeling that we have "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," and that we stand almost unique in our completeness; but is it likely? Does anybody know everything without commixture of error? May not our truths be only half-truths? May there not be another hemisphere of which we have no notion? Some people think that they see the whole moon

when it is full, and will not credit the fact that there is another side quite as large which neither they nor anybody else has ever seen.

The peril of conceit is near akin to this self-sufficiency, for pride is indigenous in human nature, and the narrow man always looks down on breadth. The china maniac has a bit of old china which has no rival in the brittle world; the bibliophile possesses the only known copy of a book; and both are consumed with inner delight born of exclusiveness. So when the theologian thinks he has grasped the perfect round of truth, with no piece missing in the puzzle creed, he sits on his blissful height with his two arms encircling his achievement, and smiles serenely on the struggling mortals who, down below, are seeking in vain the missing bits. And all the time, without suspecting it, he is embracing a poor little fragment of truth which even then is being slowly devoured by his poor pride, for conceit kills everything it touches, and whenever it handles truth taps its life-blood.

There is, moreover, the danger of arrested development, for, if we have reached the limits of possibility, why seek farther? Like a man who has made his fortune, nothing remains now but to retire and enjoy it. Only, unfortunately, few retire and live long in their idleness. Peary discovered the North Pole, and declared that one visit was enough, and that he would rest on his laurels. But there is a South Pole yet undiscovered. Now, the Christian who has given over his ambition for new discoveries will most surely drop behind and droop and die. Growth is towards a larger horizon, and to cease extending is to lose what we have gained.

The peril of endless collisions is no fancy one, as we may see for ourselves in life; for if we are satisfied with our attainments, others are not, and nothing is less unlikely than that the busy seekers will wantonly disturb our quietude. They will bid us get up and sally forth to the undiscovered lands of truth, and will disturb our slumbers like the mountaineers in Alpine hotels in the early morning who make the wooden walls

resound with their preparations to ascend some lofty peak. Probably, they will provoke us to say hard things concerning their immoderate zeal. They will be to us wanton disturbers of the peace, by which we mean our own personal peace. Certainly, this is not a world where the complacent and conceited are likely to be left undisturbed.

We shall possibly, like other leisured people whose search for spoils is over, be tempted to criticise unduly. There is no more comfortable chair in the world than that of the critic, none which is softer and grander, and few there be who, once having sat therein, care to vacate it. Feeling like a king, what wonder that the critic deals out his words in royal fashion, and hurries some to gaol and some to instant execution? Now, your critic is always a man of fixed and small horizons, a cocksure man, because he knows everything so well, and has succeeded where the rest of the world confess that they have failed. If he had been a humbler man, straining more after the unattained, he would have tumbled out of his chair in double-quick time. Happily, people do not stop much to listen to an unauthorized critic, and greet his denunciations with a smile. The pity is that he should have set up the shop of the critic with so little to put in the windows.

The fact is that narrow-souled and narrow-minded men and women are in constant danger, and are all the more in danger because they feel so complete. They have blocked up the road to progress, and barred themselves off from their better and stronger fellows; they have thrust themselves into the tightest of corners, where they live as solitaries, and where none but the narrow can squeeze themselves in for company. With their eyes glued closely to themselves and their little circle, they fail to realize how wide the world is, and how gloriously broad is the heaven above them. They live a sort of village life, unbroken by any visit to great cities or contact with greater minds, and therefore untouched by life's larger issues.

It is very pathetic that men should suffer so much from what they assume to be superiorities and excellences, but so it is.

Those who live in a narrow world must glean the mischiefs of restriction, and no matter how good their motives may be they cannot escape the penalties of narrowness. So far as they hold the truth, so far will their blessings extend ; but wherein they fall short, therein will their rewards be curtailed.

If all these contentions be true, and narrowness and constriction of mind and heart be so bad, it would be well to try to ascertain how we may extend our horizon. Sandow undertakes to expand our chests ; who will undertake to widen our view and push farther our horizon ? Let us suggest a few common-sense methods.

The first rule, surely, must be, *Get on higher ground.* Some of us have ascended from low valleys, and watched with delight and wonder how the circle has widened around us, disclosing more and more of the distance. The ascent may not be easy, but it was well worth the climb. What is true of the physical world is just as true of the mental and spiritual world ; we must get on higher ground if we would have wider views and larger expanse. But this is exactly what the schoolmaster and the professor are aiming at. Yes, and this is what the Great Master does for us when we take His Word as our standing-ground, and when we ascend the Mount of Prayer and Contemplation. All depends on our height of standing. When the revelation of ourselves takes place we see our spiritual limitations as sinners. When the love comes in we can almost feel the walls of mind and heart pressing outwards and upwards. No man on the heights of Christ can long remain narrow and restricted. We may misread our Bibles, and submit to narrow theological renderings, and be narrowed by the process, but he who takes the whole revelation and leaves nothing out will find his feet in a broad place.

We shall secure a larger vision, and so a larger horizon, by *exercising our eyes.* The mischief comes from fancying that there is nothing to see beyond. This fatally checks the attempt to see farther. The look-out man on board ship has eyes like telescopes for clearness and distance, the fruit of long practice.

Let us try to see farther, believe that there is more to see than we have yet seen, keep a sharp look-out, and the circle will widen quickly and permanently. New truths will rise near the horizon, new constellations, new visitants in the heavens as we look.

It is possible to eke out our natural powers by spiritual ones. The natural soon give out, but the spiritual ones are of a higher and higher character as we work up to them. There is no end to the power of the Spirit objective. It was He who made the narrow-minded Apostles see the right of the Gentile world to the riches of Christ, and sent them through the length and breadth of Asia and Europe declaring the everlasting Gospel. And that same Spirit is at work to-day, giving us what the Church has always possessed, but not always used, the clear vision to see farther and farther afield. Think of the many centuries when the Church in England saw only her own doorsteps. Then the vision came to a few wide-hearted and clear-eyed men, and the Gospel was launched in the foreign field. Surely, we may believe that God's power to confer vision is at least as real in the spiritual as in the astronomical world, and that we may as truly have our horizon extended and revealed as were the heavens by the powers of the telescope. Our children will see farther than we do to-day, because they will possess stronger powers for the eking out of their eyesight.

Most of us find our horizon growing larger by lapse of time and by natural growth. The very young Christian is mostly very intense and very narrow. It is the characteristic of all youth to be complete and sure. He knows more than father or mother together, and he takes care to set them right on many important matters of which he thinks they are ignorant. A little later on he is not so sure, and discovers that even he has his limitations. Then he becomes humble, and sits at his elders' feet as a pupil. And henceforth he is, as a rule, more keen to be taught than to teach. This is the natural order. For experience is a stern master, and knocks a good deal of sawdust out of our heads before it has finished with us, and the

broader the horizon, the more humble it makes us, and the more liberal and broad-minded. We then see that we have not the monopoly of wisdom, that there are a few other clever fellows in the world, that we are not half as good or as wise as we thought, that others are a great deal better than we had ever imagined, that truth has more sides than one, that good doctrine may be expressed in phrases other than we have been accustomed to, and that the trees which at the top wave widely asunder have interlacing roots, and are actually nourished by the same soil. It is such discoveries as these which broaden us out and enlarge our horizon.

Contact with broader minds will often widen the expanse around us. It is for this reason that travelled people are wider-minded. They rub shoulders with many out of their own set who utter other shibboleths and see another aspect of truth. We do not hold our own views of truth with less tenacity, but we find them supplemented by accessory truths which we had not seen before. Insularity narrows, and it is only when we break bounds and cross the Channel or the ocean that we find our creed purified by healthy accretions from without. An ampler charity comes sweeping in, and carries away much rubbish, which, as scaffolding, ought long ago to have disappeared.

Habits of study prevail sometimes to widen our horizon, if we are brave enough to read the other side as well as our own. The danger is lest we keep too strictly to one school of thought, and account it our business to make assurance doubly sure by companying only with books of our own colour. But it is not a very courageous course, and hardly profitable, if our ambition is to gather in fresh truth, and not to remain unduly narrow. If we shrink from mental disturbance, and fear the introduction of a ferment which might unsettle our views, does it not seem as if we held our views unintelligently and lightly? We can have but little confidence in our own side if we fear to be beaten by an opposing team. The fear of inquiry is fatal to all breadth or discovery of truth, or to any extension of our horizon.

The *dismissal of fogs* has much to do with clearing our horizon and widening it. And there is a heat shimmer which is almost as bad as a fog for diminishing distances. Perhaps prejudice is the worst of all mists for cutting off our distant views. There are prejudices of education, prejudices of party, prejudices of nation, which shut us in like the walls of a prison, and keep us in dismal confinement. It is true that we do not call them prejudices, but principles. Nevertheless, if they narrow our horizon unduly, we may call them what we like, but they are hindrances, and not helps. It is of the first importance to break away from fogs, from whatever source they come, and to see things in their right proportion, free from personal distortion. It is not easy, for prejudices cling to us like our own shadows. Still, it can be done if we get high enough and immerse ourselves in God's pure sunshine. We want to see things as they are, and not as we want to see them, or as others tell us that we ought to see them. Astronomers tell us that most of the differences of measurement with skilled seekers in the region of the heavens come from the "personal equation," and that, until this is eliminated or allowed for, no observation can be correct. It is well to remember this "personal equation" in our search for truth.

Obstinacy has to be severely dealt with if our horizon is to be expanded, for it plays no little part in contracting it. We have committed ourselves, we have declared ourselves on this side or that, and we will not break from our past. And while the obstinate fit is on, there is no chance of enlargement. But this stiff obstinacy is a poor spirit when it is set in opposition to the claims of truth. It is more; it is flat rebellion against the guiding Spirit who is seeking to expand our horizon. Besides, to fight against growth is unnatural. A wise man changes his mind; a fool never.

Now, in pressing these considerations of the ways in which we may widen our distances, I am well aware that there is an ultra breadth which is not to be coveted. We may go too far in any direction, and we shall do well to be alive to this danger.

Breadth is hardly earned at the expense of *shallowness*. Your threepenny-bit beaten out to the size of a five-shilling piece is not worth five shillings, is it? Your little lake expanded to twice its original extent will possibly develop islands and inconvenient sandbanks. And if our sympathies seem to be enlarged when they cover a larger area, it may be at the expense of depth and concentration. To love many more is no gain if we love everybody less. Quality must not be sacrificed for the sake of quantity.

There may be *illusions*, too, in our extended views, as when the mariner thinks he sees land, and proclaims it loudly, to discover later on that it is only a fog-bank. Definiteness must not be sacrificed for the doubtful illusion of breadth. Not all that we see is solid. Many a new theology is only new in the sense that the hovering mist is a new territory. New gold-fields in the dim distance do not always pan out quite satisfactorily, and have often been found to be "salted" by some unscrupulous pioneer. Many of the much-vaunted theological "finds" are as real as the travellers' tales with which they regale eager ears when they return home. Green pools seem solid until you step upon them and get well soused for your credulity. We have learned after bitter experience to discount much of what the eager critics tell us of their disintegration of familiar opinions, and have found them to be only the fashion of the hour, caught up by too ready zeal, and then consigned to the theological dust-heap. It is better to be narrow and sound than to be broad and cracked.

There is a danger, too, lest, in the largeness of our ideas, we lose touch with the small ones. An astronomer who to all intents and purposes lives with his head in Mars has no doubt a good and grand time of it. But his feet are on this little earth, and require attention too, to say nothing of his own family circle. The zealous man, who would fain sally forth to convert the heathen, and lets his own neighbourhood lapse into heathenism while he does it, has missed his real vocation. Far sight is good, but near sight has its value too, while normal

sight is better than either. Besides, we may so live in the future as to let the present go to rack and ruin, forgetting the world that lies at our feet.

We must be careful lest, in trying to extend the frontier of truth, we allow human philosophy to displace the revealed truth. Imagination may easily outrun revelation and deny it, and so drop what has been tried and proved. The world is covered with the wreckage of systems which have been found wanting. Do not let us add to them.

We are living in times when no truth, however venerable, is allowed to pass muster without considerable testing in the philosophical crucible. But we need not tremble. Man's mind has not yet produced anything better than the Master's Gospel, and the dignity of man, however much pushed by these original investigators, is not going to throw the need of a fallen man's Saviour out of the field of vision. Truth is all of a piece, and we must take care in the attempt of man to tinker with the everlasting Gospel, lest we be robbed of our most precious inheritance.

The golden rule seems to be—Be as wide as truth, be as broad as God, but go not beyond the Divine heart and mind, lest you fall over the edge into dismal heresy. Truth has its bed like the ocean, and there it lies in all its completeness. We may roam at will over its sunny breadth, but the moment we get out and wade into the bogs and morasses which surround it we are going out of bounds, and had better come back quickly. Error lies hard by truth, and like the quicksands on the sea-beach, may catch and hold and engulf us before we know.

