Piecing together the references that are made to Timothy in the New Testament, we have one of its most attractive sketches. Timothy was the son of a mixed marriage—his mother being a Jewess and his father a Greek. Probably when the Apostle made the acquaintance of the family, his father was dead. Some suppose him to have been a proselyte; if so, he was not a bigot, for his son was permitted to grow up without the sign of the covenant. The lad was more indebted to his mother and grandmother than to his father for the influences that made him what he was. Luther's fine saying, that this world has nothing more beautiful than a woman's heart when it is the abode of piety, was illustrated in each of them. The Jews do not seem to have had a synagogue at Derbe or Lystra. They had the unspeakable advantage of free access to those Scriptures, which deserved then, as now, to be called not only the Book of God but the God of Books. From a child, Timothy knew the Holy Scriptures. When, therefore, the Apostle and his companions came to the countryside where they dwelt, they found each heart of the little household ready to receive the Truth. On his second visit, Paul found the young man grown up to maturity, and designated already to the ministry of the Gospel. With his quick eye for men and character, Paul saw in him a suitable yoke-fellow in the Gospel, and he welcomed him to the heart of his heart; and from that time Timothy became to Saint Paul all that Barnabas had been in his early years, and more, for, while Barnabas was a brother in the Gospel, Timothy was a son: "Timothy, my son, my own son in the faith; my beloved son, my yoke-fellow." Here he calls him his second self: "For I have no man like-minded who will naturally care for your state".

The word "naturally," then, is the keynote of the passage which describes Timothy's character. I do not spend time in defending the remark. Lightfoot's comment may be quoted as sufficient: "Timothy was neither a supposititious (vōtos) nor an adopted (eisporētos) son, but, as St. Paul calls him elsewhere, a true child in faith (γιςεν τέκνον ἐκ πίστεως). He inherited all the interests and affections of his spiritual father." Possessing this character, Timothy was a contrast to all the rest of the disciples at Rome. There were degrees of warmth amongst them towards the Apostle and the Gospel; and there were those who were rather cool than cold: they were ready to fight, but not to go on a forlorn hope; ready to travel a little, but not to the ends of the earth. If selfishness did not control their Christian life, it was permitted to counsel it; and if selfishness was not an active partner in the concern, it was a sleeping partner, and had a right of veto on projected movements. Timothy alone manifested an affection for the souls of men that was tropical in the strength and luxuriance of its efforts. The Apostle says "all"—by which he means one and all with this single exception—"all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's". In opposition to them, love for the souls of men was with Timothy a voluntary, a graceful, and a natural thing.

We now propose to consider why regard for man's spiritual interests ought to be natural to every Christian.

Looking on the things of Jesus Christ, I remind you, is the first act of Christianity.

"Mind'st thou the place, the spot of land, Where Jesus did thee meet, And how He got thy heart and hand— Thy husband then was sweet, O, then the garden, chamber, bank, A vale of vision seemed; Thy joy was full, thy heart was frank, Thy husband was esteemed."
treacherous kiss of another, the shameful defection of all, enter like iron into His soul. He encountered the insult and contumely, the mockings and scourgings, of the hireling soldiers. The purple robe was stripped away; the mock admiration exchanged for bitter reviling. Fainting under His burden, we see Him passing from the city on His way to the place of punishment: and "when they came to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him". But even that was not enough for the men whose hollowness He had exposed. It was not enough for them that body and mind and spirit were bending, nigh to breaking, beneath the load of a world's iniquity. Reproach and gibes and scoff and sneer, each winged with deadly hatred, do their way to the place of punishment: and "when they exchanged for bitter reviling. Fainting under His burden, we see Him passing from the city on His work. Whilst He prays for them, they cry, "Come down from the Cross"; whilst nature gasps out her anguish in the opening of the graves and rending of the rocks, they stand exulting by with the taunt, "Thou that destroyest the Temple, and buildest it again in three days, save Thyself". And there too, as if no human pang might be wanting, His heart had all its wounds opened afresh by the presence in His sufferings of His mother. Her hands had woven the seamless robe, on which, even then, the soldiers cast their lots. Her lips had taught Him in the quiet cottage, in the hill country of Nazareth, the hymn, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Her ears were destined to hear it—the utterance of His bitterest anguish on the Cross of Calvary.

Now, brethren, when we believe in Christ, we believe that He lived that life of suffering for us; that He died that death of ignominy for us; that He emptied Himself of His glory for us; that He was made in fashion as a man for us; that He submitted to death—even the death of the Cross—for us. We hear the truth and the meaning of that life and that work all compacted for us into some such sentences as these: "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life"; "Herein indeed is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and gave His only-begotten Son to die for us".

Christ, in other words, became to us, then, the measure of all things, as Christians trusting in that death for salvation, and as Christians accepting that life as our ideal, after which we are constantly to strive. Surely it ought to be the most natural thing in the world that we should care for the things of others. Necessity is laid upon us: "Yea, woe is unto us if we seek our own things and not the things of Jesus Christ".

Second.—If care for the state of others is interwoven with the beginnings of Christian life, it is equally necessary for its continuance. Self-preservation, we say, is the first law of nature. Unselfishness is the principle of self-preservation in the Christian life. Common as is the commonplace, this is the point in a discussion of the subject at which to remind you that the law of God's universe is: "Give that you may get, and get that you may give". Christianity in this respect brings man into perfect accord with the law of the world. There is not a daisy in the sod, or buttercup on the lea, or modest violet, but has this lesson for me—it is blessed to receive, it is more blessed to give. The selfishness in Christian life which takes all, and gives nothing back, is sure to be its own bane. The Christian man who thinks and prays most for others is the man who brings the largest measure of blessing upon himself. He may not be the best critic of a sermon, as those count themselves critics who make a man an offender for a word, but he will profit most from the sermon. He may not care for what some are pleased to call the grand thoughts, but he will appreciate the good thoughts. Solid instruction will always be a welcome guest. He may not have time to gather the flowers that grow by the roadside, but as he presses on he devours the way, and is the first to reach the journey's end. The traveller, far up on some Alpine height, sees another traveller toiling up the steep ascent; as his brother nears some hidden, and to him unknown, precipice, in a tone that startles him, he shouts—"Beware!". The voice may startle the other into safety; at all events he is free from his brother's blood, whilst back upon his own ear comes the echo of his own warning, and says to him again—"Beware!". Self-preservation is the first law of nature; the Christian must naturally care for the state of others.

Third.—In the third place, care for the state of others is natural in Christian life when we consider the law of the Christian's relation to other men. The Gospel baptizes into Christ ordinary human benevolence; it enforces the fundamental teaching of social morality. Our fellow-men have claims on us, because they are our fellows, which we cannot ignore. If any of us has a word of wisdom to speak, God will not hold us faithful if we refuse to speak it. If we can in any degree contribute to make this life happier, and a more beautiful thing in the eyes of our neighbours, we are required by inexorable law so to do. When Christians hear that there are men amongst us, who are doing their utmost to relieve distress, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, they must bid them good-speed in the name of the Lord; inasmuch as they are doing it unto one of the least of the Lord's little ones, they are doing it unto Him. But this is not the highest ground on which we press our appeal this morning. There are deeper needs than those of the body; higher wants than those of the flesh. As Christians, we possess that which we believe can satisfy every spiritual need and meet every spiritual want. If I do not stay to picture that need, it is
not because I regard an appeal to the emotions as dishonouring to Christ and to His Gospel. The Gospel surely has to do with human emotions, as with every other portion of human nature. Emotions are the winds that fill the sails and propel the ship; if Christianity has nothing to do with governing the course of the ship, surely one might doubt whether it was a religion for mankind. I am not prepared to accept, without qualification, the dictum that emotion is worthless if it does not end in action. Surely a good emotion is better than no emotion: it is certainly better than a bad emotion. It is like a good thought, it depends on how we use it, whether it comes to anything or not. What has been said of affection may be said as truly of justifiable emotion. Emotion was never wasted; if it enriched not the heart of another, its waters, returning back to their springs like the rain, shall fill them full—that which the fountain sends forth returns again to the fountain.

I pass on, because this part of the argument is not within the special province which I have assigned to myself this morning. In expounding this text, I could lay bare scenes of misery and suffering that would make the flesh shrink and the heart quiver. But, powerful as such appeals are, they are not the highest which we are justified in using. Just as we are told that the first reliable knowledge of the surface of the earth was gained from the study of the stars, so it is from our acquaintance with the will of Christ that we gather most clearly the lines of duty towards our fellow-men. This is the very heart of our case, for there are many servants now-a-days who break away every man from his master. "Convert the world!" voices are heard saying outside the Church—voices are heard re-echoing the words within the Church—"Convert the world! Leviathan is not so tame. What have you to show for all your efforts? Tribes, for which the Bible was translated, have died out. A few hundred converts from year to year are all you can reckon up in India and China. If the South Sea Islands were a diadem in the Redeemer's crown, as missionary rhetoric has told us of it, it would be but a drop in the bucket. At home luxury is growing and riches are increasing, but there is no corresponding increase in your receipts. There are many who could not name your mission stations. Your missionary literature is not bought, or, if bought, it is left unread. Your prayers are destitute of all missionary fervour. Confess it at once, the old Adam is too strong for you."

This is no longer the day of small things in missionary enterprise, it is a day of great things. It is to be compared, not to an army making its way over mountain passes with difficult steps, but to an army that has gained the day, and is hastening to the spoil. Even if the objection to missions, as thus put, is true, the objector has no ground for exultation. If the missionary spirit is decaying in England, then there is a canker in the nation's heart and a blight on its prosperity. But, without staying to argue or recriminate, we can have only one reply when the objection is thus put—Christ has commanded our action, and we must obey Christ. To such a work as this there are times when circumstances seem to call a halt. It is good at such times to be wary and cautious, but work must take the place of caution, and effort must take the place of prayer. It is His to keep the light alive, ours to light the lamp; His to determine which seed shall prosper, this or that, ours to sow the seed beside all waters. It is His, if He pleases, to present to us the best circumstances, it is ours at all times to make the best of circumstances. Whether the funds are advancing or retrograding, whether there is the joy of harvest in the harvest-field or not, we must care for others, because we must obey the command of the Lord. Be it that we are fighting a losing battle, we still shall fight; be it that we are emptying the ocean a drop at a time, we shall still withdraw the drop; be it that we are rolling uphill the stone that must rebound, we shall still continue; be it that we have toiled all night and have caught nothing, if it is the Master's voice that says, "Cast your nets on the other side"—on the other side we mean to cast them, and by-and-by, when the daylight comes, the Lord will give us the draught. We are obeying the Master's command: we must care for the state of others.

If we are tempted at times to forget the commandment, and to be so unnatural in our Christianity as to disregard spiritual destitution, it is because we forget the hope and the assurance of triumph. Have you ever noticed in how many ways our proverbial philosophy bears upon impatience? "All hawthorns do not blossom on Christmas day." "Ill weeds are sure to thrive." "Truth lies at the bottom of the well." "Rome was not built in a day." "The rolling stone gathers no moss." Now, the Christian has the natural impatience of the race to struggle with when he pledges himself to his enterprise, and he needs such homely words of warning and advice as much as most men. When he looks at himself and his own feeble powers arraigned against the great evil world, no wonder that his hands hang down. Elijah cried: "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers." Jacob said: "All these things are against me." Isaiah moans: "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips." Jeremiah mourns: "O Lord God, I am but a child." The Baptist, shut up in prison, sends to Christ with the demand: "Art Thou He that should come, or look we for another?" But for all that, brethren, in spite of our doubt and despondence, "the foundation of God standeth sure." "God hath highly exalted
Jesus, and given Him a name that is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." Yes, brethren, Christian hope is a small name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should be bow: as one has said, "I have given the whole day to Satan, and have nothing but the gloaming to give to Christ, and I will give it all.

But, even when the resolution is thus manfully avowed, the habits that have been formed are not abandoned by one volition; no man changes his opinion, still less his habits, after forty years of age. Planted in good soil, fed with water from the river of life, habit becomes a valiant tree that sends forth beautiful branches, and each in turn designed to become the base and root of others. Permit bad habits to grow upon you, they may be brushed aside to-day like gossamer threads, twenty years hence they may be manacles for the hands and fetters for the feet. Learn young. "What young John will not do, old John cannot do." With the young convert, however, where the habits of Christian service grow with his life, where life and Christian service may be said to begin together, the instincts, affections, and duties become natural. What the old convert does with difficulty, the young convert does easily; the water, which is in one case pumped up by delicate and complicated hydraulics, bubbles up naturally from the spring in the other; the tribute, which in the one case may be squeezed out (and oh! how hardly some old converts can bear to be squeezed!), comes naturally in the other case.

One or two applications. Let parents recognise their responsibility. The mother—I name the mother because hers is the plastic hand which forms the coming generation. Bunyan long ago taught this. Give us mothers—good, old-fashioned, unselfish mothers; praying mothers, who will see to it that the missionary spirit be kept alive in the hearts of their children—and we shall have many more than we have yet of those who naturally care for the things of others. Of course the father has his part to play as well. He is bound to give his children the priceless legacy of a holy character and a godly example—bound to provide a home in which the house shall become a church and the family a temple. Some of them, even when the best has been done, may wander far from God, but there will always be a subtle cable drawing them back again, and the likelihood is that they will not wander. From them will come the rank and file of the reliable Christian army. Amongst them will be found the most useful office-bearers in our Church. Many of them will have occasion, when they seek for ordination, to bear witness that the seed of the kingdom was implanted by a father's hand and watered by a mother's tears. And surely I may say a word, in closing, to the young themselves. Seneca, when dealing with the complaint that men have no choice as to their birth, says that though that is true, every man has it in his power to be born as he pleases in his mental life—the books we read, the authors we choose, are of our
own selection. True as this is of the mental life, it is much truer of the spiritual life. My son — what a blessed demand it is! — give me thine heart; my daughter, give me thine heart. I ask for your money to-day, but money is the lowest demand that I make in the name of my Master. There is a palsy in the hand always when there is a frost in the heart. Money is given from a thousand motives — as many often as there are subscribers. Some give — no, they don't give — they leave what they cannot take away. Some don't like to refuse a friend. Some have a keen eye to business, and think £1 occasionally a good investment. Some are proud, and like to say, "I thank God I am not as other men, I give tithes of all I possess". Some give from vanity, some from self-love, some from ambition. Such money may be, — I don't say it will be, — but it may be useful in the hands of others. Money, thus given, can bring no merit in the sight of God, who is a God of judgment and looketh at the heart. I ask you then, bring of your money; I ask you for your hearts. All here have given money at times, and we thank God for you that there is in your hearts some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel, but oh! surely no inconsistency can be greater or more manifest than this — a human hand giving money for the hearts of others which has not given its own heart to Christ — to extinguish a conflagration in the house of another and leave your own house to be burned down — to be a finger-post (using Matthew Henry's illustration), always pointing the way and never going — to be a bell, always calling to the sanctuary and never entering. These are not too violent metaphors in illustration of and remonstrance with your position. And so, my friends, young men and maidens especially, I close my address this morning with this demand — but I don't say it would match the attractiveness of its contents. Iris: Studies in Colour and Talks about Flowers, he calls it. And why Iris? Because "the prismatic colours of the rainbow, the brilliant sword lily, that wonderful part of the eye which gives it its colour, and the messenger of heaven who beams with joy, youth, beauty, and love, are all named Iris. The varied contents of my book stand related on all sides to that wealth of ideas which are united in this name." The Painter's Despair. Now there was light, God's first-born, and with it colours, the children of light. All creatures which thereafter came into being, had, along with their peculiar forms, at the same time their peculiar colours. And when the ascending scale of organic and animated beings reached its highest step in man, the human body was distinguished by that manifold soft mingling of colours, the rendering of which, the so-called carnation, is almost the painter's despair. It is celebrated by the Shulamite, in the Song of Songs, as she exclaims: "My beloved is white and ruddy".

This at once introduces a feature of Iris which is interesting and valuable — its incidental expositions of Scripture. For, after all, Delitzsch is greatest as an expositor. He may be more, but he cannot help being that. In "Black and White" we find the name Dumah brought in to illustrate and be illustrated, to give light and to get it.

Dumah.

Motion, life, and light are interchangeable Bible conceptions, and stillness, death, and darkness are their opposite. According to the gloomy Old Testament view of the other world, the one relief from which is faith in the living God, the realm of death is the land of stillness and darkness.
The name of Edom is modified by Isaiah into the name of Dumah, which means stillness, to indicate that a gloomy future awaits Edom, which will wring out the question addressed to the prophet in anguish of spirit: "Watchman, is the night quite gone?"

**Books Noticed.**


3. Evelyn (J.): A Warrior King. Cr. 8vo, 190 pages. Blackie & Son, 1890, 2/.


11. Stables (Gordon, M.D., R.N.): The Hermit Hunter of the Wilds; with four original illustrations. 2d ed., cr. 8vo, 224 pages. Blackie & Son, 1890, 2/6.


**THE MONTH'S EXPOSITIONS AND SERMONS.**

Note.—None but valuable sermons and expositions are noticed. Of Monthly Magazines the December issue is referred to. Of Weekly Periodicals the number is given.


Gen. ix. 20, 21, CA 951, Taylor.

xxxii. 29, MR 1662, Watson.

xlv. 1-4, MTP 2116.

i Sam. xii. 24, MR 1661, Watson.

xxi. 16-17, BWP 81, Emslie.

Ps. vii. 15, MR 1660, Watson.

xxiv., E, Cheyne.

cvi. 43, CC 422, Parker.

cxxiv. 16, MT 256, Pearse.

Jer. ix. 23, CWP 940, xx. 38, CA 949, Talmage.

Esther iv. 13-17, BWP 81, Emslie.

Ps. vii. 15, MR 1660, Watson.

xxiv., E, Cheyne.

cvi. 43, CC 422, Parker.

xxiv. 16, MT 256, Pearse.

xxvi. 46, CWP 942, Gibbon.

xxvi. 19, Q, Macmillan.

Mark ii. 10, 11, CWP 941, Fisher.

iii. 17, BM, Edwards.

xiv. 17-22, BWP 81, Glover.

xiv. 8, CA 950, Walker.

xvi. 17-18, BWP 82, Nicoll.


i. 78, 79, F, 1817, M'Laren.

ii. 21, CM, Kendall.

ii. 29-32, GW, Macleod.

iii. 16, Q, Calhoun.

iv. 34, CWP 943, Jowett.

vii. 44-46, CWP 943, Brown.

viii. 38, RSP 1, M'Neill.

xxiii. 12, CC 424, Parker.

John x. 17, MTP 2117.

xiv. 6, CWP 940, Smith.

xxv. 5-8, F 1815, M'Laren.

xxvi. 2, F 1815, M'Laren.

Acts ii. 42, CEP 725, Alexander.

vii. 13, CWP 942, Clifford.

vi. 13, CWP 725, Alexander.

xxvi. 19, CWP 942, Abbott.

iii. 3, 4, CWP 940, Gregory.

i Cor. ii. 16, CWP 941, Clifford.

iii. 11-13, CWP 942, Flint.

ix. 11, CEP 725, Alexander.

xii. 13, CEP 725, Alexander.

ii. 15, CWP 943, Rogers.

ix. 15, SM, Cox.

x. 14-16, FC 425, Temple.

Gal. v. 22, CWP 941, Reiton.

vi. 2, MT 256, Lunn.

Epiph. i. 5, CWP 943, Robinson.

xxvii. 19, Q, Macmillan.

vii. 17, CM, Moule.

i. 1, 2, CP, Dods.

v. 20, CP, Westcott.

vi. 4, CWP 941, Horton.

Phl. iii. 10, CEP 726, Field.

Col. ii. 10, CA 949, Parkhurst.

i. Thess. ii. 13, MR 1659, Watkinson.

v. 18, CWP 943, Jones.

i. Tim. vi. 8, SH, Jones.

Heb. ix. 1-10, E, Bruce.

x. 39, FC 426, Vaughan.

xiv. 22, BW 160, Whyte.

xii. 8, CWP 940, Rowland.

ii. 18, C. 1034, Meyer.

i. 1-3, C. 1034, Meyer.

ii. 4-12, C. 1035, Meyer.

ii. 11, 12, C. 1036, Meyer.

2 Pet. i. 13, FC 427, Jones.

ix. 1 John ii. 14, CP, Laidlaw.

Rev. 1. 9-19, CC 423, Parker.

xxi. 24, MT 255, Hughes.

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