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History, like Scripture, is written for our learning. True to this plan, Browning represents the old Pope as inquiring how his predecessors acted and steered their way through difficulties similar to those confronting him.

> Have I to dare?—I ask, how dared this Pope?
> To suffer?—Such an one, how suffered he?
> Being about to judge, as now, I seek
> How judged once, well or ill, some other Pope.[1]

We grow wiser, that is, by comparing the past and the present, by putting ourselves in the place of others, and by avoiding the dangers of a narrow and uninstructed judgment.

(4) *Christian charity.*—There are anticipations of this crowning phase before the Christian era, and before the Christian spirit had time to diffuse itself. David's lament on Saul and Jonathan (1 S 1^{19-27}) is a pure and exquisite embodiment of the charity that 'taketh not account of evil' and that does honour both to its author and to its objects. Horace, who deals lightly with our virtues and vices, saw the wisdom of judging men charitably and the absurdity of denying our own faults in attacking those of our neighbours. To find 'softening phrases' will at any rate promote pleasantness and good feeling.

> So if one friend too close a fist betrays,
> Let us ascribe it to his frugal ways.
> (*Sat.* i. 3, Martin's trans.).

Horace's method contains the secret of making and keeping friends ('Haec res et jungit, junctos et servat amicos,' line 54). It was the wise maxim of Francis de Sales: 'If an action may be considered in more lights than one, always choose the most favourable.' After all, the work of criticism is mainly negative, useful in exposing and clearing away shams and excrescences. It becomes the artist to be sensitive to faults of form and to be his own severest critic. 'He would not make his judgment blind' (*In Memoriam*, C. xcv). Likewise, in morals, we are not to be indifferent to truth. We may do full justice to the extraordinary virtues of Charles Lamb, while not abstaining from condemning his weakness (Benson). Yet most of us, if we had to go through life again, would probably blame less and praise more. 'A couple of generations ago, the classical tutors of Cambridge, it is said, would never give a word of praise to a piece of translation or composition, however much they admired it' (Souter). This icy demeanour may brace the academic atmosphere, but something more warm and helpful is needed by those, especially the young, who are struggling in the arena of the world. Truth does not win or shine unless it is spoken and conveyed in the tone and medium of kindness (Eph 4^{15}). To spend our powers in criticism and judging is to spoil the joy, and to miss the wine, of life. 'I am much more apprehensive than long ago of the odiousness and danger of the sin of pride. I am much more sensible than heretofore of the breadth and length and depth of the radical, universal, odious sin of selfishness, and therefore have written so much against it; and of the excellency and necessity of self-denial, and of a public mind, and of loving our neighbours as ourselves' (Baxter, *Life*, p. 441). To expel from our judgments and from society the Pharisaic leaven, and to work towards the Christian ideal, is to serve best the ends of justice and charity; and the hope of progress lies in our cultivating this spirit, and in exhibiting its patience, tolerance, gentleness, and its inexhaustible virtue (Jn 13^{35}, 1 Co 13).

[1] *The Ring and the Book*, Works, x. pp. 64, foll.

In the Study.

Preaching in the Twentieth Century.

UP-TO-DATENESS.

By the Rev. John Edwards, Wakefield.

Critics of the modern pulpit are practically agreed on one point—that in order to success preaching must be timely, appropriate, up-to-date. Just as in the industrial world old tools and old machines are thrown to the scrap heap, and old methods discarded for the newest appliances, so with the pulpit—old things must go!

> Of old things all are over old,
> Of new things none are new enough.

And of old things the pulpit is said to have a great monopoly.

This criticism is no doubt one-sided and unjust, but is so frequent and insistent that preachers are in danger of thinking that they may become mere

'fossils in a theological cabinet.' We may therefore wisely inquire what is meant by up-to-dateness; and try to discover what the epithet really stands for when applied to preaching. Its meaning is clear enough in the realm of fashion, or business, or even philosophy; but it needs the most careful examination and definition before we can use it in relation to preaching.

The quality of up-to-dateness is often claimed for those who copy the methods of the most sensational press-agents, and by advertisement in the Saturday evening newspapers commend their wares by catchy or slangy titles. Frequently, however, their utterances have nothing up-to-date about them except the ludicrous headline, and in theme and treatment are beneath the dignity of ordinary pulpit discourse.

Up-to-dateness in pulpit method does not mean merely echoing popular cries, or using modern slang phrases for pulpit themes; nor does it consist in sharing the capricious moods of the crowd, or playing to the gallery. Such devices have no place in the Christian Church. It does mean that the preacher finds and uses arresting, vivid, and appropriate themes, and utters his message in modern, forceful, and picturesque language. Three things are really necessary—preaching should be timely—timeless—and arresting.

1. Preaching must be *timely*. Up-to-dateness means finding and proclaiming *the message for the day*. Years ago a lecturer addressing ministerial students urged them in their choice of passages of Scripture for public reading to select the true message for the day. The counsel was wise—and should be taken seriously to heart by the modern preacher.

So much of the preaching of to-day seems to be preaching to yesterday, or preaching about yesterday. It does not touch as it ought the contemporary life, and grapple with its problems, its duties, its difficulties, its dangers. There is in consequence a sense of unreality about it, a foreignness, a far-away-ness; and to men who are of necessity pre-occupied with the exigencies of contemporary life, it is not helpful preaching.[1]

The preacher is a messenger and must have a message. He is not before the people merely to say something, but has a definite and certain message to deliver, a message from the Great Master—the Great King—whose commission he holds. Only as that message is grasped and understood will it be a real message to the men and women listening to him. It must never be monotonous or dull, but as varied as their needs, as rich as their requirements demand, and if rightly uttered will come to them with all the force of a living message and with the authority of the Master behind it. Thus it will be characterized by *timeliness*: meeting the need of the present hour.

I have sometimes fancied that our sermons were prepared on the assumption that the Man in the Moon will be the only person present. The questions we discuss are not human questions; the problems with which we deal are not human problems; the language we speak is no human language. It may be lunar, I am not sure. But, however that may be, it is all addressed to the Man in the Moon.

Think of Thomas Chalmers. The most sensational discovery of his life was the discovery that for more than twelve years he had been preaching sermons at Kilmany that bore no relationship whatever to the actual lives of the people to whom he ministered. For more than twelve years the parish minister of Kilmany had been preaching to the Man in the Moon! Then came the great awakening. Chalmers was seized by sudden illness. During his convalescence his mind underwent what he himself called a great revolution. He found the Saviour. . . . It is difficult to read with dry eyes his own telling account of that great transformation. In due time he returned to his pulpit. The people were electrified. The minister was no longer preaching to the Man in the Moon; he was preaching to the men of Kilmany![2]

The preacher must treat the great evangelical truths in the light of present-day knowledge and conditions; his message must make itself intelligible to society with all its new facts, experiences, and conditions. To enable him to do this the preacher must be familiar with the great teachings of science, and must carefully study all that the scientist can teach him concerning the new facts and teachings of nature; and thus enrich his sermons with new and forceful illustrations and analogies, and thus make his teaching more authoritative to the people of his own generation.[3]

2. Preaching should be characterized by *timelessness*—the message must have behind it the truth and authority of God. Its timeliness will depend largely on its timelessness.

The preacher is a man with a vision—and a burden, as well as a message. His business is to make the vision which has dominated him real and vivid to his hearers; to reveal to them the glory of the everlasting gospel and the radiant vision of the abiding Saviour. This will be impossible unless he is in vital relation with Christ and enjoys frequent and hallowed communion with Him. Nothing save the fundamental truths

[1] David H. Greer.
[2] F. W. Boreham.
[3] W. L. Watkinson.

of the gospel can give timelessness to preaching. Those who are tempted to think that the royal road to effectiveness or up-to-dateness is found in any and every topic which fascinates the social, political, or literary world rather than in the old yet ever new gospel will do well to listen to Dr. Paget's advice to the younger members of his own profession. He suggests that while they ought to give careful attention to general reading and mental culture, they should not unload their artistic opinions on their patients.

The proper field for culture seems to be among those who, not having much the matter with them, enjoy talking. But not all, even of these, enjoy listening. I know of one who said to a friend, 'I don't want my doctor to talk to me about the National Gallery,' which is a shrewd saying, and has taught me to avoid all such dangerous topics Anyhow, people who are seriously ill care no more for preciosity in us than for gold-dust in beef-tea. What they want is a man who has just had and cured a case exactly like theirs; and he need not be a judge of anything outside of their insides. It is a poor comfort to them to know that he is very fond of good poetry.[1]

Is not the preacher really judged for his knowledge and experience of religion and saving grace, rather than by his talk about outside things?

What is wanted above everything to-day is positive preaching, by men who believe with all their mind and heart in Jesus Christ. If a man has any doubt about Christ he must on no account be His minister; and if one in the ministry be afflicted from time to time by failures of faith, let him consume his own smoke and keep a brave face in the pulpit. The pulpit is not the place for discussing systems of scepticism, or proving the instinctive truths of religion, or adjusting the speculative difficulties of Christianity, or apologizing for Christ. Those are belated tactics.[2]

To make a sermon that pleases a great crowd, that is admired, imitated, bruited about, that is of little account in itself. But a sermon that really edifies, really interests the heart and penetrates it with its warming power, while it illuminates the understanding; a sermon that leaves a lively searching sting behind it, that follows the hearer, and in the hours of temptation, long after the sound of it has died away, comes up, as it were, dancing through the heart; a sermon that does not please, that stirs all the flesh in revolt against it and yet pleases, that cannot be kept out of the mind, nor refuted, openly found fault with perhaps, but cannot be otherwise than approved by the heart,—*that* is the work of the wisdom, the Spirit, and the power of Christ.[3]

No message to the human soul can be appropriate and timely unless it is also timeless and ageless. The sermon should have heaven for its father if it has earth for its mother; the issues of eternity can alone give it true perspective, or endow it with arresting force. The preacher must know that he comes with a message from God if he is to speak truly and effectively to the men of his age.

Teacher, I find that since I have imbibed the teachings of the New Testament I can look beyond the mean gains of this life. I suppose the reason why English artists put so much perspective into their drawings is because Christianity has given them a Future, and the reason why Oriental artists fail to do so is because Buddha and Confucius do not raise their eyes above the present.[4]

3. Preaching must be *arresting*. Up-to-dateness requires that the preacher's message must be stated in living and burning words, and delivered with fervour and passion. The preacher's language should be that of the market-place rather than that of the academy. At the same time his vocabulary should be copious, graceful, choice: always avoiding the pedantic. A skilful choice of words will add much to the beauty and effectiveness of the sermon. Some old preachers say that the old Anglo-Saxon words are always best for pulpit use, as they are understood by everybody. But there is no real reason for such restriction, if a wise selection is made.

The beauty of words is one of the beauties of Nature. If a man were to say to you that he did not admire roses and honeysuckle, diamonds and opals, butterflies and peacocks, you would know that you were in the presence of a fool. These beauties of Nature are beautiful in themselves; we admire them right away; we do not need to be told that they are beautiful. The longer we go without them, the hungrier we are for them; that is why spring is so beautiful after winter, and Kensington Gardens after Notting Hill Gate, and a jeweller's shop after a butcher's shop. In a dull setting one beautiful word catches the light like a diamond.[5]

The finest music will not appeal if it be badly played. One has heard the great composers treated by amateur performers in a dull, lifeless fashion that irritated instead of inspiring. The notes were played correctly, but there was no insight, no vision, no interpretation. So sermons may be, and often are, theologically and exegetically irreproachable, thoughtfully weighty even, but unless they are alive they are defective, and the greatest theme in the world becomes uninspiring and wearisome.[6]

Up-to-date preaching requires also passion in the preacher, and in the congregation. The writer had the privilege recently of listening to several preachers. On consecutive Sundays he heard three different men. In each case there was a devout and reverent congregation, but only once did the message really grip. In one of the services

[1] *Confessio Medici.* [2] John Watson. [3] Lavater.
[4] *Japanese Art Student.* [5] Stephen Paget.
[6] W. H. Harrowes.

the sermon was on a living theme treated in a careful and scholarly fashion, but it had no arresting power. In the second the theme and treatment were hopelessly antiquated, and the sermon could be pardoned only as coming from an aged and enfeebled preacher called up for duty at a pinch. In the third case the message was not merely arrestive, it had evidently gripped the preacher's heart, was delivered with vigour and passion, and arrested and held spell-bound the audience.

The secret lay in the passion and fervour of the man treating a living and appropriate theme. True up-to-dateness means all this—a timely well-chosen message, a carefully prepared discourse, and a preacher full of that certainty and passion which comes from the 'unction of the Holy One.' If our preaching lacks this it is imperfect, ineffective, antiquated. It will create no inspiration because it fails in vigour and authority.

Something is due from the congregation. Passion and power in the pulpit may be rendered ineffective by listlessness and indifference in the pew. The psychology of the hearer has changed in recent years; the emotions have been checked and disciplined almost out of sight, and this fact has to be reckoned with. Can we regain the note of passion—that fervour in the hearer which reacts on the preacher and makes him as a flame of fire? It can be done; but in order to regain it we require a great reinforcement of spiritual life. The springs must be fed if the outflow is to be vigorous. The spirit must grow fervent if fervour is to spread to the congregation. We need a new vision of God, and power to make such a vision a reality to our people. In any case our primary task is to make our message attractive and vital. Every great preacher is an example here.

Truth and timeliness together make the full preacher. How shall you win such fulness? . . . First, seek always truth first and timeliness second—never timeliness first and truth second. Then let your search for truth be deliberate, systematic, conscientious. Let your search for timeliness consist rather in seeking for strong sympathy with your kind, a real share in their occupations, and a hearty interest in what is going on. And yet again; let the subjects of your sermons be mostly eternal truths, and let the timeliness come in the illustrations of those truths by, and their application to, the events of current life.[1]

When I have got my theme clearly defined, and I begin to prepare its exposition, I keep in the circle of my mind at least a dozen men and women, very varied in their natural temperaments, and very dissimilar in their daily circumstances. These are not mere abstractions, neither are they dolls or dummies. They are real men and women whom I know: professional people, trading people, learned and ignorant, rich and poor. When I am preparing my work my mind is constantly glancing round this invisible circle, and I consider how I can so serve the bread of this particular truth as to provide welcome nutriment for all. What relation has this teaching to that barrister? How can the truth be related to that doctor? What have I here for that keenly nervous man with the artistic temperament? And there is that poor body upon whom the floods of sorrow have been rolling their billows for many years—what about her? And so on all round the circle . . . our messages must be related to life, to lives, and we must make everybody feel that our key fits the lock of his own private door.[2]

John Bunyan is chiefly thought of as a Dreamer of wonderful dreams, but he was also, as his contemporaries have told us, one of the most living preachers England has ever known. His own intense religious experience largely aided his genius in this. As he tells us himself, he had tarried long at Sinai to see the fire and the cloud, and the darkness, that he might fear the Lord all the days of his life on earth, and tell of His wonders to others. So that when, in after days, he spoke with kindling eye and tongue of fire the things he had seen and felt, men bent to his words as the corn bends to the wind. No piler up of mere rhetoric was this Dreamer of Bedford, but one deeply learned in the lore of human souls, heaven-taught in the great and wonderful art of laying hold of men.[3]

[1] Phillips Brooks.

[2] J. H. Jowett.

[3] John Brown.

Virginibus Puerisque.

I.

JULY.

Independence Day.

'Remember this, and shew yourselves men.'—Is 46[8].

There are several reasons why boys and girls are taught history. But the good teacher of it has one special idea in his mind; it is to make his scholars true patriots. He tells them about their own country, he leads them on until they want to learn about other countries, and what has happened between these countries and their own. Some of the most enthusiastic lovers and defenders of this our native land, became patriots at the feet of their first teacher of history.

But the patriotism of boys and girls is inclined to be rather a narrow thing. To them Great Britain is the centre of the Universe: other countries are out of sight, and—'out of sight, out of mind'—they forget them. That was how it was when I was a boy.

If you are wiser, it is because you have been brought up when great events were happening—events that are making history. It is impossible, for instance, for you not to be interested in France just now. France has a wonderful past; one day you will read about the French Revolution. Now, its story, as you are all aware, is going on in a line with our own. And there is a great big brother whom I feel sure you love almost better than France. He has been away from us for a long time, but has at last come back to help the old folk in their trouble and difficulties. He has brought his flag with him: there are stars and stripes upon it. How proud we are to have big brother 'Sam' beside us.

He was once younger, and perhaps more impulsive than he is now, but he always had splendid manly thoughts, for he had a good and noble nature. He separated from the old roof-tree because he did not believe in being 'managed'; he felt he had a right to think for himself. Let me tell you one or two of the things he believed, and which he wrote down. 'All men are created equal, and possess certain rights that cannot be taken from them; these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of true happiness.' Therefore 'Sam'—people who love him give him that name—Sam would not submit to be treated, as he thought, like a child. He set up a new establishment for himself, ruled according to his own ideas. He wanted every one connected with him to feel safe and happy. On the 4th of July 1776 his famous 'Declaration of Independence' was published: I have already quoted a sentence of it to you.

He knew that people are apt to forget things, so he gave orders that every year on the 4th of July the Declaration should be read in all towns and villages throughout the United States of America. That is done, and great crowds gather together on 'Independence Day' to hear it.

I heard of an old Grandfather being appointed to read the Declaration on a village common. He wore his soldier coat. It had been brushed until there was not a speck of dust upon it. Just after he left home a little grandson discovered that he had forgotten his spectacles. There was nothing for it but that Jim should run with them all the way from Grandfather's house, which stood nearly a mile from the village. He arrived just in time to see the old man standing on the platform and fumbling in his pocket. Wasn't Jim glad, for Grandfather could not read a word without his spectacles. Jim somehow thought it was solemn hearing the Declaration read that day. It was as if Grandfather had been preaching and said, 'Remember this, and shew yourselves men.' When the band played 'The Star Spangled Banner' he felt that he wanted to be a man and a real American. By and by America will have new things to remember. You boys and girls have them already. What are they? Stories of noble deeds of courage, and self-forgetfulness, and many more of love and faith. You have all heard of boys who dared everything because they felt that God was on their side.

The good of remembering is that it sometimes leads us to make resolutions. 'When I'm a man'—'When I'm a grown-up woman.' These are days for filling in what you resolve to do. Make the resolution, and ask God to help you to keep it; boys and girls have a habit of forgetting. Here is a wish for a boy that I read just the other day.

I wish for him
strength; that he may be strong in every limb,
stubborn and fearless, with no cover to thank,
fighting for men with men in the front rank.

I wish him kind;
that he may have the weak always in mind:
such kindness as first treads the path of fear,
not tendance on the wounded in the rear.

Let him be flame,
quenchless and vital, in all winds the same;
fuse soul and body, and refine through years
judgment from passion, joy from his burning tears.

So let him live:
love work, love rest, love all that life can give;
and when he grows too weary to feel joy,
leave life, with laughter, to some other boy.[1]

II.

Sham Lions and Real Lions.

'The sluggard saith, There is a lion in the way;
A lion is in the streets.'—Pr 26^{13}.

I.

That was what the sluggard said. When his wife wanted him to get up and go out to earn their daily bread, he turned over groaning and hid his head under the blankets. Oh, dear no, don't ask

[1] G. W. Young, *Freedom*, 17.

him to go out! There was a lion on the doorstep, a great big, fierce, hungry beast! And what would she do if it made a breakfast of him? Who would earn her bread then? No, no, his life was far too valuable to risk. He was much safer in bed. And so in a few minutes he was snoring again.

But if any one had suggested chaining that lion or shooting him, what do you suppose the sluggard would have said?—He would have cried out, 'Oh no, no! Leave him there, *do* leave him! I couldn't possibly get along without him. He is my very good friend.'

For, I want to tell you a secret. That lion was not a real lion at all. He was a made-up lion put there by the lazy man himself to excuse his not going out to work. He had no real reason for refusing to go out, and so he had to invent one, and the lion idea was a splendid one. Nobody could ever expect him to risk his life.

I wonder if there are any lions in your streets? Are there any excuses that you keep handy when you have to do something troublesome or disagreeable? Most people keep a few lions ready for such times. Some people keep a whole menagerie of them. There are the lions that we keep outside the bedroom door when we have to get up in the morning. They are very fierce and very real, and it would never do to risk facing them. There are the lions that get in the way of our being obliging or doing any little unpleasant duty. There are the lions that await us on the threshold if we dare to venture to school, that block our path when we should be learning home lessons.

I was reading the other day about two boys who invented a wonderful lion of that kind. They were boarders at the same school, and one evening both were late for preparation. Of course the master, after the manner of masters, demanded the reason. So the first boy told a wonderful story of how he had been asleep and had dreamt he was going to Folkestone on a steamboat; and when he heard the school bell he thought it was the boat bell. Then the master turned to the second boy and asked why he was late. 'Please, sir,' he replied, 'I was waiting to see him off!'

Now, if you have made the acquaintance of any of these stuffed lions, will you cut them as quickly as you can. Nobody really believes in them—not even yourself—and they can do you no good. For though they are only shams they are feeding a very real lion that lives in your heart. That lion's name is Laziness, and if you make a pet of him, he will gradually devour all that is best in you.

II.

We have been speaking about sham lions, but are there no real lions in the street? Oh yes, there are. There are nearly always lions in the way of anything that is worth doing or worth having. There are very often lions in the way of our doing right. These lions are called 'Difficulties,' and they are put there, not to frighten us away, but to make us strong, and brave, and true. If we get frightened and run away they will overcome us; but if we face them, we shall overcome them.

In the old church of St. Katherine Cree, in London, a curious service is held every year on the 16th of October, and what is called the 'Lion Sermon' is preached. This service has taken place for two hundred and fifty years, and this is the story of it.

Once upon a time there lived in the city of London a good man called Sir John Gayer who became Lord Mayor of London. At one time Sir John was travelling in Asia, and when he and his caravan were passing through a desert place he found himself face to face with a lion. The rest of his company had gone on in front and there was nobody to help him; he was quite alone. What was he to do? Well, he remembered that God could help him as He had helped Daniel in the den of lions. So he knelt down and asked Him to shut the mouth of the lion. And when he rose from his knees the wild beast had disappeared. Had he tried to run away it would have pursued him, but his courage in facing it, and his strange behaviour in thus kneeling down, had frightened it away. When he came back to London Sir John set aside a sum of money to provide gifts for the poor every 16th of October, and he arranged that a sermon should also be preached on that date to tell the generations to come how God had delivered him from the mouth of the lion.

Now I don't know what your special lion is. Perhaps it is a hard lesson you find it almost impossible to master; perhaps it is some disagreeable task that lies in front of you; perhaps it is a hot temper that threatens to get the better of you. I don't know what your lion is, but I do know that the very worst thing you can do is to run away

from it. If you do that the lion will be the victor. If you do that you will prove yourself a coward and you will make it easier for the next lion that comes along to conquer you.

Will you remember two things about these lions. First they usually are not nearly so terrible or so fierce as they look. Very often their terror is just a picture in our own mind. We imagine that they are much stronger and fiercer than they really are, and when we face them we find they are quite tame and gentle. But it is only by facing them we can find out. Here is a poem I came across the other day, and although the difficulty is called a giant, not a lion, a giant and a lion are very much the same when it comes to facing them.

There came a giant to my door,
  A giant fierce and strong,
His step was heavy on the floor,
  His arms were ten yards long.
He scowled and frowned; he shook the ground;
  I trembled through and through;
At length I looked him in the face,
  And cried, 'Who cares for you?'

The mighty giant, as I spoke,
  Grew pale, and thin, and small;
And through his body, as 'twere smoke,
  I saw the sunshine fall.
His blood-red eyes turned blue as skies,
  He whispered soft and low.
'Is this,' I cried, with glowing pride,
  'Is this the mighty foe?'

He sunk before my earnest face,
  He vanished quite away,
And left no shadow in his place
  Between me and the day.
Such giants come to strike us dumb—
  But, weak in every part,
They melt before the strong man's eyes,
  And fly the true of heart.[1]

And the other thing I want you to remember is that God is always on our side against the lions. If you feel afraid remember the story of Sir John Gayer and how he was delivered from the lion. God lets the lions cross our path to make us brave and strong, and He is always willing and ready to help us to conquer them.

[1] C. Mackay, *A Garland of Verse*, 101.

III.

The End that Counts.

'Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof.' —Ec 7[8].

I once lived in the same house with a little girl who was very clever with her hands. She could sew, she could knit, she could crochet, and she was always busy with some piece of work. She seemed to be tremendously keen on what she was doing, but I noticed that her piece of work was never very long the same. She seemed to be constantly starting something new, and what happened to the old piece I could not tell. One day I found the little maid in tears. Between her sobs she told me the whole sad story. A new governess had arrived, and she had discovered in a drawer a score of half-finished pieces of embroidery, a dozen small scraps of crochet, and six or seven knitted articles that boasted a first half, but badly wanted a second. She had found them all—this clever governess—and she had then and there decreed that not another piece of work should that little damsel begin till she had finished every one of those she had cast aside. It took her months and months and months, and it cost her many a sigh and many a tear ere she reached the end of that drawer full of work. But wasn't she proud the day the last stitch went into the last article? You should have seen how she beamed! And she had learned her lesson in the meantime. And she hasn't forgotten it since.

1. Now our text teaches us the very same lesson. It tells us that *the end is better than the beginning*. Everything has two ends—a beginning end, and an ending end—and it is the ending end that counts. There are many young people in the world who are magnificent starters. They set out on any new undertaking with a tremendous flourish of trumpets. You feel that what they are going to do should be a success, for they seem to be putting their whole heart into it. But alas! they are only starters. Their fatal fault is that they can't keep at it, so they never get any further. Their enthusiasm burns so hot at first that it quickly burns itself out. We have a proverb, 'Well begun is half done,' and a good beginning is not to be despised, but twenty yards ahead at the start of a race is not so important as twenty yards ahead at the goal. It's the keeping going that matters, and the people who have done the

greatest things in the world have been, as a rule, not those who were cleverest at school and carried off all the prizes, but the people who were considered quite ordinary in class, but who made up their minds to 'get there.'

We'd all be better of a little of the bull-dog nose. The bull-dog nose is not what you could call a pretty shape, but it is splendidly useful; for the flat wrinkly way it slants back enables the bull-dog to breathe and to hold on to his enemy at the same time. It is because he is able to hold on that he wins the fight. And victory in life is always to the boy or girl who holds on. We speak of holding on to the *bitter* end. That is a mistake. We should speak of holding on to the *sweet* end; for the joy and glow of a task well done is ten times sweeter than the joy of a task well begun.

2. But I should like to tell you something most important—*don't long too much for the end.* If you are always counting how many rows of knitting there are before the garment can be finished, or how many pages there are before the end of the lesson book can be reached, if you are always sighing for the end, it won't help you to get there. The more you count and the more you sigh, the longer you'll be on the way. You will be like a clock I heard of the other day. It began to count how many seconds it would have to tick before the end of the year. It got so worried when it thought of the enormous number of times its pendulum would have to swing backwards and forwards that it determined to save itself further trouble by stopping altogether. Some of us are like that foolish clock. We think only how difficult it is to reach the end, and we forget how easy it is to take one tick at a time. Why, if we went on steadily tick by tick we'd be at the end almost before we knew! Don't think of everything at once. Think of the little bit in front of you, and determine to do that well. Climb your ladder step by step, instead of looking up at the top step and saying to yourself, 'How am I ever to get up there?'

3. The last thing I should like to say is this. *There is no such thing as an end.* Every end is just a new beginning. If you have won success, and have got the prize you worked for, don't sit down and do nothing more. Make that success the starting-point for a greater success. Don't be content with an end. Turn it into a beginning. That is the true secret of advancement. It is the secret of life itself. Life never ends. Christ told us that death is not an end, it is only a new beginning. It is a beginning of something more glorious than we can ever dream or imagine; for who knows what wonderful things we may not do when at last we go to be with Christ?

'Are they Few that be saved?'

(ST. LUKE xiii. 23).

By the Rev. Rayner Winterbotham, M.A., Canon of Edinburgh.

It is useless to ask what this anonymous inquirer meant precisely by his question. It is useless to contend for this or that shade of meaning to be attached to οἱ σωζόμενοι. That sort of thing has been vastly overdone, and leads to nothing certain. Our Lord's reply corresponds exactly to the broad and obvious sense in which the question has been repeated with ever-increasing emphasis and insistence by fifty generations of Christians—but never with such insistence as by the Christians of to-day. We want to know, approximately, broadly, what the final result and outcome of our Lord's Incarnation and Atonement is to be on the happiness or misery of mankind. It seems indeed absurd that we should have to ask the question at all, in face of the overwhelming fact that the Son of God was made man, and died upon a cross, for the very purpose of saving us all. Yet the minute we begin to study either the Scriptures or the records of Christian opinion we meet with a thousand difficulties, reservations, doubts, and contradictions. It really is not any use to put aside the question as though it did not concern us: it *does*. And, as a fact, almost all Christians are more or less explicitly answering it for themselves, without guidance, without authority (whether of Church or of Bible),