IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD

What Church Folk Are Thinking Abont and Doing

JONAH'S PRESENT PREACHING.

The International Sunday School Lesson For April 30 is "God's Pity For the Heathen." Jonah 3: 1-4:11.

(By WILLIAM T. ELLIS.)

Jonah needs to be rescued from the whale. The popular mind holds nothing concerning the great character except the belief, or disbelief, that he was once swallowed by a whale. Incidentally, it may be remarked that the Bible nowhere says that Jonah was swallowed by a whale; simply because a whale is the biggest fish within the knowledge of people generally, this conclusion has been jumped at. Let the book be read for itself, in its entirety. Every adult owes it to his intellectual equipment to know this masterpiece of literature at first hand. Every teacher should make sure that all his scholars read it for themselves.

The book may be read in less than ten minutes. Concerning its literary value, consider what the great novelist, Charles Reade, has to say: "Jonah is the most beautiful story ever written in so small a compass. It is in 48 verses, or 1,328 English words. Now take 1,328 words in our current narratives; how far do they carry you? Why, ten to one, you get to nothing at all but chatter, chatter, chatter. Even in those close models, 'Robinson Crusoe,' 'The Vicar of Wakefield,' 'Candide,' 'Rasselas,' 1,328 words do not carry the reader far, yet in the 1,328 words of Jonah you have a wealth of incident and all the dialoge needed to carry on the grand and varied action. You also have character, not stationary, but growing just as Jonah grew, and a plot that would bear volumes, yet worked out without haste or crudity in 1,328 words."

A Little Geography Lesson.

This dramatic story needs to be studied in front of a map, as well as with the open book. Bible narratives have a way of sweeping from place to place, as though the distance were but a step. They are history, not travel records. Nevertheless, they are true to the geography involved. Thus Abram goes from Ur of the Chaldees, through Haran, with as little said about it as the modern suburbanite says about his daily jaunt from home to office. So this brief recital takes Jonah over a large part of the then known world.

From the little town of Gath-hepher, in Galilee, just north of Nazareth, he was called to the greatest city of his time. One is tempted to dwell upon the small places which do business with the whole world, like Oberlin and Holyoke colleges, whose graduates may be found in mission work all over the earth. So the territorially insignificant British Isles have for nearly a thousand years been the leading force in the world's politics. From anywhere one may reach everywhere.

Joppa, the modern Jaffa, the seaport of Jerusalem, has a unique place in the history of missions. It was from there that Jonah, the first foreign missionary, tried to run away from his call. It was there that Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, had his wonderful vision. This is the main gateway of the land that gave the world its good news. As I myself, and countless other travelers have done, Jonah took a ship at Joppa, en route from the northern Syrian ports. He was bound for the farthest place he could reach—forgetting, in his panic, that there is no near and far with Jehovah—the port of Tarshish, in far-away Spain. All the while he should have been going in the opposite direction, by land and not by sea, to the Great City on the bank of the Tigris.

What About That Fish?

Here we come to the part the fish plays in the narrative. A great storm overtook the ship. The sailors in terror, called on their gods. Only Jonah dared not; he lay in the innermost hold of the ship, sleeping the sleep of numbness and nervous exhaustion. His soul was spent in its mad fight with God. The sailors decided to cast lots to see who had offended the Ruler of wind and wave. God, who maketh the wrath of man to praise him, caused the lot to fall upon Jonah; who thereupon made a clean breast of his whole story. In this crisis, wearied of a vain struggle against Jehovah, his nobler nature asserted itself, and he splendidly offered himself a sacrifice for the sake of the ship. This greatest height in Jonah's life fairly reaches Calvary proportions. After all possible delay and with greatest reluctance the blue sailors surrendered Jonah to the angry waves.

Now the Creator, whose creative work we reverently believe to be never done, "prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah." Here enter the cavilers. They say that there is no fish big enough to swallow a man. Let them read the testimony of scientists, or inspect the models, in the Beirut museum, of great fish taken from this same Mediterranean, and learn better. One day I visited the shrine, which the Moslems have kept from remote antiquity, that marks the site of the delivery of Jonah on the sands of the Mediterranean, by the great fish. The spot is half way between Beirut and Sidon. My companion was Rev. F. E. Haskins, D. D., of the Beirut Mission Press, and we talked over the Jonah story. He advanced the theory that the fish which held the prophet for at least parts of three days, was a surviving monster of the antedeluvian period. He is of the opinion that in the depth of the sea there may be such survivals, and that they may be responsible for whatever truth thert is in the occasional apparently well-responsible for whatever truth there One of these days a monster may be found to put an entirely new complexion upon the episode of Jonah's strange return to the mission from which he was fleeing. Even though the whole story be regarded as a parable, the teaching remains the same that a man cannot get away from God.

Back to the Task.

Like most foreign missionaries, Jonah found that his call involved a deal of travel. Nineveh lay weeks away to the East. When Jehovah's call came to him a second time, renewing the first command, only this time falling upon obedient ears, Jonah had to set out upon a long and toilsome journey, almost as long as that taken by the patriarch Abram, when he heard and heeded the call of God. Probably Jonah's route was the one I am at this moment following, the historic one between Syria and the East. He went up the smiling valley of the rontes to Aleppo, that ancient and again-to-be-great city at the crossroads. Then afoot or by animal, he slowly made his way across the Euphrates (I hope he also had a day of rest by the beautiful pools of Abraham at Urfa, the old Edessa), until he came to the Tigris. There, I have no doubt, he followed the method of transportation which was in use in his day, and which is still employed; he came down the river on a raft made of inflated goat skins. I am on such a craft, a "kelek," it is called, and I have just reached Nineveh. I have been more than ten days on the way.

Obviously, the Bible means, when it says that "Nineveh was an exceeding great city, of three days' journey," that it took this long to walk through or around it. Therein it accords with modern archaeological discoveries, which have proved the city to be more than fifty miles in circumference, as I have myself seen. Thus we read that "Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey." All this lies on the surface, yet I have by my side a book showing that it would be impossible for Jonah to go from the Mediterranean to Nineveh by water. Of course it would; every Hebrew rustic knew what this acute writer thinks himself so clever for having just learned. In the wide-spread ruins of Nineveh, now farm land, there are two hills, one Sennacherib's palace, and the other the reputed tomb of Jonah, still called "Nebi Yunis," after the prophet.

There are many preachers today in the great metropoles who can sympathize with Jonah in his dread of attempting to move a great city. It is at once the hardest and the most important religious undertaking of the time. The modern cry, "Save the city and you save the nation," was especially applicable to Nineveh. Assyria had succeeded to Babylonia's supremacy. Its sway was to cover almost the whole of the known world. But although its power ran far (only a few days ago I bought an Assyrian coin in a village on the upper Tigris), Assyria essentially was Nineveh. And Nineveh, the magnificent, was also the wicked. It is well that both teachers and scholars in our Sunday schools are ignorant of the character of the wickedness of this ancient city. Humanly speaking, the task to which Jonah was recalled was impossible.

The Prophet in the Streets.

Newly awake to the sole supremacy of loyalty to the commands of God, the prophet essayed his task. What a sensation this foreigner must have created among the proud and pleasure-loving and self-assured citizens of Nineveh, as he went through its streets, heedless of their magnificence, crying his message of doom, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh overthrown!" Some thoroughly modern person may arise and object to the harshness of Jonah's deliverance; would it not be better for him to proclaim the innate divinity of man, and other teachings of sweetness and light? But the message which alone could stir Nineveh—and sometimes it seems the message that our modern cities most need—was this one of the wrath of an offended God. Only they who accept Jehovah as Lord have a right to call Him Father. Penitence and pardon must precede fellowship.

And Nineveh, startled, heard and heeded, and the visitation of wrath was averted. Jonah had succeeded in what he had thought impossible. Then he grew offended because his own "face" was hurt. He had a petty pride in seeing his prophecy exactly fulfilled, rather than a joy in the salvation of the people. He was as proud of his sermon as many a modern preacher. So in a fit of sulks that was partly physical reaction, Jonah went off and wished that he might die. Shall we liken him to those narrow denominationalists who are keen to see the heathen converted, but it must be in their way, and to their own particular sect? Like many another missionary since, Jonah had to be taught the lesson of broad-mindedness.

"For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind,
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind."

SEVEN SENTENCE SERMONS.

God does not pay every Saturday, but finally he pays.—Italian Proverb.

The Soul is not so much where it lives as where it loves.—Ralph Venning.

Patience means the readiness to wait God's time without doubting God's truth.—Arthur T. Hadley.

Men grumble because God put thorns on roses; would it not be better to thank God that he has put roses on thorns?—Anon.

Say not, "The days are evil. Who's to blame."
And fold the hands, and acquiesce—oh, shame!
Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's name!

—Babcock.

How shall I be able to rule over never falling, but in rising every time and command of myself?—Rabelais.

Jews With "Christian" Names.

(Louisville Courier-Journal.)

Essentially stupid in all its manifestations anti-Semitism has found another disgusting expression in Russia. This time it is an edict of the holy synod prohibiting Jews in Russia from bearing so-called "Christian" names. The object of the order, of course, is to compel the Jews so to identify themselves by distinctively Hebrew names that they may the better be recognized for purposes of of prosecution. In many instances the Jews have shown a disposition to cultivate a Russian national patriotism and the holy synod's edict will serve to check a movement calculated to enlist the aid of Jewish genius in the development of Russian prosperity and culture.

A peculiar feature of the situation is pointed out by Hebrew scholars who show that many Christian names are indubitably of Hebrew origin. There is a fine irony in the fact that the name of the czar himself, Nicholas, is a variant of Hebrew, Nichomachus. John—in Russian, Ivan—is a form of the Hebrew Joachanon, and even Patrick is from the Hebrew Patricius, according to Judge Mayer Sulzberger, of Philadelphia. Judge Sulzberger further cites the Christian name Marion as a derivative of the Hebrew Marinus. Alexander is Hebrew, Anthony is from Antonius, and the list might be indefinitely extended

Despite the remarkable tenacity of the Jews in clinging to many racial characteristics there is an abundance of evidence that they do not relish a position of separateness. When permitted to do so they throw themselves whole-heartedly into promoting the interests of the countries they have made their homes. In New York especially is there a decided tendency to adopt not only American ideals and customs, but American or English names as well. The Russian Jews particularly dispense with names which identify them as a people separate and apart. The dispatches a few days ago told of Broker Robin, whose sister is Dr. Robinovitch.

The brother found it more convenient to be Robin than Robinovitch, and hundreds of other Jews, from perfectly proper motives, have Anglicized their names or taken entirely new ones. From pride of tradition many hold to names unpronounceable by American tongues, but as many others gladly cast their old names and themselves into "the melting pot."

Value of Sunday Rest.

(Denver Republican.)

Prof. Jules Amar has submitted to the academy of medicine in Paris the results of his study of the man machine, says the Dietetic and Hygiene Gazette. He proceeded upon the principle that a man who eats liberally ought to recuperate in weight every 24 hours.

If his weight lessens he works to excess; if his weight increases he has not expended the maximum effort. Amar found that the human machine gives a profit of 25 to 35 per cent on the expenditure, but that the best artificial machine returns only 14 per cent.

It would seem from these experiments that man is indeed superior to all mechanism, with the very slight exception that he always wastes energy during the first five minutes of work before regaining his equilibrium.

It would seem that Monday's human labor is the most inferior and Tuesday's the most superior, owing to the curious action of Sunday as a rest day: the Monday lassitude of the French workingman is proverbial. And it is found that the workman who does not rest gradually loses his energy, and this is now a subject of keen interest among scientists.

Judge Pritchard Goes North on a Mission.

Asheville, April 22.—Judge J. C. Pritchard, of the United States Circuit Court, left this afternoon on a second speaking tour of the Northern States in behalf of the colored training school and chautauqua at Durham, N. C.

WILHELM MEISTER'S APPRENTICESHIP

(Continued from page twelve.)

truth regarding the boy. Felix was his own son, the child of Mariana! When Mariana had died Aurelia had happened to be passing through the town in which the event took place. Aurelia had adopted the child and always thereafter had declared that it was her own son by Lothario. A physician whom Wilhelm consulted told him that such cases of monomania were not uncommon. Wilhelm returned to Lothario's castle bringing his boy with him. He found Mignon very ill indeed. And must this strange child die with the mystery of her birth unsolved? Wilhelm thought.

One other of the members of his abandoned theatrical company Wilhelm had taken care of—t was the aged harper who had become so violently insane that Wilhelm had placed him in an asylum. Wilhelm went to see him, and the physician in charge told him of several curious cases of insanity which had of late come under his observation. There was Count —, he said, who had become insane from suddenly returning to his castle where he was entertaining Prince — and fancied that as he entered his apartment he saw his own "double." The Countess, it seemed, had had an innocent tenderness for an actor who was stopping at the castle, and the whole affair had been a practical joke arranged by some of the guests. The lover, on bidding the Countess farewell, had pressed her in his embrace and had driven a diamond ornament which she wore into her bosom, leaving an effect which her morbid fears exaggerated into a cancer.

It was with the keenest anguish that Wilhelm heard the story of his own misadventures at the castle of the Count. "One moment of pleasure—and an age of sorrow," he thought. He returned to the bedside of the dying Mignon to hear her confess that it was her love for him and her jealousy of Philina which had caused many of her eccentric actions—she was dying and would confess. Just then there arrived at Lothario's castle an old friend of the family, the Italian Marquis di Cipriani. The Marquis came just as Mignon died holding the hand of Wilhelm. The Marquis was in search of Mignon—he found her dead. It transpired that she was the daughter of a brother of his—an illegitimate child—and the crazed harper was Mignon's father. The Marquis had sought the two long, and had got trace of them too late.

But now over the ramblings and the petty tumults of the life of Wilhelm Meister's life settled a holy calm—the calm of the serene presence of the even-balanced common sense of Natalia. The death of Mignon had plunged Wilhelm into grief, the knowledge of the fate of the Court and Countess had filled him with remorse; the presence of Felix was a perpetual reminder to him of the sins of his youth. But Natalia held him fast to the castle from which he often thought to fly by the serenity of her personality. It was the frivolous vagabond, Frederick, who finally, in his impetuous manner, brought Natalia and Wilhelm to an understanding. The two were married and the apprenticeship of Wilhelm Meister was ended.

GOLDSBORO MAN DIES AT VALDOSTA, GEORGIA.

Sudden Passing Away of Mr. J. J. Street, Who Was Widely Known in Eastern North Carolina.

Goldsboro, April 22.—A telegram this afternoon from Valdosta, Ga., brings the intelligence of the sudden death in that city of Mr. J. J. Street, formerly of this city. Mr. Street, with his late father-in-law, Mr. J. Strauss, founded the Goldsboro rice mill here, and subsequently the Goldsboro Lumber Company, which he afterwards moved to Dover, where it is still located, although now under other ownership.

He afterwards, with the money he received from his interest in the Goldsboro Lumber Company, established the extensive Acme Machine Works here, in which venture he lost more than $30,000, and after the plant went into liquidation he moved to Norfolk, and thence to Valdosta, Ga., where he died yesterday. He is survived by his wife and a large family of children.

The remains will be brought to this city for interment.

MR. A. G. HEARNE DEAD.

Citizen of Pittsboro Passed Away Here at Rex Hospital.

There passed away at Rex Hospital during Thursday night, Mr. A. G. Hearne, of Pittsboro. Mr. Hearne, who was 56 years of age, is survived by his wife and several children.

The remains were taken to Pittsboro yesterday by Mr. W. H. Hearne, a son of the deceased.

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