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THE BAPTIST DEBT TO THE WORLD

Sermon preached before Southern Baptist Convention, Houston,
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"I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to
the wise and the unwise." Romans 1:14.

I would prove untrue to my feelings, and to the feelings of the
mighty host assembled; and above all to the cause of truth, were I not
at this point to express for you and to you, the sincere sorrow we,
one and all, feel over the departure of one who did more for Texas Bap-
tists, and more to hasten the coming of Christ's Kingdom in Texas,
than anyone else who ever lived or died in its broad and blessed domain.
Without naming him, the towering form of the Christly Carroll rises
in the might and majesty before us. Like Roderick of old, who gave his
shrill whistle to summon his men before Fitz-James---

"That whistle garrisoned the glen,
At once with full five hundred men
As if the yawning hill to heaven,
A subterranean host had given."

And now we may say:

"Where was Roderick then?
One blast of his bugle horn
Were worth a thousand men."
"The great men pass, we stand
Appalled and say,

How shall we live when
These have left our day?
How shall we fight when
Splendid leaders fall?
How work, when silent
Is their bugle call?"

He is gone, but in his going, like the setting sun, he has colored the sky with a flame of golden glory. He is dead, but he lived the life of an immortal, and died the death of the deathless.

May the Holy Spirit guide us in the quest of truth as we strive to study together the subject to which I trust I have been providentially directed—"The Baptist Debt to the World."

In the final accounting, every man is a world asset, or a world liability. We are all debtors, and all should be creditors. We are all debtors to Christ, and should be creditors of His creatures. The fact that Christ is our creditor makes us debtors to a dying world.

A spiritual debt is more sacred than an ordinary financial obligation. Since every honest man will make a real effort to pay his debts, it should follow that every Christian will earnestly endeavor to discharge his spiritual indebtedness. The wilful failure to pay an ordinary debt entails commercial disgrace, and an unwillingness to pay spiritual indebtedness should be deemed doubly disgraceful, and an aggravated form of downright dishonesty.

Whatever may be our differences, we are all agreed that Baptists owe a debt to a dying world, and that by the help of God, this debt shall be paid. And while it is true that Baptists have their differences, yet

they are Baptist differences; and Baptist differences are more sacred to Baptists than alien agreement. For my own part, I would rather be a free man and if needs be differ with my brother, than live in forced agreement for fear of the ecclesiastical lash. After all, difference is not always a doubtful blessing; for while difference is always a sign of life, indifference is not infrequently a symptom of spiritual dissolution. In all our differences let us never forget that we are brethren, and woe be to him who would attempt to spy out our liberty; even to contend with one another.

The Baptist debt to the world is specifically stated in the Commission. The Commission as I see it, was given to the churches; and unless Baptist churches get their mission from the Commission, they are without a mission and should go out of commission. If the Commission was not given to the churches, then the churches are usurping authority in preaching, teaching, and baptizing, and should immediately cease their high-handed usurpation. So far as my information extends, Baptist churches are the only bodies that profess to carry out the Commission in the exact manner and order in which it was given. Many of the past and current theological controversies, probably unconsciously to those engaged in them, find their real source in the Commission, and here, if I mistake not, will be waged and won the world's greatest ecclesiastical battle.

I shall first attempt to define this debt, if not according to our wishes, at least in a manner to meet the demands of Scripture. The initial item in this list of indebtedness is the command to preach the Gospel. Nothing, not even the printed page can ever take the place of

the preached word, evermore the prophet must have his place. He cannot, as of old, foretell, but as a mouthpiece for the Almighty, he can declare. He is no longer the seer, but he can, and should be, the sage. The first and fundamental duty of the preacher is to preach, and preach the Gospel. Christ is a substitute for our sins, but there can be no substitute for the Gospel of Christ. Merry music; picture shows; spectacular and pantomime performances can never take the place of the Blessed Gospel of the Son of God. Such things may enchant for the moment, but they can never lead to Calvary, or grip and hold the heart of mankind--

"E'er since by faith I saw the stream

Thy flowing wounds supply;

Redeeming love has been my theme,

And shall be till I die."

Sociology is a good thing in its place, but its place is not in the pulpit, but the school room. The world needs theology more than it needs sociology. Many make the mistake of beginning with man and trying to work up to God instead of beginning with God and working down to men. In the beginning was God, and in the end will be God. Any system of sociology that does not begin and end with the blood of Jesus Christ, will inevitably end in confusion worse confounded.

At this point it is well to note that there is a vast difference between lecturing and preaching. Had Socrates contented himself with lecturing he would have never tasted the fatal hemlock. The difference between the lecturer and the preacher is, in many respects, the difference between Socrates and the sophists. The lecture may be popular; the Gospel is powerful. Instead of trying to popularize the Gospel, we had better polarize the pulpit.

We hear much now-a-days about a new Gospel. When it is demonstrated that there is a new God, a new Christ and a new Bible, then, and not until then, will I commit my life to a new Gospel. Apropos the story of Pauleaux, a member of the French Directory, who invented a new religion which he called Theophilanthropy. Seeing that his religion made little progress he complained to Talleyrand of the difficulty of getting the people to accept his religion. Whereupon Talleyrand told him to go and get crucified, and be buried and rise again the third day, and then go on working miracles; healing all manner of diseases, and then he would probably gain a following. I have but little faith in the pleaders, and no faith in the pleas that the Old Gospel is losing its power. It is not the old Gospel that has lost power, but the preacher who has lost faith in the power of the Gospel. Far better lose your pulpit than your pulpit lose its power by you. The pulpit will lose its power only when its occupant has lost the Gospel.

"Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood

Shall never lose its power,

'Till all the ransomed church of God

Be saved to sin no more!"

I love life; yet I trust I shall not live long enough to cease to believe that the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; and therefore a sufficient rule of faith and practice, and abundantly sufficient for the salvation and sanctification of every sinner under the sun. The difficulty is,

many have been dealing in dismal doubts instead of eternal verities, and hence a multitude of spiritual agnostics. We need a revival of faith in our message and in the God of our fathers until with Job of old we say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." I can see the old patriarchs and his black Arabian steed staked to his tent. I can see him as he stands alone in the silence of the night gazing into the serene and shining pathway of the everlasting stars. Though coming up out of great tribulation, I can hear his say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth.... yet out of my flesh shall I see God." In his unsaken assurance he claps hands across the centuries with the princely Paul. I can see this giant of grace as he closes his 1st letter to his beloved Timothy. With trembling hand he write, "I know Him whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." Ah, brethren, shall we not learn with the advancing years, that Christ is all--

"I entered once a home of care,
For age and penury were there,
Yet joy and peace withal;
I asked the lonely mother whence
Her helpless widowhood's defence,
She told me, 'Christ was all.'"

"I saw the martyr at the stake,
The flames could not his courage shake,
Nor death his soul appall;
I asked him whence his strength was given,
He looked triumphantly to heaven,
And answered, 'Christ is all.'"

"I dreamed that hoar-time had fled,
 And earth and sea gave up their dead,
 A fire dissolved the ball;
 I saw the church's ransomed throng,
 I heard the burden of their song,
 It was 'Christ is all in all.'"

And just here I wish to affirm with all possible emphasis, that every preacher who believes in preaching and practicing the Gospel is, in some real sense, a missionary of the Cross, though he may not have gumption enough to know it, or grace enough to acknowledge it. There is no orthodoxy without missionary endeavor, and sometimes mighty little with it. The germ of regeneration is the genesis of missions, and a saved man will believe in the saving business. In my time, at home and abroad, I have seen many sad sights, and stood in many drear and lonely places; yet I am persuaded that the bleakest spot on this earth is not the Alhambra, rich only in ruins, or the Parthenon, the eternal study or despair of the architects of the ages; or the Coliseum with its crumbling walls and forgotten glory, but the bleakest spot of deepest darkness and unutterable desolation is the blasted heath of an anti-mission heart. It is an established fact that when the sinking Titanic was sweeping the seas with its wild cry for help, a near-by vessel caught the cry and in a few moments could have been at the side of the sinking ship. But with inconceivable selfishness and unutterable cruelty, the Captain refused to go to the aid of the great ship, soon to go down with its cargo of men, women and children. I would rather bear the mark of Cain and the name of Iscariot, and go down to a grave of everlasting oblivion than to have been the Captain of the ship that refused to go to the aid of the Titanic. Were I that Captain, in my

sleeping and in my waking moments, I would hear the wild shrieks of the dying, and see their awful and hopeless struggle against a watery grave, and the frightful picture, like Banquo's Ghost, would never down at my bidding. Yet I would rather have been the Captain of that ship, than with folded arms to sit in selfish silence, while men and women are daily dying about me without hope and without God in the world.

The next item in our list of indebtedness, and one on which we have made only a partial payment, is that of teaching, or our educational debt. I am not prepared to say, as a matter of strict exegesis, that the education, as commonly understood, is taught in the Commission, but I do affirm with all confidence that it logically grows out of the Commission, and that it is a fact and factor in carrying out the Commission. In some real, but limited, sense, the mission of the church may be defined by the words *magistra mundi*. If I mistake not, the century's and the church's call to culture is louder and clearer than ever before, yet the tree of knowledge is not the tree of life.

I would not, however, as is quite common among us, emphasize education for the sake of leadership, but rather for Christ's sake, and our country's sake. The final apology for culture is Christian service. We need educated men and women, who, by the alchemy of action, will transmute day-dreams into deeds of deathless devotion. We need knowledge applied to a worthy cause, and that cause, the coming of His Kingdom in all the earth.

Be it also understood that if Baptists have an educational debt, it is a Baptist debt, and can be liquidated only by Baptist teaching. And this leads me to say that every Baptist school is a Baptist asset,

or liability, and I fear, in the past, they have been about as frequently one as the other. If a school is a denominational asset we should support it far better than we have done in the past; if, to the contrary, it be a liability, we should change its character, or speedily arrange for its obsequies. It should be fathered or funeralized. It may be true that a man cannot teach denominational mathematics, but if he cannot teach mathematics so as to put a premium on Baptist principles and incite to Baptist achievement, it is mathematically certain that he is unfit for a chair in a denominational institution. The man who cannot generate a Baptist atmosphere should be forced to breathe some other.

Strangely enough, our universities have proven our religious storm centers. From them have come the heterogeneous heretics, which for sweet charity's sake, we call higher critics, but who are, in reality, enemies of the Cross. It is true, and may as well be said here as elsewhere, that the greatest tragedies of the last few decades have been our scholastic tragedies. As I speak, there rises before me the sainted and saintly form of Luther Rice, who, with a zeal that was consuming, rode over hill and dale to collect funds to found an institution that through the years might stand for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Where now is the school he helped to endow with denominational dollars? Its birthright has been sold for a mess of pottage, and its denominational relation changed for a cash consideration.

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,"

Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

Just here we are called upon to face a question in casuistry as provoking as it is perplexing--"Why should the scholastic conscience

be less sensitive than that of the ordinary individual?" It is a tragic fact that many of the denominational schools have, through their official representatives, certified in writing that they are in no sense sectarian or denominational, that they might be placed upon the pension list. This statement will probably not be particularly appreciated by those who have a peculiar penchant for the pie counter.

"Perish policy, perish cunning;
Perish all that fears the light;
Turn from man, and look above him;
Trust in God and do the right."

I believe I speak advisedly when I say that Christianity's greatest battle will be with a Christless civilization. Well may we pray to be delivered from a Christless culture. Like Absalom, civilization has turned to destroy its own parents. That civilization without Christ is more dangerous than unmitigated ignorance has been demonstrated in the present cruel conflict. Christian education is, then, the universal imperative of our times. As it now appears, Christian education will find its greatest concrete expression in the Christian college, which, without doubt, is one of our greatest denominational assets. Nor is the day of the denominational college dead, as some have surmised, but is only dawning. Baptists must have a studio, but let them build it hard by Calvary, where all its learning will be tinted with the crimson of the Cross. Baptists must know books, but let them remember that the book of all books is the Book by which they must live, move and have their being. If our knowledge shall be sanctified by those sacred pages,

all will be well, however discouraging the outlook. Using the figure of another, on the wildest night I have ever known at sea, and when it seemed that every leap of the mighty ship would be its last, I could hear the voice of the lookout, "All's well!" How false and foolish seemed his cry as it was lost in the wild shriek of the storm. But he spoke only the truth; and the mighty waves were breaking in impotent fury about the tempest-tossed ship, which was headed straight to the haven of rest. And so with the old ship of Zion, the wild waves of cruel and accursed criticism may bear mercilessly about her, but the angels of God are on the lookout and she is headed straight home!

Another item in the list of our indebtedness, and one we cannot deny if we would, and would not if we could, is the duty and debt of baptism. It is ours to baptize according to the Gospel. To do this we must have a Scriptural subject, which, according to the New Testament, can be only a believer. Baptists do not, as they have sometimes been charged, believe in baptismal regeneration, but in the baptism of the regenerate. A child must be born a child, and when born, cannot be unborn by the world, the flesh or the devil.

It would appear far more sensible, and equally as Scriptural, to baptize a man to cure consumption of the lungs as to cure consumption of the soul. I know that baptism will not remit sins, as I have baptized those who give abundant evidence that they still retain them. We reach the Jordan by way of Calvary, and not Calvary by way of Jordan. The difference, though it may appear insignificant to some, is the difference between works and grace, water and blood. The tide that washes life's sinful shores is a crimson tide; the thread that binds man to

God is a scarlet thread. When Stonewall Jackson lay in state, in Richmond, Virginia, one of his old soldiers asked of the sentry that he be permitted to see the body. He was informed that the hours for receiving visitors were past, and that he would not be admitted. Shaking his armless sleeve, the old warrior said: "I lost my arm in the Valley Campaign, and in the name of the blood I shed, I ask to see my Chieftain." The doors were opened, and the old soldier for a few moments silently gazed upon the face of him who, in several respects, was the world's greatest military genius. Through His blood---Lord of Lords and King of Kings---and His blood alone and only do we look for salvation from sin.

"He breaks the power of canceled sin,

He sets the prisoner free;

His blood can make the foulest clean,

His blood availed for me."

And mark you, we are commanded to baptize, not rantize. Here, too, the command must be paid in Scriptural and not in counterfeit coin. So far as I am informed, no other denomination administers baptism in the same way and for the same purpose as Baptists. Indeed, they have a Scriptural baptism all their own, and, which like the gold dollar, is taken at full face value in all the ecclesiastical markets of the universe. It was true yesterday, it is true today, and will be true tomorrow that here, as elsewhere and everywhere, only things that are equal to the same things are equal to each other. According to Holy Writ, there is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. It would be no more difficult to prove two faiths and two Gods than to prove two baptisms. Christ is our substitute, but there is no substitute for the

command of Christ. Believer's baptism is the Baptist trust of the ages, and must be sacredly kept at all costs to the end of time.

And now, Fathers in Israel and Fellow Citizens in Zion, I beg that you heed my prophecy, the day Baptists cease to make believer's baptism a test of church membership, that day is the identical day they will sign their own death warrant and earn their right to rest forever in a dishonored denominational grave.

It should be said, and probably there is no better time and place than here and now to say it, that if the bewitching dream of Church Union is every realized, it must rest upon the only possible and plausible basis of One Lord, One Faith and One Baptism. For such a day, we hope and pray; and that we may hasten its dawning, let us continue to declare the truth, until "Jesus shall reign."

Let us now turn our attention to the way in which this indebtedness may be discharged. First of all, and perhaps chiefest of all, this debt can be liquidated by preaching a pure Gospel. It goes without saying, that a Gospel is pure or impure, and cannot be pure and impure at one and the same time. Like a dollar, it must be genuine or counterfeit; of full value or valueless. The greater the piety, that people should be more exacting as to the purity of their daily bread than they are concerning the divine manna; more careful to observe the rules of sanitation than the terms of salvation. With all, a little fly will spoil the choicest pie, while a little error in spiritual things is often deemed altogether palatable. A little poison may spell death in the pot. One drop of iodine will discolor many times its weight in water. A falsehood may be told in many ways; the truth is only one. The truth is not

inclusive, but exclusive. Two plus two equaled four in the Garden of Eden and will when life's little day is ended. Not only does it equal four, but it equals nothing more nor less than four.

We are told that it makes no difference what a man believes, as long as he does right. It would be nearer the truth to say it makes no difference what a man does, if he believes right. One is neither saved or lost for what he does, but by what he believes. The man who believes that one thing is as good as another, is himself good for nothing. He who loves truth will hate error, and this hatred for error will be in proportion to his love for the truth. We need a revival of holy hatred for the impure; yea, the spirit of Him who said, "Do not I hate the abominable thing?" The man who follows the line of truth, will find himself going in the opposite direction of error.

We must learn that we are stewards of doctrine as well as of dollars; of the Gospel, as well as of gold. We need a stewardship of faith as much as we do of finances; for finance, without faith, is dead; or at least alive only to the Devil.

Let not a false conception of love prevent us from contending for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. If I rightly discern the signs of the times, a lawless love will prove the curse of our century. Christian contention is the inevitable logic of Christian conviction. Christianity is not only conciliatory, but contentious. A dearth of conviction will result in the death of contention.

To be sure, our contention should be in love. We should beget love if we have been begotten of it, for only the Christlike can conquer for Christ. To win, we must be winsome; but winning is not worth

while unless it means a victory for the truth. There can be no peace between the truth and error until one or the other has found a forgotten grave. But truth must triumph.

I know now what others might do, but for my part, were I forced to choose between my family and my faith, with a heart bursting with a boundless love, and eyes blinded with unavailing tears, I would kiss good-bye to wife and children, and cling to the faith of my fathers. And in so doing, I would console myself with His words, "Unless ye forsake father and mother, houses and lands, yea and your own life also, ye cannot be my disciples." This, to some, may seem infinitely "narrow", but let us not forget that it is the broad way, made for broad people, that leads to destruction; while the "narrow way" leads through the wilderness of life straight home at last.

Let us, then, stand like an oak on the storm-swept hills, laughing at the fiery lightning, defying the furious flood, and waving its challenge to the rolling thunders.

Not only must we preach a pure Gospel, but to meet our obligations, we must preach the whole Gospel.

If we fearlessly preach a full Gospel, it may put us out of harmony with the spirit of the age, and also with many noble spirits; but happily for us, if it keep us in harmony with Him who is the author of life and death. As of old, they cried to Him who was dying at duty's door: "Come down from the Cross," so the call comes today to the faithful soldier of the Cross. No,

"The consecrated cross I'll bear,

Till death shall set me free.

And then go home my crown to wear,

For there's a crown for me."

Possessed with the spirit of compromise, Moses would never have refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, but would have enjoyed the pleasures of sin for a season. With it, Daniel would have never entered the lion's den and bequeathed far-off generations an example of deathless devotion. With it, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego could never have entered the fiery furnace and come forth with their clothes not smelling of fire, but of myrrh, aloes and cassia out of the ivory palaces. Swayed by this spirit, Paul would have never sung praises to God at midnight in a prison. With it, the Baptists of Virginia and Rhode Island would not, at the price of blood and tears, have won for the world the priceless boon of religious liberty.

Be it ours to preach the whole truth, though by so doing, we join the disembodied spirits of the brutal Bastille, and with our spiritual ancestors glorify the guillotine.

"He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never know defeat;

He is summoning the souls of men before His judgment seat;

Oh, be quick, my soul, to answer Him, be jubilant my feet;

Our God is marching on."

Brethren, preach the word, and with the smile of God, you need not fear the frown of man. You whose ancestors were nurtured among the rending rocks, and whose eyes saw the sun die away in the darkness, and whose ears heard the words, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," will verify the promise that, "My word shall not return unto me void, but accomplish the end whereunto I sent it".

Contend for the right, and when the smoke of battle has cleared, the Lord of Hosts and the holy angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, and good men and women will shout the welcome, "Hail! the conquering hero comes."

The last, and by no means the least, is our duty to preach the Gospel to the whole world. Until this is done, it is impossible to discharge our indebtedness to the world.

The fact of individual redemption is the fiat for universal evangelism. The Commission is a command, and it is our duty not only to come to Christ, but to carry Him to others. We come to carry. The field is the world and not any particular part of it. We are to go not only to the uttermost parts of the earth, but to all the earth. The Commission is not provincial or territorial but cosmopolitan and universal. It is bounded only by time and the universe.

With the French, home missions mean missions in France; with the English, home missions mean missions in England; but with God, missions mean the map of God. We must preach the Gospel to every creature in all the earth. The solidarity of humanity is the assumption and the imperative of missions. Some day, and may God hasten the day, we shall come to know that the cannibal is our cousin, and that the despised and desolate denizen of the brothel should become our sister, by saving grace, through the blood of Him who died to redeem us one and all.

"Go preach the Gospel to every creature," is the mandate for worldwide missions, and the marching orders of the redeemed. While the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America is dividing territory, let Southern Baptists continue to divide the word of truth. It is well, too,

to bear in mind just here, that it was not the uncultivated masses but the Christless classes that crucified Christ. To the neglected rich, and the forgotten poor, we must carry the message of Christ. Someone has surmised that Peter protested when Christ commanded the disciples to preach the Gospel to "every creature." That Peter replied, "Lord, do you mean for us to preach forgiveness to the man that placed the crown of thorns on your brow?" But in tones of unspeakable pathos, the Master answered: "Preach it to every creature." Stunned and staggered at such infinite forgiveness, Peter said: "Shall we preach forgiveness to the merciless wretch who plunged the spear into thy side?" As never man spake, soft and low and sweet, the Master says: "Go preach the Gospel to every creature."

I know not to what extent America may become a world-power, but I do know that the best way for our nation to become a permanent world-power, is to demonstrate God's power in the world. I cannot speak with assurance, or authority, as to "manifest destiny," but with all my heart, I do believe that the present cruel conflict points the path to the splendors of American missionary achievement. I know now whether the Constitution follows the flag, but this I know, the blood-stained banner of Calvary waves in protecting triumph over the head of the lonely missionary. And at this moment where'er he be, on land or sea, as he lifts his eyes to the kindly skies and gazes into the mystery of the milky way, with his soul he may say--

"I know not where His islands lift,
 Their fronded palms in air;
 I only know I cannot drift
 Beyond His love and care."

"And so beside the silent sea,
 I wait the muffled oar;
 No harm I know can come to me,
 An ocean or on shore."

"The 'LO' is inseparably connected with the 'GO!'"

The ranks of the missionary may be decimated by death, but others will take their places on the far-flung battle lines. The missionary may be buried, and the winds of ten thousand centuries sweep over his forgotten grave, yet the hand of an angel shall write the epitaph of the hero of the Cross, and his name shall be heralded in heavenly history forever and forever.

Brethren, I believe we have trifled long enough with the eternal issues of the missionary problem. We should not cease praying earnestly "Thy Kingdom Come," but it is high time that we were willing to pay for His Kingdom to come. The world may not understand our orthodoxy, and it would be infinitely wiser and better if it did, but it can comprehend our offerings. Last year, our nation spent a billion and a half for strong drink; 8000 million for tobacco; 750 million for jewelry, and more for chewing gum than for all mission causes. In spite of this, it is a fact that when missions fail, God's Kingdom fails among the children of men. It would seem that it is about time we were practicing our prayers. A confession of faith should be tantamount to a missionary subscription.

I entertain the profound conviction that the next decade will largely determine the denominational destiny of the world. Hence the greater necessity for a mighty forward movement--move forward! move

forward! move forward all along the line.

I have seen the great creation of Louis David, known as "Napoleon Crossing the Alps." Here and there are myriads of soldiers plowing their way through snow, men and horses are trying to carry the cannon up the steeps; while far in advance is seen the wizard warrior, with deathless determination written upon his face, and his hand pointing to the heights above.

A greater picture is the host of the redeemed pressing over mountains of difficulties, to carry the Gospel to the lost.

I am not unmindful of the seeming effect of the present war upon mission ^{work} ~~work~~. True, the enemies of the Cross may revel in ghoulisn glee, for a time; the night stars of hell may shine with brighter luster, for a little while, and the sons of Satan may shout with redoubled joy, for a season, but their seeming victory shall be their sure and everlasting defeat. For peace, permanent peace, shall come, and its coming is as sure as the coming of Christ's Kingdom in the heart of man.

Out of the black storm of war the radiant rainbow of light and love, and joy and peace will be born, and its angelic arch shall circle the earth in enduring praise.

"Peace, peace, wonderful peace,

Coming down from the Father above,

Sweep over my spirit, forever I pray,

In fathomless billows of love."

Thank God, the gentle dove of peace shall yet displace the fierce eagle of war, and wild flowers will yet bloom o'er the erst-while blood-stained battlefield. In the mute mouth of the forgotten cannon, singing

birds shall find their nesting places, and in trenches once drenched with brothers' blood, the lamb and the lion shall lie down together. Then shall the only artillery be the artillery of prayer that sweeps the heavens with conquering power. For the booming of the cannon and the roar of musketry have given place to the anthem of the skies---

"Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will to men."

"When the war-drum throbs no longer

And the battle-flags are furled,

In the praliament of man,

The federation of the world."

Standing on the promintory of today, we behold in the dim distance the silent cemetery of the buried centuries. We read the epitaph, which tells in lournful numbers of the failures and successes of the serried years. For the moment, we stand downcast and disheartened, and even faith seems to falter; but we hear the song of the Psalmist---"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

From the exalted eminence of today, we behold the wreck of many blighted hopes and blasted ambitions. In the presence of our humiliating failures, we stand staggered and discouraged; but lest we faint, there falls about us a light that never fell on land or sea and by it we read the mystery of our tears and the divinity of our defeats. With this light comes the messenger of the morning, and he speaks, as only the Son of Man can speak--"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.."
And our souls answer back,

"Through many dangers, toils and snares

I have already come;

'Twas grace that brought me on thus far,

And grace will lead me home."

From our vantage ground, we strive to look into the far future and read the story of the coming years. The distant sky seems blackened by many a cloud, and disturbed by many a storm, but from far over the everlasting hills we hear the clarion cry of Christ, "I am with you even unto the end." As we listen to the pledge of His perpetual presence, we exclaim with the princely Paul, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

Let us then take heart, for this we know, that by and by, in God's own good time, God's tomorrow shall become God's today, and by the alchemy of divine power the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ. Let us hope and pray, and work and give, that the day may not be far distant when the mountains shall whisper to the sea, "Redeemed," and the sea shall murmur back to the mountains, "Redeemed"; and the land and sky and sea together shall sing, "Redeemed! Redeemed! Redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb!"

Then shall America shout aloud, "One Lord!" and Europe and Asia shall answer back, "One Faith!" and Africa and the Isles of the Ocean, shall shout back, "One Baptism!" and the whole earth, and the angels of Heaven shall swell the far resounding chorus: "One Lord, one faith, and one baptism," for the knowledge of the Lord has covered the earth as the waters cover the sea. Then, with loud hallelujah, and

hosanna, and everlasting Amen! and Amen! we will praise the God from whom all blessings flow; for His Kingdom has come and His will is done on earth, as it is in Heaven!

JOHN WILLIAM PORTER, D.D.; LL.D.

Dr. John William Porter was born in Fayette County, Tenn., August 8, 1863. He was the son of Colonel John F. Porter and Martha Carolina Tharp Porter. Dr. Porter grew to young manhood in Fayette County, Tennessee, being educated in the public and special private schools of the time. At first his mind turned to the Law and he was graduated with the degree of LL.B. from Cumberland University in Tennessee in 1882. He practiced law in Tennessee from 1882 to 1885. A few years later, however, he gave up the Law and began preaching. He was ordained in 1890. Soon thereafter he entered the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary from which he graduated with the degree of ~~D. G.~~ ^{D. G.} in 1892. Subsequently he held pastorates in Germantown and Collierville, Tennessee; Pewee Valley, La Grange and Maysville, Ky.; Newport News, Va.; and then for 14 years he was pastor of the First Baptist Church at Lexington, Ky., where he built one of the greatest church houses in the land and built up the leading church of the State. In 1922 he became pastor at Third Avenue Baptist Church in Louisville where he still serves.

In the meantime Dr. Porter has found time and talent to edit the Western Recorder for twelve years; to be president of the Baptist Book Concern of Louisville for fifteen years, and to hold scores and hundreds of great revival meetings; to preach and lecture over most sections of the South; and to become a leading author among Southern Baptists. He is the author of "The World's Debt to Baptists"; "The Baptist Debt to the World"; "Evangelistic Sermons"; "Assurance of Salvation" (a second volume of sermons); "Evolution---A Menace"; "The Dangers of the Dance"; and other

smaller publications.

He has been moderator for two years of the General Association of Kentucky, and is honored as few men in the whole South today.

Almost sixty years of age, Dr. Porter is as young and as agile as a youth of twenty-five. He is in fact "a human dynamo" of energy, wit and aggression. If Dr. J. B. Gambrell deserved the title of "The Baptist Commoner of the South", Dr. Porter certainly merits the title of "Baptist Stalwart of the South." He could have occupied an enviable place in the United States Senate as easily as he has attained and held his place of eminence among Southern Baptists. Yet he counts as the chief glory of his life that he has already been able to receive more than 12,000 additions into the Baptist churches where he has been pastor or has held evangelistic meetings, that he has taught everyone of the 2,000 to "contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints"; and that he is going on with unbounded joy and undiminished strength *to still grate service for the Master.*