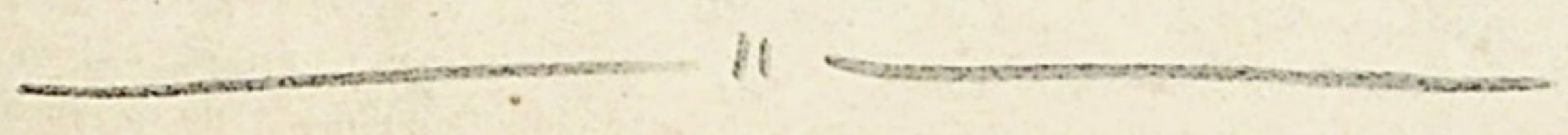


The Fullness of Time

Galatians iv, 4, 5: But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.



With these sacred words I give you Xmas greeting, my people. Our ancestors were not wont to commemorate the birth of the Saviour, in those hard times when "Presbyterian" was a name of reproach; for church festivals three hundred years ago had been greatly debased by the corruption against which those fathers became Protestants; & when they left Rome with her corruptions, it was natural, & benefi-

cial, that they ^{should have} hated "Even the garments
spotted by the flesh." Had not those stern
Kus applied the principle of total abstinence
for awhile from the old endearments of
Romanish religion, the Reformation would
have been less real than it has proved
among their descendants. And it may
not be amiss for us now to recall ~~to~~
^{correctly} how those venerable progenitors of ours
protested, that no man knows on what
day, or even in what month, the
child Jesus was born. ~~Egyptian Kus that~~
the day was in January; Clement of Alex-
andria names some who attributed it to
a day in April; & others in May; Epipha-
nius speaks of some who placed it in June,
others who supposed it to have been in July;
while various modern Bible-scholars whose

One community of Xmas or another, or one or another commentator, has celebrated the ~~birth~~ of Advent in every one of the twelve months of the year; & it is a wise conclusion to which the commentator Northworth comes, that the Holy Spirit has concealed this knowledge from the wise & prudent, to teach them humility (Lange's Luke, p. 36).

But at this distance from the temptations, as well as the antipathies, which distressed about the Xmas of our fathers, we may, avoiding with them a superstitious observance of a day, ~~not to seize the occasion, they~~ avoid as it was not possible for them, the loss of a great historical lesson. The instructions of history are not in its dates & annals; but in the study of its great Epochs, in the discov-

~~Day of great Events~~ A principle, which
~~coming forward at a moment as diffic-~~
~~ult to mark as twilight,~~

vance, make the day an occasion to
 recall the significance of the age of the
world in which He was born. Scripture,
 silent as to He, is eloquent concerning
 the Advent; & in this text which I
 offered you has become our attention,
 in ~~the~~ striking language, to the

Fullness of Time.

This phrase is restricted ^{in the text} from any
 general meaning of which it is capable,
 to refer to that period of history when
 the world was ready for He. It sug-
 gests the answer to the question: Why
 was the coming of the Messiah so

~~long delayed; justifies an examination,~~
~~not indeed into a profitless study of~~
~~calendars, but into the epochal fitness~~
~~of the~~

I invite us to mark
 in our minds the time when he did

appear, not by ^{the} profitless ^{mathematics} ~~numbers~~ of an

arbitrary calendar, but by the extraordinary

preparation which history shows awaited

him. If I might hope that this dis-

course could clearly portray to you the

need & expectant state of the world when

the Sun of righteousness appeared upon it,

~~I should feel sure that ^{the} ~~deposition of your sacred~~~~
~~light, whenever celebrated, would always be to you a~~
~~precious after-glow, a more sacredly~~
~~memorial ^{the}~~

~~to you, that the phrase "the X. Era"~~

~~would often rise to your lips with ex-
 tions of thanksgiving; & that the~~

~~infinite import of the religion which~~

~~You profess~~

I should rejoice to believe that our annual festival of Knas would henceforth ~~scarcely~~ fill your mind with the infinite glory of the religion which you profess; would establish your faith on foundations of historical fact, & vitalize it by associating your unseen Redeemer with the ~~visible~~ multitudes of struggling mortal people whom you see in need of His help; & would make the phrase "the Kn Era" often rise to your lips with emotions of joy. But if I cannot hope to bring the develop so forcibly the pregnant sense of my text, in the measure of my ability, I shall strive at least to suggest it. ~~to you that~~

^{omittable} St Paul makes use of this expression of "the fullness of time" in the midst of his argument to the churches of Galatia

to depend on the law only, & not any longer on the law of Moses, for justification & acceptance with God. ~~He reminds them~~ how a child, even an heir, is indeed under tutors & governors until the time appointed of the father. Using the figure of an heir to great estates being necessarily kept under instruction until the time appointed of the father for him to receive his inheritance, he pictures the chosen people of God as ~~needing~~ ~~receiving~~ instruction in the ~~renewal~~ ~~of~~ what he terms "the rudiments of the world" for an ordained period; & then adds the words we have for a text: "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son", &c.

In a similar manner the same phrase is used in Ephesians i. ⁽⁹⁻⁾ 10:

God has made known unto us the mystery of His will, acc. to His good pleasure which He has purposed in Himself, that in the ^{dispensation} of the times He might gather together in one all things in X^c, both which are in heaven & which are on earth. Similarly also in various passages is this culmination of ancient history in X^c. Jesus referred to; indeed the whole of ancient prophecy points toward it & makes it the great theme of the Bible & of X^c. literature.

The fullness of time, as thus interpreted, consisted in these three things, which will be the divisions of our thought:

the exposure of the need of man for a Saviour
 the dissemination of God's promises, awakening an expectation
 and the combination of facilities for spreading the Gospel of Christ.

omittable

An Address to the People of Sussex Co.

The Executive Committee of the Sussex County Temperance Alliance would again call your attention to the great evil of intemperance among us. We beg you to read and reflect.

Consider the expense which it causes. Two thirds of the pauperism and of the crime which disgrace society, spring from this source alone. It confronts us at every session of the Court. It fills our almshouse and jail. It is an ever present evil; an evil which it is hard to exaggerate, if we would. Reduce it, and taxation would sensibly decrease.

Consider the fact that it saps the productive industry of a community. He who *should* add to the wealth of a community, *takes from* that wealth when he becomes a drunkard. The money spent upon his early support and education is utterly wasted. He ceases to be a skillful workman. He is a loss when he should be a gain to society. Instead of his being a support to his family, he is only a painful burden, until he is removed by death.

Consider the sorrow which this evil brings to so many hearts and homes. No tongue or pen can rightly tell it, and imagination cannot paint the misery in all its gloomy colors. The wife mourns over the brutalities of a drunken husband until she is forced to leave him. The mother weeps in secret over her prodigal boy. The sister is sad indeed, when she thinks of a brother's terrible downfall. Even the child, whose nature it is to be happy, cries bitterly over the father who haunts the tavern and spends the last cent of his hard earnings for that which sends him a poor reeling drunkard to his wretched home. Who that reads this does not recall a relative or dear friend who has strayed, or is straying, far away in a drunkard's path? Oh! as we would save the homes of the future from this great woe which fills so many homes to-day, let us haste to the rescue.

Consider, above all, the harm done to religion. Christians are taught to pray "Thy Kingdom Come." The evil of intemperance stands directly in the path of the progress of that Kingdom. Piety, no less than patriotism and humanity, calls for its removal; and we urge you to hear that call and heed it.

People of Sussex County: You know the evil of intemperance, and many of you have felt it keenly in your own homes. It rages like a plague, and we appeal to you to stay its fearful ravages. As you love the welfare of your fellow men, do not stand idly by. As you would save the young and rising generation from a drunkard's path and a drunkard's grave, aid us in our work. That man is guilty before God, who does not do what is in his power to banish or destroy that which makes only evil to society, and that continually.

Perhaps you are ready to ask: "What can we do?" We answer:

Give us the benefit of your example. Avoid not only evil, but the "appearance of evil." Do not sanction in any way, shape, or form, the harmful drinking customs of the day. Keep out of the bar-room and censure most strongly the fashion of going there to be treated at the expense of other people. Enough harm has already come from this fashion and it ought to be at once abandoned.

Work through organized societies, but especially through the church; for it is the mission of the church to assail evil in every form. Approve of faithful preaching on this subject, and of the wise administration of discipline. Attend the public meetings which may be held from time to time. Let the children be faithfully warned of this great evil of intemperance, for prevention is better than cure; and let it occasionally be brought to the notice of the church in its regular meetings for prayer. Surely the community has a right to expect that the Christian church will strike hard and strike often at this giant evil with the weapons of prayer and work.

We ask you, as good citizens, not to vote for any man of any party, who is fallen into the habit of drunkenness, and to strongly condemn any political aspirant, who, to gain office, will furnish money to tavern keepers with which to bribe votes and influence, by treating men freely to liquor. Join with us in declaring plainly that a bar-room, with its evil associations, is not a proper place to hold an election so long as another room can possibly be had.

Urge public opinion to the enforcement of the law. See whether the petitions for a tavern license are properly signed according to law. If licensed houses sell to minors or on the Sabbath; if they permit gambling; if they promote tippling or are in any way disorderly, let information be lodged against them. If a nuisance can be proven there is a power to abate it. Let no more inns and taverns be licensed than the needs of the community demand. Study carefully the law upon this subject; keep the law and see to it that others keep it likewise.

We now make our solemn appeal to you to help in forming a public opinion which will be strong and right. We have a great foe to meet and a great battle to fight; but we are not dismayed. We are in a righteous cause, and to such a cause, time will be sure to bring victory. There is no evil but will shrink from the frown of an overwhelming public opinion.

People of Sussex County: by voice, by example, by influence, by earnest prayer and by united and persistent efforts, aid in this work.

By Order of the Executive Committee.

WILLIAM E. SKINNER,

Chairman.