

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

VOLUME XIII

	OPP. PAGE
THOMAS REED	<i>Frontispiece</i>
PHILLIPS BROOKS	19
JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN	56
GROVER CLEVELAND	149
JOHN HAY	223
SIR WILFRID LAURIER	378
JOHN FISKE	441
WILLIAM MCKINLEY	456

(viii)

BISHOP POTTER



HENRY CODMAN POTTER, D.D., LL.D., American bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, son of Bishop Alonzo Potter, of Pennsylvania, was born at Schenectady, N. Y., May 25, 1835. He received his early education at the Episcopal Academy, Philadelphia, was graduated at the Theological Seminary of Virginia in 1857, and made deacon the same year. On Oct. 15, 1858, he was ordained to the ministry, and was successively rector of Christ Church, Greensburgh, Pa., St. John's, Troy, N. Y., and assistant pastor at Trinity Church, Boston. In May, 1868, he became rector of Grace Church, New York, where he remained until 1883, when he was appointed assistant bishop to his uncle, Bishop Horatio Potter, of New York. He was consecrated to this office, October 20, in the presence of forty-three bishops and three hundred members of the clergy. The aged bishop's failing health left the responsibility of the diocese largely upon his assistant, who, at Bishop Horatio Potter's death (Jan. 2, 1887), was named his successor. Dr. Potter was secretary of the House of Bishops from 1866 to 1883, and for many years was a manager of the Board of Missions. In 1863, he was chosen president of Kenyon College, Ohio, and in 1875 bishop of Iowa, but both of these offices he declined. Bishop Potter is an active prelate of his church, zealous in all good work for his own diocese, and an able preacher and eloquent speaker. Among his published writings are "Sisterhoods and Deaconesses at Home and Abroad" (1872); "The Gates of the East" (1876); "Sermons of the City" (1877); "Waymarks" (1887); and "The Scholar of the State" (1897).

MEMORIAL DISCOURSE ON PHILLIPS BROOKS

"It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."—John vi, 63.

THE discourse from which I take these words finds both its occasion and its key in the miracle which preceded it. In a day when some people are fond of saying that the most powerful motives that attract people to the religion of Christ are what Bishop Butler called "secondary motives," it is interesting to note that of some, at any rate, this has been true from the beginning. Christ takes the five loaves and two fishes, blesses them, divides them, and dis-

tributes them; and lo, the hunger of a mighty throng is satisfied. His boundless compassion finds no limit to its expression, and the twelve baskets full of fragments tell of resources which no emergency could exhaust.

There must, indeed, have been some in that vast concourse who understood what the wonder meant. There must have been some aching hearts, as well as hungry mouths, that pierced through the shell of the sign to the innermost meaning of that for which it stood. But there were others, it would seem, who did not. There were others to whom, then as now, another's affluence of gifts was only one more reason for demands, and they the lowest, that could know no limit. These people were there, over against Jesus then, as there are people now who stand over any gifted nature just to reveal how sensuous are their hungers and how much they must have to satisfy them.

And so it is that Jesus follows the miracle with the sermon. It is, in one aspect of it, a counterpart of all his preaching. A large proportion of those to whom he spoke could see in his mighty works only their coarser side and be moved by his miracle of enlargement only to ask that it may be wrought again and again to satisfy a bodily hunger. And so he sets to work to lift it all,—the miracle, the bread with which he wrought it, the hunger which it satisfied—up into that higher realm where, bathed in the light of heaven, it shone a revelation of the aim of God to meet and feed the hungers of the soul.

This is the thought that echoes and re-echoes, like some great refrain, from first to last through all that he says: "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life." "My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven." And then, as if he would

bring out into clearer relief the great thought that he is seeking to communicate, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth in me shall never thirst." "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him."

One can readily enough understand the enormous shock of language such as this to a sensuous and sense-loving people. To say, indeed, that it had no meaning to them, would be as wide of the mark as to say that it had no other meaning than that which they put upon it. But it is, plainly, to show that other, inner meaning, which from the beginning to the end of the discourse they seem so incapable of discerning, that the whole discussion gathers itself up and opens itself out in the words with which I began: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

How the thunders of old disputes, like the rumbling of heavy artillery through distant and long-deserted valleys, come with these words, echoing down to us from all the past! It is a reflection of equal solemnity and sadness that no ordinarily well-instructed Christian disciple can hear the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel read as one of the Church's Lessons without having called up before his mind's eye one of the bitterest and most vehement controversies which for a thousand years has rent the Church of God.

On the one side stand the mystics, and on the other the literalists; and behind them both is that divinely-instituted

Sacrament which, as in turn the one or the other has contended, is here, or is not here, referred to. Happy are we if we have come to learn that here, as so often in the realm of theological controversy, both are right and both are wrong.

For on the one hand it is impossible to deal candidly with these words of Christ's and not discern that they are words of general rather than of specific import; that they were spoken to state a truth rather than to foreshadow a rite. On the other hand it is no less impossible to read them and not perceive that there is in them a distinct if not specific foreshadowing of that holy ordinance which we know as the Eucharistic Feast. It is indeed incredible that "just a year before the Eucharist was instituted the Founder of this, the most distinctive element of Christian worship, had no thought of it in his mind. Surely, for long beforehand, that institution was in his thoughts; and, if so, the coincidences are too exact to be fortuitous."¹ This is the other aspect of the discourse.

But, as the great Bishop Durham has said, "the discourse cannot refer primarily to the Holy Communion, nor, again, can it be simply prophetic of that Sacrament. The teaching has a full and consistent meaning in connection with the actual circumstances, and it treats essentially of spiritual realities with which no external act, as such, can be [co-] extensive."

Calm words and wise, which touch unerringly the core and substance of the whole matter and bring us face to face with that larger truth which most of all concerns us who are here to-day.

For, first of all, it belongs to you and me to remember why we are here and in what supreme relation. This is a Council

¹ Plummer, *St. John's Gospel*, p. 146.

of the Church; and, whatever conception some of us may have of that word in other and wider aspects of its meaning, there can be no question of its meaning here. The Church, with us and for the present occasion, at any rate, is this Church whose sons we are, whose Orders we bear, in whose Convention we sit, whose Bishop we mourn, and whose Bishop you are soon to elect.

In other words, that is an organized, visible, tangible, audible body, situate here in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, of which now at any rate I am talking, and with which you are to be concerned. It is an institution having an earthly as well as a heavenly pedigree and history, and having earthly as well as heavenly means to employ and tasks to perform.

There can be, there ought to be, no indefiniteness, no uncertainty about this. Whatever of such indefiniteness there may have been in the life and work of the Church in other days, we have all, or almost all of us, come to the conclusion that the time for it is ended now. If the Church is to do her work in the world she must have an organized life, and a duly commissioned ministry, and duly administered sacraments, and a vast variety of means and agencies, instruments and mechanisms, with which to accomplish that work. And when we come to Convention we must talk about these things, and add up long rows of figures, and take account of the lists of priests and deacons, and the rest, and make mention of vestries, and guilds, and parish houses, and sisterhoods, and all the various arms and tools with which the Church is fighting the battle of the Lord.

Yes, we must; and he who despises these things, or the least of them, is just as foolish and unreasonable as he who despises his eye or his hand when either are set over against that motive-power of eye or hand which we call an idea. One

often hears, when ecclesiastical bodies such as this have adjourned, a wail of dissatisfaction that so much time and thought should have been expended in things that were, after all, only matters of secondary importance; and the fine scorn for such things which is at such times expressed is often itself as excessive and as disproportionate to greater and graver things as that of which it speaks.

But, having said this, is it not my plain duty to tell you, brethren of the diocese of Massachusetts, that he who stops over-long in the mere mechanism of religion is verily missing that for which religion stands? Here, indeed, it must be owned is, if not our greatest danger, one of the greatest. All life is full of that strange want of intellectual and moral perspective which fails to see how secondary, after all, are means to ends; and how he only has truly apprehended the office of religion who has learned, when undertaking in any wise to present it or represent it, to hold fast to that which is the one central thought and fact of all: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

And this brings me—in how real and vivid a way I am sure you must feel as keenly as I—face to face with him of whom I am set to speak to-day. In one aspect of it my task—from which at the first view any one might well shrink—is made comparatively easy by words which have been spoken already.

Never before in the history, not only of our own communion, but of any or all communions, has the departure of a religious teacher been more widely noted and deplored than in the case of him of whom this Commonwealth and this diocese have been bereaved. Never before, surely, in the case of any man whom we can recall, has the sense of loss and bereavement been more distinctly a personal one,—extending

to multitudes in two hemispheres who did not know him, who had never seen or heard him, and yet to whom he had revealed himself in such real and helpful ways.

It has followed, inevitably, from this, that that strong tide of profound feeling has found expression in many and most unusual forms, and it will be among the most interesting tasks of the future biographer of the late Bishop of Massachusetts to take note of these various memorials and to trace in them the secret of his unique power and influence.

But just because they have, so many of them, in such remarkable variety and from sources so diverse, been written or spoken, and no less because a Memoir of Phillips Brooks is already undertaken by hands pre-eminently designated for that purpose, I may wisely here confine myself to another and very different task. I shall not attempt, therefore, even the merest outline of a biographical review. I shall not undertake to analyze, nor, save incidentally, even to refer to, the influences and inheritances that wrought in the mind and upon the life of your late friend and teacher. I shall still less attempt to discover the open secret of his rare and unique charm and attractiveness as a man; and I shall least of all endeavor to forecast the place which history will give to him among the leaders and builders of our age. Brief as was his ministry in his higher office, and to our view all too soon ended, I shall be content to speak of him as a bishop,—of his divine right, as I profoundly believe, to a place in the Episcopate, and of the pre-eminent value of his distinctive and incomparable witness to the highest aim and purpose of that office.

And first of all let me say a word in regard to the way in which he came to it. When chosen to the Episcopate of this diocese, your late bishop had already at least once, as we

all know, declined that office. It was well known to those who knew him best that, as he had viewed it for a large part of his ministry, it was a work for which he had no especial sympathy either as to its tasks, or, as he had understood them, its opportunities.

But the time undoubtedly came when, as to this, he modified his earlier opinions; and the time came too, as I am most glad to think, when he was led to feel that if he were called to such an office he might find in it an opportunity for widening his own sympathies and for estimating more justly those with whom previously he had believed himself to have little in common.

It was the inevitable condition of his strong and deep convictions that he should not always or easily understand or make due allowance for men of different opinions. It was—God and you will bear me witness that this is true!—one of the noblest characteristics of his fifteen months' episcopate that, as a bishop, men's rightful liberty of opinion found in him not only a large and generous tolerance, but a most beautiful and gracious acceptance. He seized, instantly and easily, that which will be forever the highest conception of the episcopate in its relations whether to the clergy or the laity, its paternal and fraternal character; and his "sweet reasonableness," both as a father and as a brother, shone through all that he was and did.

For one I greatly love to remember this,—that when the time came that he himself, with the simple naturalness which marked all that he did, was brought to reconsider his earlier attitude toward the episcopal office, and to express with characteristic candor his readiness to take up its work if he should be chosen to it, he turned to his new, and to him most strange task with a supreme desire to do it in a loving and whole-

hearted way, and to make it helpful to every man, woman, and child with whom he came in contact. What could have been more like him than that, in that last address which he delivered to the choir-boys at Newton, he should have said to them, "When you meet me let me know that you know me." Another might easily have been misunderstood in asking those whom he might by chance encounter to salute him; but he knew, and the boys knew, what he had in mind,—how he and they were all striving to serve one Master, and how each—he most surely as much as they—was to gain strength and cheer from mutual recognition in the spirit of a common brotherhood.

And thus it was always; and this it was that allied itself so naturally to that which was his never-ceasing endeavor—to lift all men everywhere to that which was, with him, the highest conception of his office, whether as a preacher or as a bishop,—the conception of God as a Father, and of the brotherhood of all men as mutually related in him.

In an address which he delivered during the last General Convention in Baltimore to the students of Johns Hopkins University, he spoke substantially these words:

"In trying to win a man to a better life, show him not the evil but the nobleness of his nature. Lead him to enthusiastic contemplations of humanity in its perfection, and when he asks, Why, if this is so, do not I have this life?—then project on the background of his enthusiasm his own life; say to him, 'Because you are a liar, because you blind your soul with licentiousness, shame is born,—but not a shame of despair. It is soon changed to joy. Christianity becomes an opportunity, a high privilege, the means of attaining to the most exalted ideal—and the only means.'

"Herein must lie all real power; herein lay Christ's power, that he appreciated the beauty and richness of humanity, that it is very near the Infinite, very near to God. These two