

The Keswick Movement: In Precept and Practice

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Introduction

I cordially commend these pages to the prayerful consideration of every Christian reader. There is a message here for the whole Church—a presentation of that special aspect of truth which is so much needed in this our day.

My friend and brother, Dr. Pierson, has outlined the historical facts connected with the "Movement," and speaking as a witness and from a personal experience of the "fulness of the blessing," he has given us here, fully and clearly, and yet with singular brevity and conciseness, the main characteristics of the teaching.

May our Lord and Master graciously use this message to the stirring up of God's children, and to the deepening of their spiritual life throughout all the churches in the world!

—EVAN H. HOPKINS. LONDON, January 3, 1903.

A Word to the Reader

The name "Keswick" has now become historic. It stands for something which, like the Master Himself, "can not be hid."

From many different directions, and with increasing frequency, come inquiries and questionings as to the purpose and purport of the "Keswick Movement." Requests are made by many parties for some clear and concise history of its origin and development,

and for an explicit statement of the truths taught by Keswick teachers.

This little book, the substance of which has, in part, appeared previously, and in other forms, often fragmentary, is an attempt to supply a felt need and answer these inquiries. Herein we briefly trace the story of the whole movement and of the so-called "Keswick Convention" in England, from its beginnings, through the more than quarter of a century of its annual recurrence, and seek to show what are the truths, principles, and practises for which "Keswick" stands. —A. T. P.

First Chapter—The Story of Beginnings

More than twenty-nine years ago, in 1873, a movement began in Great Britain which has ever since been like a river with a stream growing constantly broader, a flood becoming continually deeper, and a current sweeping ever stronger onward. In some respects it has proven a sort of modern Pentecost, having both a depth of meaning and a breadth of influence quite unforeseen and unsuspected at first, even by those who were prominently connected with it.

Mr. R. Pearsall Smith, an American evangelist, and his wife, Mrs. Hannah Whithall Smith, both of whom were well known also as writers of books and tracts on holy living, were providentially connected with the inception of this movement, and their addresses were very stimulating and helpful, tho neither of them has ever been associated with the later conventions held at Keswick.

The fact is that the real founder of this great movement must be recognized as God Himself. He seldom works in one locality or in one section only of the Church of Christ, and hence we often find simultaneous quickenings in various parts of the world. In the human body, any marked reinvigoration shows itself at the same time in different members and organs, and even at opposite extremities; even so the Omnipresent Spirit of God makes His reviving influence felt at the same time in various members of the Body of Christ.

Keswick is a small village of Cumberland, on the south bank of the Greta, about twenty-four miles from Carlisle. It has a resident population of from three thousand to four thousand, with a good

average of both industry and intelligence. It nestles at the foot of Skiddaw Mountain and beside Derwentwater, in the Lake District, famous by association with the poets of the Lake School, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey. Even in this charming section of country, Keswick's Vale is unsurpassed for picturesque and fascinating scenery, and Ruskin considered the view from Castlehead as one of four, finest in all Europe.

The main fact which makes this locality conspicuous, however, is that it is inseparably linked with the annual convention of believers, which meets here for one week, but, during the whole year, and throughout the whole world, radiates a blessed influence on spiritual life and missionary activity, and is in a sense reproduced in smaller conventions in many different localities.

The name " Keswick," therefore, is local merely, having no other significance than that which thus historically connects it with the place where the annual gathering is held, in the last week of July.

It is difficult to trace this stream of spiritual power and influence to a definite point of beginning. About the year 1870 there began a distinct movement in many parts of the world, in the direction of a higher standard of personal holiness on the part of God's people, which was perhaps the natural and necessary outcome of that remarkable revival, about twelve years previous, that swept over Britain and America, and more or less affected the whole world.

Meetings for the promotion of holiness were convoked in rapid succession on both sides of the sea. In the United States, at Oberlin, Ohio, and in Maine, on the borders of Canada, we recall such gatherings; in the latter locality the numbers were great, some forty thousand special tickets being issued by the railways to persons in attendance. There were similar meetings on a smaller scale on the continent of Europe and among missionaries abroad, showing a wide spread and growing interest in what is now generally called "the deepening of the spiritual life."

Meetings in London, etc.

During the year 1873 small meetings were held in London, in connection with the Young Men's Christian Association's midday hour of prayer, when Mr. and Mrs. Pearsall Smith spoke to a few

interested hearers about the duty and privilege of present victory over besetting sin. Among the few who attended these gatherings there were marked cases of definite, conspicuous, and immediate blessing, to which convincing testimony was borne at once, both by the lips and the life. When God's angel stirs the pool, and there is healing in the waters, the diseased and lame will gather, in crowds, as the report of blessing spreads; and so these little meetings became crowded, and led to larger gatherings in other and more commodious places.

In 1874 special meetings for new self-dedication were called, for two or three days' continuance (as at Mildmay Conference Hall, Hanover Square Rooms, etc.), these being followed by other and similar meetings in Dublin, as well as in Manchester, Nottingham, and Leicester, and even on the continent of Europe. It was very plain that God was thus leading out His people into a new and better life of godliness. He had stirred them up to desire a holier walk with Him, and now He was filling their desire. Wherever these assemblies were held, it was found that there was a deeper sense of sin and need, an expectation of fuller blessing, a nearer approach to God in prayer, and, what was perhaps most remarkable, a new and surprising *transformation of temper*—a renewal of the spirit of the mind, a victory in that department—the disposition—which so often proves practically the last stronghold of sin to be taken for Christ.

These new experiences of victorious power found in Christ, for present sin and need, came to thousands as practically a new revelation. It was not so much a discovery of new *truth* as of new *life*. The promises and commands of God were unchanged, but there was new grasp on the promises and new strength to obey the commands. Members of churches and even ministers of Christ found, after years of daily defeat and discouragement in their conflicts with sin, a sudden and marvelous uplift of soul, a supernatural courage and confidence in meeting the adversary, and a peace that passeth understanding. They seemed to see and know and feel that *God means what He says*; that His word of command is an assurance of ability to perform. Where there is such an experience there must be a testimony; for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." And where there is such witness, others will hear and come to seek similar blessings for themselves.

SALVATION FROM SIN

It is a conspicuous fact in the history of mankind that no subject has so lasting and universal a charm as that of deliverance from sin. However degraded and debased man may be, there yet remains a spiritual instinct, an often unconscious yearning after something better and higher. Sin may put out the eyes of the intelligence, bind with the cords of tyrannical habit, and set its victim to grind in the mill of idolatry and superstition to make sport for demons; but there is something in man that can feel the touch of God, and breathe a prayer, and receive His strength; and then, like the blinded and enslaved Samson, heave from their base the very pillars of Dagon's temple.

If this be true of sinners, that practical victory over evil has for them a strange fascination, how much more of saints! The inevitable result of these smaller and larger conferences in Britain and elsewhere was to stimulate inquiry, arouse deeper interest, awaken intenser expectancy, encouraging believers to seek the fuller realization of all that God has promised. Hundreds were led thus to claim their rights as sons of God, in Him who is the First Born among many brethren, and so there came an experience of triumph over sin, purity of heart, peace with God and the peace of God, and power in service, quite unknown before.

MEETING AT BROADLANDS

In the summer of 1874 a convention was held at Broadlands. Meetings for consecration had been held at Cambridge, in term time; and some of the university men had glimpses of possible blessing, and they yearned for a few days of seclusion and quiet meditation and prayer, free from interruption and diverting studies. They had got a partial blessing, and they longed to know more of the scriptural possibilities of the spiritual life, as to entire surrender to the will of God, constant communion with the Lord, and daily triumph in Christ over the power of sin.

Some such desire being expressed by these parties, in the hearing of the owner of Broadlands Park, near Romsey (afterward known as Lord Mount Temple), he at once put his own house and grounds at their service. Afterward the invitation was extended to some hundred guests, and for six days; and from July 17th to 23d meetings were held by the riverside, under the broad beeches, or in the orangery. The interest awakened was such that

seven o'clock in the morning was not too early for meetings, nor eleven at night too late. Even at meal-times it was hard to break up the meetings to attend to the wants of the body, and the days were filled with Bible study and prayer. Common conversation gave way to the pressure of spiritual themes. There were also meetings for ladies only, as well as general gatherings, Bible readings, etc. ; informal colloquial addresses, and silent prayer were conspicuous features; and the presence and power of the unseen God manifestly pervaded those six days, which some yet living recall as the most solemn and yet joyful seasons of communion with Christ ever known to them. They were days of heaven upon earth.

STEPS FORWARD

It is both interesting and instructive, in tracing such a stream to its source, to note just how God worked. There seems to have been a *definite order and method* in the teachings of the Spirit which to this day have not been essentially changed, and which have led those who now conduct Keswick meetings to give a corresponding order to the topics treated.

It was very noticeable, for example, that the first step toward this new life in Christ was commonly negative rather than positive. There was a putting away of known sin. The eyes were opened to see more clearly both what sin is and what is sin. Evil was discerned anew, and its enormity and deformity were seen more clearly. Even doubtful indulgences seemed wrong, because, being "not of faith," they were therefore sin. (Romans xiv : 23.) For some days the little company of believers were kept under the intense searchlight of the Word of God, so that any hindrances to a true fellowship with Him might be revealed and any idols exposed; and that there might be a true knowledge of self, and of all that limited the mighty working of the Spirit. Long ago the sages of Greece wrote over the doors of the Delphic oracle: "We must descend into the Hell of self-knowledge before we can ascend into the Heaven of self-improvement," and disciples have often found that, before any true advance in holiness is secured, they must learn to pray with the Psalmist:

"Search me, O God, and know my heart,
Try me and know my thoughts;
And see if there be any wicked way in me,

And lead me in the way everlasting."

One of the practical thoughts made emphatic in those early days was that every child of God should earnestly seek to have his actual state correspond, as far as possible, to his judicial standing; that there should be a holy walk such as befits so high and so holy a calling. The result was that, not only open sins were rebuked and denounced, but secret sins brought out into clear light, exposed, confessed, and forsaken. There was this further result: that the spiritual senses were exercised more clearly to discern things which are good and evil; so that what had before been justified, or at least extenuated, was now positively condemned, and what had been at most looked on only as questionable was now seen to be undoubtedly sinful and harmful.

The same search-light of God revealed the half-unconscious *reservations* which had hindered a true self-dedication—the territory over which Christ was not practically sovereign; and so the way was prepared for a more complete self-surrender.

When disciples of Christ reach the point where they are ready to have God do a thorough work in them, and are prepared to welcome His righteous rebukes and smitings, in their deep desire after genuine godliness, they find Him faithful in dealing with them. They come to know themselves as never before, and the final result is that they also, as never before, come to know Him.

The whole time spent thus at Broadlands Park was almost a continuous meeting. Even in the intervals little groups might have been found in retired places in the woods, by the waters, studying the Word, praying together, or talking of Divine things; and even when at meals, spiritual things absorbed attention and conversation.

Pasteur Theodore Monod, of Paris, referring to these memorable meetings, remarks that they differed from many others as a flower differs from the *name* of a flower; instead of mere talk about things, they had the very things themselves. He and other French companions found there a faith which was both soul-satisfying and God glorifying. They got all they expected and more. It was during this conference that Pasteur Monod himself, entering upon a fuller experience of blessing, wrote the now famous hymn, "The Altered Motto," which begins:

"Oh, the bitter shame and sorrow!"

Of course, the new experiences of those who attended this conference "could not be hid." The reports of blessing received spread far and wide, and led to much general inquiry as to the secrets of a closer walk with God. Hundreds who had never yet been at such meetings found a strange unrest within, and were led to a new sense of sin and need, and a deeper yearning after God. They began to ask, If others have found richer blessing, why may not we? And not only desire but *expectancy* was awakened as never hitherto.

It was natural that other and larger conferences should follow, open not to invited guests only, but to all who were disposed to come. A proposal for such a gathering met prompt approval, and one of the guests offered five hundred pounds toward the expenses incidental to such an effort, none of which, however, it was found needful to draw upon; for the voluntary offerings were so ample that there was a large surplus for extending the movement in the Continent. Sir Arthur Blackwood, who was one of those who met at the Broadlands gathering, suggested that the next convention be held at Oxford, in vacation time. Sir Thomas Beauchamp meanwhile called together some forty clergymen at Langley Park, his country-seat, in August, 1874, for five days of waiting on God, and here the details of the Oxford convention were settled; so that on August 8th was issued the call to the

"OXFORD UNION MEETINGS

for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness," from August 29th to September 7th ensuing. There were but three weeks between the call and the convention, but from all parts of the United Kingdom, and even from the Continent, there came a large and representative body of disciples to wait upon God during those ten days.

The experiences of that great convention it is hard to describe. It was essentially a new thing which God wrought. In a university city, stately with venerable associations and traditions, and having an atmosphere of exclusiveness and ecclesiasticism, ministers both of the established church and of various non-conformist bodies, with twenty or thirty continental pastors and many laymen, were found harmoniously united in prayer and

praise, Bible study and Christian conference, all with one end in view a more exalted and God-honoring type of personal piety. At the early morning meetings a thousand were found together, clergymen and laymen, to confess the same sin and needs, to pray for the same blessings, and to witness to the same experiences of blessing received. God, in some cases, chose the weak and foolish and base things of the world to confound the mighty, wise, and noble, that no flesh should glory in His presence. It is safe to say that this Oxford gathering reached a higher flood-mark than any other that had preceded, such as those at Barnet, Mildmay, and Perth, as well as those at Mannheim, and Vineland, and Round Lake, and Oberlin, in the United States.

At this Oxford convention the late Canon Harford-Battersby himself found the "rest of faith," and yearned to have others find it also; and to him, under God, the so-called Keswick Convention owes its suggestion.

The stream, which had found its human source in so obscure and small a spring, was now proving a river of God. Its channel was becoming broader and deeper. Earthly rivers find increase in other tributary streams which flow into them as they move onward toward the sea. But the River of God has no tributaries. Instead of depending on other rills and rivers to swell its flood, it has the secret of its own increase, and as it goes, instead of receiving other streams as channels of supply, it sends out other streams as channels of distribution. It multiplies itself as it flows. Its branches are rather like those of a tree than those of an ordinary river not means but modes of its growth, not for its increase but for its dispersion. And so as this movement advanced it began to multiply. Like seed scattered before the wind and finding root in new soil, the influence of the Oxford meetings was felt in many parts of the land and far across the sea.

STROUD CONVENTION

Accordingly, shortly after this Oxford conference, similar but smaller gatherings were held at Stroud, under the presidency of the late Mr. T. Croome, and two brethren, who had participated in the Oxford meetings, also took the main part in the Stroud conference. At this gathering Prebendary Webb-Peploe was in

attendance; he shortly himself had experience of the victorious life, and became a leader in this type of teaching and testimony, as he still continues to be. It was at the Cheltenham conference, which followed that at Stroud, that he first appeared as a teacher, and began to evince his remarkable power as a Bible expositor.

Next in succession was

THE GREAT BRIGHTON GATHERING,

held in the Pavilion May 29 to June 7, 1875. During these ten days some eight thousand met for Bible searching and devout waiting on God. Those again were days of heaven upon earth, never to be forgotten, and the Spirit's presence and power were conspicuous. There is a light as well as a darkness that may "be *felt*." The Holy Spirit not only shone as a light and burned like a fire, but moved like a wind and swayed those masses as a field of corn bows under the breeze. To this day the fruits of that gathering are abundant at home and abroad. The meetings are surrounded in the memory of many yet living by a sort of halo of the Divine presence.

The grand object sought in united prayer was some new revelation and experience of Holy Ghost power in two directions: first, enlargement of soul in sanctity, and, second, enduement for power in service. In one sense, perhaps, it was true, as in all great gatherings, that "the greater part knew not wherefore they were come together," save that there was in all hearts a longing for and an expectation of a fresh and full bestowal of power from on high. Worldliness had invaded even the courts of the Lord. Formalism had corrupted worship, selfishness had paralyzed spirituality, and apathy was threatening even the work of missions. Symptoms of spiritual decline were so apparent and so alarming that devout souls were driven to prayer in despair of any human help, feeling that God must interpose.

He who wakens holy desire also satisfies the longing He creates. The blessing sought was given. He outpoured first of all a spirit of prayer and supplication. Then, as cries to God grew more earnest, importunate, and expectant, it became plain that some new spiritual energy was at work. Many who had been cold and conventional, hampered and hindered by forms, exclusive and uncharitable in spirit, distinctly entered into a "newness of life" and of love, a fuller experience of purity, peace, and power.

No one then suspected how far-reaching as to time, and how wide-reaching as to space, this new movement was to prove; the real import of this Divine visitation was not read by even the seers of that day, and hence the imperfect and inadequate records which now are quite out of print and difficult to obtain. [Note: "Record of the Convention for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness. Brighton, 1875." S. W. Partridge & Co., London. "Account of the Union Meeting. Oxford, 1874." F. H. Revell, Chicago.] But to none who were there will that Brighton gathering ever cease to be a new Pentecost a spiritual season of quickening quite indescribable. From this point on it was plain that there was no arresting the stream that had already the force and momentum of a flood. To resist such a movement would be to fight against God. Wise men and women who had stood aloof, fearing lest this were merely some new thing, destined like so many other novelties to pass away with the transient excitement of the hour, began to look into the whole matter with prayerful interest. And, as in all that bears a distinct stamp of God, the characters which were transformed became the convincing proof that the omnipotence of grace was at work. Investigation removed prejudice, and corrected misrepresentation, and won new adherents.

It was here at the Brighton convention that Canon Battersby, who had himself found much blessing at the Oxford meetings, planned that first convention at Keswick which was held in July following, and which will now have a separate consideration.

Second Chapter: The Keswick Convention

Just here it may be well, first of all, to define more fully the type of convention which was in the mind of the Vicar of St. John's, Keswick, when he issued that call, for this conception and purpose became the dominant shaping influence in the remarkable series of annual gatherings which followed. Here we have another illustration of that important law of human conduct which we need to have constantly impressed upon us anew—namely, that as no man can tell what may be the outcome of any definite act or word, all things should be said and done with care and prayer, as in God's presence; but, preeminently, that any official utterance or act, however unimportant and uninfluential it may appear at the time, should be hallowed by taking God into

partnership. No disciple knows how far the impulse to a given step may be from God, as the starting-point in some great movement which is to affect the destiny of the race and to last through the duration of the ages upon so small a hinge of human choice and action does the door of opportunity often hang and swing.

In connection with one of the earliest Keswick meetings, Canon Battersby wrote of the convention the unmistakable words which define and outline his own conception and purpose.

THE PURPOSE DEFINED

"Our desire is to let those speak to us and lead us, not who are able to make the most eloquent speeches, but whom God has manifestly led into the secret of the Divine Life, and who are *willing to be nothing and let Him speak through them*; men who will be faithful with us and not spare us, but set forth very plainly our sins, and the things that hinder our full enjoyment of God's peace and our growth in holiness.

"Our *first object* being the *promotion of personal holiness*, the first thing must be *to get down low before the Lord and in stillness to wait upon Him*. (Psalm lxxviii.) Then, listening for His voice, to be prepared to obey Him in whatever He may command, even tho it be to the cutting off of the right hand or plucking out a right eye.

"Then also we want to be led on into the fuller realization of the Divine purpose in our sanctification (I. Thessalonians iv : 3), the indwelling of Christ and of the Spirit, the love of God, the entire union of heart and mind with our Heavenly Bridegroom.

"This is what we want, and how should we pray that the lips of those who speak should be chastened and purified with the fire of the Holy Ghost from the altar of sacrifice, so that it may be manifestly not they who speak, but the Spirit of the Father speaking by them." [Note: "Keswick Convention 1879," pp.7-8, S. W. Partridge & Co.]

We quote these words in full, italicizing leading phrases, to show what, by the deliberate utterance of the leader of the convention, was the declared purpose and spirit of the gathering. Nothing is more conspicuous here than the careful, watchful avoidance of

dependence upon mere human eloquence, and the persistent waiting on God for His presence and power, and the deep desire for thorough humiliation before Him. It seems to us plain that, from the very beginning, a certain apostolic character was thus stamped upon this Keswick movement. It began by exalting the *Holy Spirit as the Divine Teacher and Administrator in all assemblies*. Consequently, *prayer* was emphasized as the grand condition of all success and blessing, the secret of preparation for speaking and hearing, and the secret of germination and fruitfulness after the seed of the Word is sown. And, as another result, *human teaching* was consistently held to derive both its aptitude and its authority from the Supreme Teacher Himself, and therefore to demand preeminently a spiritual state in harmony with Him.

Canon Harford-Battersby, at the Brighton convention, had been a close observer of all that took place, and then and there made arrangements for a small gathering at Keswick in July, 1875, on the beautiful grounds of his own vicarage. He had, however, no conception of the permanent, ultimate significance of this step. His thought was akin to that of the proprietor of Broadlands Park, when he had invited a hundred guests to his estate near Romsey, a year previous; but that first Keswick meeting became, in God's plan, like Sarah, the mother of a numerous seed; and now similar gatherings, not by Derwentwater only, but at many other points in Britain and in far-off centers on the Continent and beyond the sea, have multiplied and are multiplying rapidly.

The convention was informally called and conducted, and very naturally Canon Battersby presided, and without any formal election continued, while he lived, to act as chairman at the subsequent annual gatherings at Keswick. After his death this chairmanship passed by general assent to Mr. Henry Bowker, and, after him, to Mr. Robert Wilson. There has never been a cast-iron system of conduct; all methods here have the twofold characteristic of steel: tenacity and elasticity—great jealousy about fundamentals, but equal flexibility as to non-essentials. The Holy Spirit's presidency in the Church is constantly and consistently recognized. Hence there are no hard and fast rules, and no fixed committee of leadership, or definite arrangement as to chairman. Without any such rigid uniformity, or dependence on men, the convention has, for more than a quarter century, proven that, when a matter is of God, it is not easily overthrown.

He can raise up men to take it in charge. And it is plain that there is a Divine Pilot whose hand is on the helm.

RAPID GROWTH

The Keswick convention has grown steadily, year by year, until, in 1901 and 1902, two large tents were in daily use, each capable of holding about three thousand, and, beside these, three or four other places of meeting, more or less capacious, for accommodation of lesser assemblies for ministers, young men, young women, etc. It is estimated that nearly ten thousand persons are now, during part or all of the Keswick week, in attendance. There are perhaps forty or fifty speakers, more or less prominent at these annual gatherings, and identified with the movement; but those who, in a larger sense, are interlinked with its history and in sympathy with its object and teaching, number thousands and tens of thousands, and are scattered over all lands. Indeed, the Keswick week finds representatives from many foreign countries coming up to the annual feast, as the Jews went to Jerusalem to the Feast of Tabernacles. Meanwhile the literature of the Keswick convention has greatly increased, until the "Keswick Library" embraces some of the richest contributions to spiritual life. The *Life of Faith* is the weekly and wide spread organ and journal of Keswick teaching. [Note: Published by Marshall Brothers, Keswick House, Paternoster Row, London, E. C.]

There is another marked feature of Keswick life namely, its

SELF-PROPAGATION

Its "seed is in itself, after its kind." Besides having nine of its own missionaries in the field, deputations are sent out frequently, as in 1901 to Canada and the Continent of Europe, and in 1902 to Jamaica and Blankenburg. The *Life of Faith* is sent gratuitously to missionaries abroad, involving in one year an expenditure of five hundred dollars; and for the current year's expenses of the Keswick movement some seven thousand dollars are required, not to pay salaries but to carry on God's work.

No one can foretell whereunto this thing may yet grow. A quarter of a century has not impaired but only increased its vigor. It has distinctly improved with age, like any healthy child; in attaining the measure of a full stature, many things that were undesirable

and immature, and that marked its infancy, have been put away, as more wisdom and discrimination came with experience, and there was a clearer apprehension of the mind of the Master.

THE KESWICK PLATFORM

To an unusual extent, at Keswick, God is magnified, and, as an inevitable consequence, it continues to be true that little deference is paid to men, as such. Great learning and scholarship, rhetorical and oratorical gifts and accomplishments, high social and ecclesiastical position, while not undervalued or depreciated, are by no means overrated. Keswick stands for a peculiar type, both of spiritual teaching and living, and to this all else is consistently subordinated. Those who by conviction hold these truths, and by experiment have tested them, are asked to take part, and no others. It is held that all spiritual truth demands for effective teaching the authority found in *testimony*. Christ sent out as *heralds* only those who were also *witnesses*, and therefore even angels, because they have no experience of sin and salvation, are thrust back in favor of believers who, as saved sinners, can bear testimony to the grace that saves. The most renowned theological professor, eloquent preacher, or successful evangelist, who might be in a Keswick meeting, would not be asked to speak on its platform, apart from some personal knowledge of the peculiar truth there held and taught. There is a certain witness to the reality of a truth which, even though it finds no direct utterance in the narration of definite experience, gives a strange and unmistakable air of confidence and a peculiar sanction of authority; and such speech, with the whole man behind it, is what is coveted at Keswick. It is a noticeable seal of the Holy Spirit on this unwritten rule and standard that very seldom any man who speaks on this platform gives the impression that he is exploiting himself. This is not the place where "star sermons" and brilliant rhetorical efforts would find a congenial atmosphere or a sympathetic hearing. There is something indescribable and indefinable in these assemblies which would go far to stifle an ambitious orator. Almost all the addresses are simple expositions of the Word of God, and impress the hearer as quite devoid of attempts at mere literary effect. However masterly, they do not strike one as a display either of scholarship or of art. An atmosphere of prayer pervades the meetings, and very few are the addresses that do not themselves breathe the fragrance of the secret place of

communion with God.

This is not so by any accident. From the beginning the standard of excellence has been a spiritual rather than an intellectual one. The Holy Spirit of God is practically honored as a living, presiding Person. Everything is done to keep this fact to the front, that He is the Leader of these assemblies, and that the singing, praying, speaking, and hearing are all to be as in His presence. This is so far both the prevailing sentiment and aim, that it creates, as has been intimated, a sort of atmosphere in which one who is not in sympathy with such a spirit would not feel at home.

Third Chapter: Keswick Teaching and Methods

It may be well now to amplify a little upon both the Keswick *teaching* and *methods*.

As to the type of *teaching*, it is steadfastly maintained that it embraces nothing new, as in the matters of spiritual truth, according to the old adage, there is nothing new that is true or true that is new. But it is felt that some old truths need, from time to time, restatement and new emphasis. The teaching here is definite, however, and complete. It is also progressive; usually during the four or five days of the annual convention each day has its peculiar class of topics, and the teaching as a whole has a beginning, middle, and culmination. In other words, some truth is taught as preparatory to what follows, and all the teaching moves toward a definite result in sanctity and service.

Without intimating or implying that there is a mechanical and uniform order in human experience, or that a human soul can be run, like an engine, along an iron track from station to station, there are six or seven successive stages of experience through which believers generally pass who enter into this higher life of faith, victory, and blessing. We venture to indicate what are, in such advance,

THE MAIN STEPS

(1) The *prompt renunciation of what is known or even suspected to be contrary to the will of God*. Conscience must be first of all clean and clear of conscious disobedience or neglect of duty. Hindrances to holy living must be abandoned.

(2) The acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ *not only as Saviour but as Lord*. A new surrender to the will of God which practically enthrones Him as sovereign. The self-life sacrificed with its self-indulgence and self-dependence.

(3) *Obedience now becomes the watchword of the soul*. The will of God being voluntarily enthroned, compliance with it becomes habitual and natural, and service to God the supreme end of one's being.

(4) This prepares for *close and constant fellowship with God*. Communion ceases to be occasional and clouded, and the great promise of John xiv : 23 becomes increasingly real in experience.

(5) The sense of *Divine possession of one's entire being*—spirit, soul, and body is the natural outcome of such conditions. When there is no longer any conscious reservation, the whole being joyfully yielded up to Him, we become consciously His own.

(6) There is now a *new joy and peace* which passeth understanding, a new revelation of Christ as an indwelling presence, and a true infilling of the Holy Ghost.

(7) All this fits for the *largest possible service to God and man*. God gives to all truly consecrated believers the scepter of holy influence. The Living Water which was first a draught to quench thirst, and then a well or spring of life within, now becomes a stream, flowing out and multiplying into rivers of blessing. This is the last stage of the victorious Life—the stage of victorious power over sin, prevailing power in prayer, and witnessing power among men.

Whatever method there is in all this teaching has been gradually and almost unconsciously developed. At the basis of the whole lies the deep and irresistible conviction that the average Christian life is lacking not only in real spiritual power, but in the spiritual mind, and is essentially carnal. It is also confidently believed that it is both the duty and privilege of every disciple, having "received Christ Jesus the Lord," so to "walk in Him" as to manifest the power of His resurrection in newness of Life.

Hence, the first great definite step urged is the *immediate and final abandonment of every known sin* and of every weight that

hinders advance. Nothing which is revealed in the Word of God to be evil in God's sight can be indulged with impunity. Known sin is not only damaging but destructive to all spiritual life and growth. It is allied with death and not with life. It stops communion, makes peace impossible, and robs us of our testimony. It is destructive of all true assurance of salvation, not because salvation hangs on our merit, but because disobedience clouds our vision of Divine things. Obviously sin indulged blocks all true service to souls; for how can one lead others into a new life of purity, peace, and power which he has not himself found, or help a sinner to an assured sense of salvation when he has lost his own assurance?

MATTERS OF DOUBT

It is felt also that whatever is doubtful as an indulgence should be surrendered *because of the doubt*. In matters open to question, God and not self should have the advantage of the doubt. To continue in a questionable employment, amusement, or pleasure brings condemnation, "for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." And because evil things are hurtful, they are unnecessary—there is no fatality about continuance in sin or in injurious habits. *God's commandment is His enablement*. Whatever is believed or suspected to be opposed to His will and our well-being should be renounced, and *can be* abandoned at 'once and forever, because it *should be*. This is essentially Keswick teaching. It is an appeal to faith, to claim victory in Christ. And thousands have put such teaching to the test, and found it true and God faithful.

The self-life is here held up as needing constant watchfulness in all its seven forms self-trust, self-help, self-pleasing, self-seeking, self-will, self-defense, and self-glory. The only way successfully to overcome it is to have a new, practical, personal Center, about which all else is to revolve. We all need to learn "the expulsive power of a new and mightier love," displacing the old.

The real difficulty with that large class of indulgences which do not bear the brand of positive sin lies in their tendency to give undue prominence to self. To consult self-gratification and self-glorification is in itself an unwholesome and an unholy habit. The lusts of ambition, avarice, appetite, however refined their forms of indulgence, all give self the supremacy. Ambition grasps after place, power, position, and feeds the pride of life and

self-glory; avarice seeks by heaping up treasure to promote self-indulgence and self-display; appetite makes the pleasure of eating and drinking an object, an end rather than a means to a higher end, and so ministers to self-pleasing and self-seeking. Many other forms of self-life need guarding, few of which are more subtle than the disposition to court human applause by catering to carnal tastes, and to avoid separation unto God by conformity to the world.

As to doubtful amusements, it may be safely contended that it is not enough to settle the fact that they have no necessary and inherent sinfulness. *Moral tendency* must always enter into any candid weighing of such matters. Several forms of popular amusement bear a distinctly worldly stamp, such as the theater and the opera, the dance and the card-table, the wine-cup and the race-course. For some reason these are not found associated with an advanced type of piety or of fruitful service. Some churches have made indulgence in them a ground of discipline. Whatever may be said in defense of any or all of them, this is unquestionably true: that wherever disciples find their way into the deeper experience of Christ's presence and power, the abandonment of them either precedes or follows such experience. In all our attendances at Keswick we have seldom, if ever, heard these matters directly mentioned; the teaching deals with great general principles rather than specific practises; yet, as a fact, from the very beginning until now, those who have attended these gatherings have found themselves asking whether such things have not hindered holiness and service.

Whatever is done primarily to please one's self puts at risk pleasing God, and hence a high standard of holy living always and in everything involves obedience to two simple, practical rules:

- (a) I will seek to please Christ as my Master and Lord, the Sovereign of my life;
- (b) I will seek to please my neighbor for his good unto edification.

Paul, led by the Spirit, has left, as to all things "lawful"—that is, all doubtful indulgences not distinctly forbidden—three great modifying principles: "All things are lawful for me," but

(a) "all things *edify* not;"

(b) "all things are not *expedient*;"

(c) "I will not be brought under the *power of any*." [Note: I. Corinthians vi : 12; x : 23.]

Even after the question of lawfulness is settled there yet remain, therefore, three questions to be answered, namely: is this expedient for me? is it edifying to others? is its tendency to enslave me? A heart set on pleasing God will soon fence off all debatable ground on these principles and get free of bondage to questionable indulgences.

It is a notable fact that those who accept Keswick teaching practically abandon tobacco, from an inward sense of its being promotive of carnal self-indulgence. Where it is used, not as a medicine but as a means of gratification, it is felt to lift self into undue prominence, and without any direct pressure being brought to bear by the speakers, hundreds have voluntarily resigned the use of this favorite narcotic. In the Brighton convention a clergyman expressed his sense of bondage to the tobacco habit, but declared that it would kill him to give it up. The chairman then made this memorable utterance: "*It is not necessary for us to live, but it is necessary for us to give up anything which enslaves us or imperils our fellowship with God.*" It is not necessary to add that this encumbered servant of God, who in the strength of God abandoned his enslaving habit, did not die, but lived to declare the works of the Lord.

THE GREAT LAW OF LIFE

The *surrender of the will to God* in habitual obedience is, however, the radical law of all holy living. The Lord Jesus Christ must to every believer become not only Saviour, but Lord. [Romans x : 9 (Revised Version)] And no man can thus say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost. [I. Corinthians xxii : 3.] It is a sad fact that so many who claim to have taken Him as Saviour from sin, have little or no real conception of Him as the actual sovereign, supreme over the daily life. To Laodicean disciples He is still outside, standing at the door and knocking for admission. The keys of the house are not in His hands. There is a definite act whereby the door is opened and He is admitted to control. But so long as one apartment is voluntarily reserved the

transfer is incomplete, for a reserved territory, however small, involves and implies a reserved right of way to such territory.

From the nature of the case God must have *all* or He really has *none*. Every child of God should search his own heart to see whether from any part of his being or life the Lord Jesus is practically shut out; for over that part Satan has control, and he will use his opportunity to tempt us continually by that way of approach. And God will not interpose to prevent, for He respects even the devil's rights; and if we reserve anything from God, it constitutes Satan's territory, and God will allow him the right of way to his own. The only way to exclude him is by a full surrender to God.

When, under the surgeon's testing touch, any part of the body shrinks, showing an abnormal sensitiveness, he begins to suspect that in that part disease lurks. And whenever we are especially sensitive to any point and shrink from a candid application of Scripture to any particular practise, it is easy to conclude that, just at that point, there is a serious difficulty and danger. On the other hand, he who opens up the hidden recesses of the whole heart and life to the Son of God will find that the very chambers where previously the idols have been hidden will become the audience rooms of a Divine communion and converse. The idol-room often proves afterward the Throne-room.

Four Chapter: Strong Points in the Teaching

The *infilling of the Spirit* is among the most precious of the Keswick teachings and experiences.

Here is, perhaps, the most delicate and difficult truth to make clear to the ordinary Christian. There is too much tendency to quarrel over phrases, and the whole matter is often beclouded by a vague set of terms or a lack of clear discrimination. For ourselves, we care little about the *philosophy* if we can get at the *fact*. And it is a conspicuous and incontrovertible fact that, while others are disputing about words and terms, thousands of professed believers are like those Ephesian converts that had not heard whether there be a Holy Spirit or not, and thousands more have gloriously found a new and Divine revelation of His power.

The late Dr. A. J. Gordon, of Boston, was wont to discriminate between sealing, filling, and anointing, referring the first to

assurance, the second to power, and the third to knowledge. But the practical point is: have you ever claimed and received the power of the Holy Ghost as such? When He came down at Pentecost and filled disciples, this experience was both subsequent to and different from *conversion*. The hundred and twenty in that upper room had, some of them, for years followed Jesus as disciples; and yet, suddenly, they all, by a new Divine gift of the Spirit, got new apprehension of spiritual truth, a new witness borne to them as children of God, and a new power to witness to others. Somehow that day brought to them new light, life, and love, and a new utterance, so that they spoke in tongues before unknown. It is maintained by some that this baptism of the Spirit was once for all given, and that in this age no further such effusion is to be expected or even prayed for. Granting this to be the true theory, it may nevertheless be the privilege of each disciple to *claim a full share in that blessing*, and know for himself a similar experience. Granting that Pentecost was the filling of an exhaustless Reservoir for the Church of all ages, what is to hinder every one of us from being filled at that Reservoir, and so having our own individual Pentecost?

CLAIMING BLESSING

This reminds us that another strong point in Keswick teaching is that *a promised blessing is to be claimed rather than sought*. How many of us treat proffered good as tho there were no changeless Word of God behind it! There is something in true prayer that is far beyond mere asking: it is *appropriating*. It is like confidently drawing upon a bank deposit, which is stored up and is our own, ready and waiting for use. In Christ "we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him." "Let us, therefore, come boldly unto a throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

As Coleridge wrote :

"Faith is an affirmation and an act
That bids eternal truth be fact."

True Faith has the authority of a *fiat*, as Christ has taught us. [Note: Mark xi : 22, 23] Instead of dishonoring God, such faith honors Him. It takes Him at His Word, and claims as our right in Christ Jesus that which in Him is ours. This is not irreverence; it is the highest reverence. It is the boldness of a child of God who

knows his Father's truth, power, and love are all unchangeable and equal to every emergency.

FAITH AND FEELING

Blessing thus claimed is to be *assumed as ours*, without reference to feeling or conscious inward states. *Faith* is not to be confused with *feeling*. At Keswick few truths are more strenuously insisted upon than this: that we are to depend upon the *Word of God* and not on our own *mood*. The Divine order is Fact, Faith, Feeling. He declares the fact; in that fact we are to have faith; then sooner or later feeling will follow; but whether or not the feeling follows, the fact is unchanged, and the faith in the fact should be firm, resolute, absolute.

Repeatedly in the Word of God we find these three things in this unflinching order. To the eunuch of Ethiopia Philip declared the *fact* of Jesus as the slain Lamb of Isaiah's prophecy. In that fact he *believed* with all his heart, and went on his way *rejoicing*. It was exactly so with the Philippian jailer to whom Paul declared salvation by faith. Believing, he rejoiced with all his house.

In I. John iv : 9-19 we have this same order explicitly set forth. First, the Fact that "God loved us and sent His son to be the Saviour of the world." Second, the Faith: "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us." Third, the Feeling: "We love Him because He first loved us." When God gives us a door into a fold of blessing we must not climb up some other way. Many do, however, seek to climb up and over into Faith upon the shoulders of Feeling. They vainly try to reverse God's order. As the Rev. Evan H. Hopkins quaintly puts it, "Here are three men in a procession—Mr. Fact, Mr. Faith, Mr. Feeling—they must go in this order. Now the moment Mr. Faith turns toward Mr. Feeling he turns his back on Mr. Fact." And so in proportion as our faith depends for its strength and encouragement on feeling, it forgets and loses sight of the divinely announced fact upon which its only secure resting-place must be found. In John iv : 46-54 we see the three stages of faith plainly illustrated. The nobleman besought Christ to come down and heal his son. Christ said to him, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." He believed the word that Jesus had spoken and went his way. When he arrived home and found his son fully restored, his faith was confirmed and rewarded, and his joy was full. This is one of the most important

lessons. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is *stayed on Thee* because he trusteth in Thee"—not whose mind is stayed on his feelings, but on Thee. "Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is the *Rock of Ages*." [Isaiah xxvi : 4, margin]. Nowhere is feeling addressed or appealed to in the Word of God, and for the best of reasons: were feeling made either a proof or a test or a gauge of spiritual life, we should depend upon it and habitually try ourselves by this standard, and our faith would vacillate and fluctuate, as our feelings do. It would never have the Rock of Ages to rest upon, but something as shifting as the quicksand.

Man is complex: he is composed of spirit, soul, and body; and body and soul have much influence on spirit. Where bodily conditions are not normal they becloud the higher faculties; and so what is called feeling is often very largely at the mercy of a torpid liver, a disordered stomach, an overtaxed brain, or overstrained nerves. But physical conditions and dispositional moods do not affect the *facts* of redemption or the *promises* of a faithful and unchanging God, and should not affect either our faith or our choice. In sickness and in health, in adversity and in prosperity, alike, the heart may be fixed on God, who says, "according to your faith"—not your feeling "be it unto you." He who opens his heart to the Spirit's infilling and humbly but boldly claims his share in Pentecost, and rests on God's faithfulness, will find that He will not fail him.

EFFECT ON THE LIFE

The result of Keswick teaching has, to hundreds of believers, been *a new revelation of Jesus Christ in the soul*, as an indwelling, abiding Presence. This is perhaps the climax both of the teaching and the experience. The supreme end of the Holy Spirit's indwelling and inworking is to manifest the personal Christ, as consciously possessed by us and possessing us. This is the mystery: "*Christ in you*." The Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ and *shows* them to the believer; He testifies to Christ; He glorifies Christ. These are the three parts of His work as our Lord Himself indicates them: [John xv : 26; xvi : 13,15] manifesting, witnessing, glorifying Christ. He shows Christ in all His offices and relations; He makes Him real as our actual possession; He clothes Him with glorious attractions, so that, gazing on Him, we are enamored of His divine charms. It is one

thing to have Christ revealed *without*, as a historic personage, and another thing to have Him revealed *within*, as our Master, Lord, Friend. The Word of God can and does hold Him up and sets Him forth before us, crucified for our sake; but only the Spirit of God can reveal Him within us, as an ever manifest and indwelling Presence, identified with our life and experience, our history and destiny.

Another thing which, at Keswick, is much emphasized, is

THE IMMEDIATENESS OF BLESSING

Whatever obstacles are in the way, they are not in God, but in ourselves; hence the moment we are thoroughly willing and ready, blessing comes in as a full flood when barriers are removed.

No one can read the Gospel narratives without being struck with the frequent recurrence of such words as "immediately," or "straightway" in connection with the bodily cures wrought by our Lord. It is evidently meant that the reader should be impressed with the fact that the word or touch of the great Healer was followed, *at once*, by a *complete cure*. It is equally plain that all this was intended to be typical of a like fact in the spiritual sphere; and there is a striking correspondence in the terms used in the two classes of cases. Take the following as examples of the immediateness of salvation to the penitent and believing soul:

"*To-day* is salvation come to this house."—Luke xix : 9.

"*To-day* shalt thou be with me in Paradise."—Luke xiii : 43.

"*That same hour of the night*"—Acts xvi : 33.

"He *went down to his house* justified."—Luke xviii : 14.

"She *went her way* into the city." John iv : 28.

"He *went on his way*, rejoicing." Acts viii : 39.

"And *straightway* he preached Christ." Acts ix : 20.

These are but seven instances of phraseology which occurs with amazing frequency, and which is evidently designed to convey to our minds the idea of immediate blessing, realized the very day and hour or moment when certain conditions were met, so that

one went back to his house or took up his journey from that point, essentially transformed.

Such instances all leave the impression of forgiveness, acceptance, justification, and even assurance, as following at once upon repentance and faith. There is another instance in which, indirectly but more emphatically still, the same lesson is taught. When the prodigal son comes back to his father, his father is represented in many ways as more than receiving him. He is waiting for him, so that, while yet a great way off, he sees him; he runs to him, falls on his neck, and kisses him. Note that the meeting and the kiss of reconciliation *precede* even the confession. But there is one subtle hint of the immediateness of blessing that is even more delicate and divine: the son has ready a very proper confession which he proposes to follow with a humble prayer—"Make me as one of thy hired servants." *This petition, however, is never uttered.* When just about to utter it his father interrupts him by saying: "Bring forth the best robe, the ring, the shoes, for this *my son* was dead and is alive again." Surely, after such a word of welcome, even such a ragged and wretched vagrant could never more say: "*Make me as one of thy hired servants*"! While in other cases we have the thought of immediateness expressed in words of time ("to-day," "that same hour"), here we have the same thought expressed in action, and the immediateness is instantaneous—it is like a lightning flash for suddenness—and we get the impression of a father smothering with kisses the lips on which the prayer to be taken in as a hired servant was trembling into speech!

LIMITING GOD

Keswick teachers feel and seek to make others feel that in nothing, perhaps, is unbelief more at fault than in limiting the full and immediate exercise of God's saving and sanctifying power, and the correspondingly full and immediate incoming—inrushing—of blessing. There is a subtle *legalism* in our conceptions of saving and sanctifying grace that corrupts our faith and delays God's working. We have a feeling that so much depends on ourselves that we make more of our cooperation than of God's operation. We are so intent on our own preparation and the conditions of blessing in us that we get our eyes off of the source of blessing in Him. We have all yet but half learned that it is to the most helpless and hopeless soul that the Great Helper

most appeals, and that only when we have reached the end of ourselves are we at the beginning of God. So long as we are intent on self-help we never find the fulness of God's help; but when, like Jacob at Peniel with dislocated thigh, we can no longer wrestle, and can only, in the despair of self-effort, hold on in prayer and cry, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me," we shall find it once more true: "*And He blessed him there.*" (Genesis xxxii : 29.)

Fifth Chapter: Keswick Practical Influence

The great aim of Keswick teaching is to bring men and women to a high level of holy living and holy serving, and to make their *state* more correspond to their *standing*.

Reference has been made to a *definite order*, in which certain steps are taken or stages of blessing reached. It is not, of course, meant that there is anything rigidly uniform, mechanical, stereotyped in such experience. Yet it is substantially true that one step seems to prepare the way for another, tho there is not always a consciousness of such regular advance. The order is rather logical than chronological, experimental rather than mechanical. And it is true that in all spiritual progress we go, however rapidly, one step at a time, as in all other advancement.

For example, he who earnestly purposes a fuller life of godliness will naturally begin by renouncing and abandoning every known sin or even questionable practise. This prepares him to enthrone Christ in his heart and practical life as the governing power, in cheerful self-surrender. Manifestly this is the true preparation for all uniform obedience and effective service. And only when we get thus far are we prepared for intimate and uninterrupted fellowship with God. And now naturally follows the sense of Divine ownership and possession we feel that we are God's, and that there is no reserved territory in our being. Then we come into the true life of rest and peace, when darkness flees away and His light floods us. And then, and then only, are we fit for that wider influence and authoritative witness which comes with the filling of the Holy Spirit. Here are seven more or less distinct

STAGES OF EXPERIENCE,

and in many cases the steps are definitely marked. Is there not a hint of some such sevenfold experience, and even of some such a

definite order, in the final glimpse of perfect sainthood in Revelation xxii : 3-5?—

"And there shall be no more curse;"

"But the throne of God and of the lamb shall be in it;"

"And His servants shall serve Him;"

"And they shall see His face;"

"And His name shall be in their forehead;

"And there shall be no night there;

"And they shall reign for ever and ever."

If we rightly read these grand sentences they indicate seven features of the ideal life, somewhat like these:

1. Perfect sinlessness.
2. Perfect authority.
3. Perfect obedience.
4. Perfect communion.
5. Perfect consecration.
6. Perfect blessedness.
7. Perfect glory.

It would seem also that the *order* is unchangeable. Not until there is no more any sin [sic], and so nothing more worthy of curse, can there be perfect and undisputed Divine authority, and only then can there be implicit and obedient service. These conditions prepare for uninterrupted and intimate communion, and the consciousness of being wholly the lord's, occupied, possessed, and filled with Him. Then all darkness must disappear, and the whole being be flooded with light. And only so is the way prepared for that final share in the reign of Christ which implies that He first reigns in and rules over us. For, as the Centurion said to our Lord, "I am a man *under authority*, having soldiers *under me*," God will never give us authority over others until first He has undisputed authority over us. If this is both the character and the order of final perfection, may it not hint a corresponding character and order in experience on earth?

Tho there was never any conscious design in Keswick teaching of following the order here laid down, it has been substantially

the order of such teaching, because in actual experience it has been found that the Holy Spirit leads along a way in which these mark the general stages of advance. So many have experienced blessing by some such steps and stages of progress that, half unconsciously and involuntarily, the teaching has been so shaped as to conduct along similar lines. But however blessing is obtained, it is a supreme joy to find it, and to have others find it; and, after all, it is not any blessing that is to be sought, apart from Him who is the one blessed and priceless treasure, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. "Unto them which believe He is *The Preciousness*." [I. Peter ii : 7 (Greek)]

Of the order, either of teaching or experience, no Keswick teacher is jealous. No doubt there is more or less diversity of operations wherever the Spirit of God works. But it is of the foremost importance that He shall work and work freely. The great aim is to get out of His way all conscious hindrances or barriers. With some parties blessing comes, as it seems to have come to Saul of Tarsus, with remarkable celerity of inflow. Christ is taken in one supreme moment as both Saviour and Lord, revealed almost simultaneously as crucified for us and revealed within us. sanctification follows justification at once, and there is a joyful and complete surrender. Would it were always so; but, alas! it is not; and what the Keswick movement seeks is to make real this larger and fuller experience.

PULPIT AND PEW

It is very natural to ask, What is the influence of the Keswick convention on preaching and on the conduct of church life? Keswick teaching should not, as we have insisted, be construed as a new school of religious thought or theological opinion. Among its body of forty or fifty representative and acknowledged teachers, ten of whom are prominent leaders, there is not one who would not emphatically disclaim any such thing as novelty in the truth espoused and taught. In fact, a characteristic feature of these teachers is rather a conservative spirit, a tenacious clinging to the old truths, with a corresponding suspicion of all new and strange doctrines. They unanimously hold that the Word of God contains, and plainly unveils, all that is needful for spiritual guidance and holy living; that what is there found is *revealed*, simply, clearly, so as to be apprehended by the common mind, needing not so much great intellectual powers for

its reception as a childlike heart and an obedient will simplicity and docility.

STANDING AND STATE

What, then, is the use of Keswick teaching at all? The answer is, that its main province and purpose are to make the Scripture ideal of character and life more real and actual, to bring God's sublime teaching down from the vague, mystic, and somewhat misty realm of the impossible and impracticable to the terrestrial level—to make the *judicial, experimental*. As there are in the Bank of England millions of pounds sterling in unclaimed wealth, there are infinite and royal resources in God, meant for us and belonging to us by right of redemption, which we do not claim, appropriate, and possess. Keswick teaching aims to impress on all disciples the fact of this immense store of unclaimed spiritual power and privilege, and to embolden faith to reach out and lay hold of whatever is needful for holiness of life and power in service.

Keswick teaching as to the Holy Spirit conforms to this general law. The fundamental position is that our Lord meant what He said: "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Paraclete will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send Him unto you." (John xvi : 7).

Here is a statement which nine-tenths of disciples practically do not believe: that Christ's personal withdrawal was an advantage, because of the Spirit's bestowment. Nothing more affects Gospel preaching than such a real sense of the present, living, guidance of the Holy Spirit, as indwelling in all believers, and as the supreme dependence of the preacher and teacher. The ultimate test of all religious teaching must be its influence upon the character and conduct of those who receive it; and judged by such standards, we are not ashamed to compare the truths taught from the Keswick platform with any other type of teaching.

NO CLAIM FOR NOVELTY

At the same time let it not be forgotten that, as already explicitly stated, Keswick stands for no new and modern school of theological thought or opinion. Of all such it is rather shy as of something involving risk. The conviction more and more obtains that it is no new truth that is needed, but only a new emphasis

upon old truth, sadly neglected and losing practical power. What God reckons or counts the believer to be, he is to reckon or count himself, and thus translate doctrine into the sphere of deportment, seeking to make real in character and conduct what is real in the will and Word of God concerning him. God's reckoning him righteous and holy is "not a legal fiction, but a Divine anticipation." We are to seek so to be yielded, in spirit, soul, and body, to His will as that the Divine anticipation may come nearer and nearer to a present realization.

The bearing of Keswick teaching on Gospel preaching is therefore to be traced and discovered rather in a practical than a theoretical form. It is a result, or, more properly, a resultant, of the whole general attitude of Keswick teachers not only toward the Holy Spirit, but toward the Word of God. Without one known exception, they hold to the absolute plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures in every part. To them the Bible is the final court of appeal in matters both of doctrine and duty the last, ultimate arbiter in controversy. "What saith the Scripture?" is therefore to them all the one determinate question. Here in the Word of God, they hold, are to be found three great qualities or characteristics: First, perfect sufficiency for human guidance; second, perfect supremacy of Divine authority; and, third, perfect simplicity of remedy for human need. Whatever obscurity or mystery or perplexity may inhere in the teaching of the Scriptures does not concern *duty*. There are secret things which belong unto the Lord our God—inscrutable mysteries, like that of Trinity; but all the words of this law, which pertain to our guidance in matters of practical obedience, are plainly revealed, and it is these which belong to us. (Deuteronomy xxix : 29.)

THE GOSPEL ALL SUFFICIENT

If anything be fundamental in Keswick teaching as to the preaching of the Gospel, it lies in this conviction: that the Gospel alone can meet human need, and that it can and does prove, whenever and wherever it is faithfully preached, both the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation. Observe, both the wisdom and power of God—teaching all necessary truth, and supplying the secret of victorious power. Keswick has for twenty-five years stood especially for *power*. The Church has long taught that the *wisdom* of God is found in the Gospel, and the doctrinal phases of truth have been presented with more or

less clearness in evangelical pulpits; but the other aspect of enabling power has been overlooked. Nothing has more characterized Keswick than the marvelous emphasis both of teaching and testimony upon the fact hitherto stated that *every commandment of God is an enablement*, and that when Christ said to the crippled, the impotent, the palsied, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk," "Stretch forth thy hand," it meant power to do what is commanded. Just so in the department of spiritual disease and incapacity, the will must be surrendered to God; there must be faith that when God commands He assures the willing soul the capacity to obey, and that there is therefore no apology for continuing in sin and in bondage to evil habit. Every summer men and women are coming to this quiet retreat in the Lake District and finding actual deliverance from besetting sins of tongue and temper, habits of wrong-doing, which they have been wont to regard as infirmities to be borne with and struggled against until death gives relief and release. But there they learn to abandon their own vain struggles, and, ceasing from their own works, they commit themselves in faith to God's keeping, and actually enter into His rest. And so they return home, in a sublime sense, leaving behind their crutches and broken fetters as those who no longer need the former and are no more bound by the latter. Men who both believe in such a Gospel and, from experience, can witness to its power, have little temptation to preach anything else but Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God. And therefore Keswick, to a very unusual degree, stands for simple and effective Gospel preaching and nothing else.

The enduement of the Spirit is strongly emphasized as essential to all power in testimony; there is also a scarcely less important baptism of

POWER FOR PRAYER

Rev. D. Nash, known as Father Nash, after enduement from on high, was one of the few mighty intercessors of his day. He who before had been the dullest of preachers had almost resistless power in the pulpit, and the hearts of men were swayed by his prayers and preaching as trees before a wind. He was found dead in his closet on his knees.

He was wont to pray with a map of the world before him on

which missionary stations were marked, and for a day or more he would make each the special object of prayer. After death, in his journal such records were found as this: "I think I have had this day a spirit of prayer for—mission," etc., and so on, from date to date. On comparing these entries with the records of the mission boards it was found that revivals had sprung up *in every mission prayed for*, and in the identical order of the entries, and at the very date recorded. ("Life of C. G. Finney," p. 259.)

While others are contending over questions of theory, the practical question remains, "Are you baptized with the Holy Ghost?"

In Maine, near the Canadian border, a company of disciples were met for ten days for purposes similar to the famous Oxford meeting in 1875. At one meeting Rev. Dr. Steele preached at 2 P.M. on the verses in Ephesians iii : 14-21—Paul's prayer. The president of the conference rose at the close and said, referring to the enduement with power which the preacher had both referred to and received, "Our brother has something which I have not received. I know that I am all the Lord's, but I must be filled with the Spirit. We have all heard how God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us, and now I shall kneel here and stay on my knees till what God has done for Brother Steele He shall do for me. Let all who desire it do the same." Above four hundred knelt, while thousands more bowed in prayer. A season of *silent prayer* continued for *three hours*, and the place became awful with God's presence, so that any audible prayer or song seemed intrusive, because God Himself was speaking. They saw His holiness and their own sinfulness, and at the same time the exceeding greatness of His power. The impression lasted through the interval to the evening service, and when the president said, "*Bow down* before the Lord your Maker!" saints and sinners together knelt, and not only did many testify to their own enduement, but over a hundred were converted. Some such scenes as these have been repeated at Keswick meetings at home and abroad.

KEWICK METHOD

The Keswick *method* is almost as definite and as jealously guarded as its teaching, and can not but have a wholesome

influence on church life and conduct. This method includes several particulars which, before referred to, in part, may be briefly epitomized as follows:

1. First of all the *Holy Spirit* is practically regarded as the *presiding officer* and *chief administrator* in all truly holy assemblies. He is the true Archbishop, the Supreme Teacher, the Divine Guide and Governor. From this fundamental position, of necessity and naturally follow several others. For example:

2. *Habitual waiting on God in prayer* and often in silence and meditation, in order to the realization of the Divine Presence, and to the cultivation of inward readiness both to receive and impart blessing.

3. *Avoidance of man-worship*. No teacher is felt to be competent unless himself taught of the Spirit, and having a definite experience which gives power to his testimony. Teachers are valued, therefore, less for their gifts than for their graces, and power to expound and illustrate the Word of God is supremely valued.

4. *Independence of worldly attractions and patronage*. Mere numbers are not regarded as an index of success, nor is there any direct appeal for money except for aggressive mission work. Expenses are met by voluntary offerings.

5. *Apostolic simplicity of worship, witness and fellowship* is sedulously guarded and cultivated, music and all else being subordinated to the one object the promotion of the glory of God in the promotion of truth and holiness.

6. *All believers are held to be one in Christ Jesus*. On the basis of agreement on such grand essentials as the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the Deity, Incarnation, Atonement and Resurrection of Christ, Regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and the awards of the Future State, the platform is built upon which representatives of all evangelical denominations find alike a welcome and a hearing.

Both the teaching and the method are alike Scriptural and spiritual. A distinguished and impartial observer, who, before his visit to Keswick, had prejudicial conceptions of the convention, confessed afterward that he found there the nearest approximation

to his idea of the primitive Apostolic Church which he had ever found. No perfection is claimed for the teaching or the method advocated there; yet we believe with increasing confidence that, behind all human agency and instrumentality, He has been working from the beginning who is perpetually saying to His people, and never more so than in this apostate age:

*"Be ye holy,
For I am holy."*

Copied from *The Keswick Movement: In Precept and Practise* by Arthur T. Pierson. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1903.

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