

PAUL'S
HYMN OF LOVE

By
D. M. PANTON B.A.

LONDON:
CHAS. J. THYNNE & JARVIS LTD.
28-30 WHITEFRIARS STREET, E.C. 4

Price 1½d. each post free 2d. 24 copies post free 3/-
50 copies post free 6/- 100 copies post free 11/-

PAUL'S HYMN OF LOVE

By D. M. PANTON, B.A.

LOVE AND ATTAINMENTS

Paul begins his hymn of love by unfolding the richest attainments possible even in a miracle-gifted Church. "If I speak with the tongues of *men*"—miraculous utterances as at Pentecost; "or of *angels*"—such as Paul heard in Paradise; or as the voices of the Seraphim, who cried one to another (Isa. vi. 3) in language pure as heaven itself: if I am master of all sublimities of speech in both worlds—"but have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." (1 Cor. xiii. 1). Even if the Holy Ghost speaks *through* me, and the words range through the

whole compass of language, in themselves deeply profitable; yet without love, I am but the organ of a foreign impulse; I am brass, sounding when hit, but sound only: weighed in God's scales, and analysed in my own essential character, I am an echo. "And if I have the gift of *prophecy*"—supreme among the miraculous gifts, as sharing in God's foreknowledge—"and know all *mysteries*"—so as to plumb the depths of God's secrets, such as the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, the two natures in Christ, election, regeneration, all types and mystic symbols—"and all *knowledge*"—embracing all Scripture like a Paul, or all nature like a Solomon; "and if I have all *faith*"—that is, the *gift* of faith; faith in its final fulness—"so as to remove mountains"—a faith so high as to accomplish things wonderful and incredible—"BUT HAVE NOT LOVE, I"—as distinct from my marvellous attainments—"am NOTHING." The 'all' thrice repeated

supposes each gift possessed in its perfection, even as the language was angelic: the man explores every height and depth, and enjoys the freedom of the universe. The contrast is overwhelming. Prophecy—the whole range of eternity; mystery—the whole range of the unknown; knowledge—the whole range of the Bible; faith—the whole range of miracle; almsgiving—the whole range of the practical; martyrdom—the whole range of devotion: it is astounding to learn that with these, but without love, *I*—the essential ego, the hidden man of the heart, that which ought to be likest God—am NOTHING—a moral nobody, a nullity, a nonentity in the spiritual life.

LOVE AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Paul next passes from attainments to achievements, and he selects the utmost possible sacrifices of property and person. “And if I bestow *all my goods* to feed the poor”—an

act that seems so identical with love, that it has stolen love’s name, ‘charity’: if I display the most magnanimous sacrifice of possession possible, the giving of one’s entire fortune to the poor—“and if I give my body to be *burned*”—the supreme sacrifice, in the supremely awful death; no longer the goods sacrificed, but now the person—“but have not love, it *profiteth* me”—for these are achievements which ought to carry reward—“NOTHING.” We may exhaust property, and sacrifice life, in that which will bring us no profit at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

LOVE’S KINDNESS

Paul, having shown love to be the supreme essential, the underlying vital of all conceivable life—for God has built all things on love—now reveals two cardinal virtues of love: “LOVE SUFFERETH LONG and is KIND.” It is most remarkable that suffering is the quality

of love put first ; as if the Christian path *must* be a path of suffering, and its first great victory is that, *in* suffering, it *loves* ; and it continues kind, which is love in action—the word denotes a disposition to put oneself at the disposal of others. Love is the ocean into which sparks of fire fall, only to be instantly quenched ; not perhaps without slightly raising the temperature of the water, yet at once absorbed in its all-receptive kindness. “ Love *suffereth* ” : for the greater our love, the larger the surface we expose to heart-broken sorrow : love can involve a Calvary.

LOVE'S NEGATIVES

Paul next passes to Love's negatives. Every great engine is made exact in its movements, checked from error and miscarriage, and has all its power controlled and directed by a regulator. Paul now reveals Love as a sevenfold restrainer and regulator of our life.

Love closes seven doors, one after another : on envy ; boastfulness ; conceit ; rudeness ; selfishness ; temper ; censoriousness. (1) “ Love *envieth not*.” Love does not envy a brother's success, and is not jealous of his gifts. This was Mr Moody's life-long experience :— “ The moment we begin to set up our little party, or our Church, then the Spirit of God seems to leave, and there is no more conversion.” (2) “ Love *vaunteth not itself* ” ; does not show itself off. Cicero, the Roman orator, uses this very word. Speaking of a great oratorical effort of his before Pompey, he says : “ Good heavens ! how I *showed myself off* before my new hearer, Pompey ! ” (3) “ Is not *puffed up* ” ; is not inflated with vanity (Stanley). The more we love others, the less we love ourselves. Like a lantern let down into a dark well, the lower we drop the lantern into our own heart, the more we learn how narrow are the walls and how black the waters. (4) “ Doth

not *behave* itself *unseemly*”; unbecomingly ; in an eccentric manner ; is never coarse or offensive. The very heart of courtesy is a delicate, watchful consideration of others : breeding does it by training ; love does it by instinct. Louis XIV., telling a story before his courtiers at Versailles, suddenly ended it very flatly. A few minutes after a prince left the room. The king then said :—“ You must have noticed how lamely my story ended. I forgot that it reflected on an ancestor of the prince who has just left the room ; and I thought it better to spoil a good story than to distress a good man.” (5) “ Seeketh not *its own* ” ; does not seek even that which is hers by right. Love always gives *itself* ; and therefore all its own interests are merged in the person loved.

Love took up the harp of life, and smote on
all the chords with might ;
Smote the chord of self which, trembling,
pass'd in music out of sight.

(6) “ Is not *provoked* ” ; is never exasperated ; is not touchy ; gives way to no provocation at all (Ellicott). (7) “ Taketh not *account* of [the] *evil* [done to it] ” ; does not put down in its notebook the affronts it receives ; forgets them. “ Love,” as Mr. Spurgeon says, stands in the presence of a fault with a finger on her lip.” Love is the fulfilling of all law : therefore, in the superb saying of Augustine,—“ Love, and do anything.”

LOVE AND CRITICISM

Paul next discloses an exceedingly important quality of love for these modern days. “ Rejoiceth not *in unrighteousness* ” ; is not pleased when others fall ; does not feel oneself better because others prove themselves worse : “ but rejoiceth *with the truth* ” ; criticism may be its duty, but truth is its delight. All love is wrapt up in the Creed of Christ.

If all these are pearls worn upon the neck of love, we now behold her blazing diamond pen-

dant—one of the loveliest sentences in the Bible, and the peak of this love song. “*Beareth* [or *covereth*] all things”—throws a mantle over the faults of others, suffering in silence the consequences of those faults: “*believeth* all things”—because of the possibilities of grace in all; is quick to impute good motives when it cannot prove them: “*hopeth* all things”—for Love hopes when others without love have ceased to hope; when the shadows are gathering over a man, Love says, —‘I hope that man will be proved white’: “*endureth* all things”—with a brave patience that never goes under: when hurt, it bears; when depressed, it believes; when disappointed, it hopes; when persecuted, it endures. *Love never faileth.*

LOVE'S ETERNITY

Paul has shown Love as essential; then Love as supreme; finally, he breaks away from the transient and the mortal, and reveals

Love as eternal. “But whether there be prophecies, they shall be *done away*”—fulfilled, they pass; “whether there be tongues, they shall *cease*”—when all shall be of one lip (Gen. xi. 1; Zeph. iii. 9); “whether there be knowledge, it shall be *done away*,”—because, when day dawns, all stars disappear, not lost in cloud, but lost in light: “for we know in part”—in fragments of knowledge—“and we prophecy in part; but when that which is *perfect*”—not omniscience, but completion—“is come, that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I *spake* as a child”—our utmost range of utterance; “I *thought* as a child”—our utmost range of comprehension; “I *felt* as a child”—our utmost range of emotion the sympathies of a cramped intelligence and a feeble affection: “now that I am become a MAN”—symbol of the mighty manhood of eternity—“I have put away childish things.” When we speak, we stammer

when we think, we stumble; when we feel, we cry: heaven will be manhood, where earth's best is infancy. "For now we see in a mirror darkly"—seen through our smoked glass nature, and even the Scriptures, perplex us with insoluble riddles—"but then face to face"—in the Beatific Vision: "now I know in part; but then shall I know [thoroughly] even as I have been [thoroughly] known [by God]."

LOVE'S SUPREMACY

So there now blazes forth the one great orb of Eternity. "And now"—as the matter stands finally, amid the passing and perishing of all beside—"abideth"—as permanent in the human—"faith; [abideth] hope; [abideth] love, these three; but the *greatest* of these is LOVE;" each foundation grace is great; but love is supreme. All salvation is wrapt up in faith; all reward is wrapt up in hope; but all heaven is wrapt up in love, for

love is the nature and the home of God; and our coming perfection, which lessens the need and diminishes the intensity of other graces, only expands the power and enlarges the sphere of love. The reverse curiously enforces the truth: faith—infidelity; hope—despair; love—hate: these three, but the blackest of these is hate. Love is greatest because it is the oldest: Love can say, Before faith and hope were, I am: for before the worlds were, Love was. Love is greatest, because faith and hope permanently witness to our limitations—faith to our dependence, hope to our lack; but love is purely positive. Love is greatest, because faith is not a goal, but a road—to salvation; hope is not a goal, but a road—to joy; but love is a goal, not a road—for God is love. Love is greatest, because faith and hope acquire blessings, love gives them: *I* benefit by my faith and hope; *others* benefit by my love. Love is greatest, because faith and hope

are creature virtues, love is the essence of the Creator : our love is not an imitation of Him (faith), or an aspiration after Him (hope), but an emanation from Him—the life of God pouring through us, to make us God-like. Faith pores over a book—the Book of God—with face enthralled with conviction : Hope is seated at the casement, watching, her face aglow with the coming dawn : but Love kneels on the pavement, lifting the head of a foul, criminal tramp ; and in *her* face is “ the light that never was on sea or land,” but which was upon the face of Stephen.

THE CHRISTIAN HOME. Its Sanctity and Joy. By D. M. Panton. Paper Cover 6d net. Cloth 1/- net. Leather gilt edges 3/6 net

Made and Printed in Great Britain, by
M. F. Robinson & Co., Ltd., at The Library Press, Lowestoft.

PERILS OF THE AGE

By D. M. PANTON, B.A.

Millennial Dawnism	...	...	...	1d.
Christian Science	...	...	...	1½d.
Modernism	...	...	...	1d.
Spiritualism	...	...	...	1½d.
Tests for the Supernatural	...	...	...	1½d.
The Seed, The Ox, and The Garment	...	...	...	1d.
The Order of the Star in the East	...	...	...	1½d.
God's Terms of Communion	...	...	...	1½d.
The Secret of the Great War	...	...	...	1d.
Universalism	...	...	...	1½d.
Spiritualism Inside the Churches	...	...	...	1½d.
Prayer for Our Lord's Return	...	...	...	1½d.
The Cry of the Children	...	...	...	1½d.
The Arab and the Jew	...	...	...	1½d.
Paul's Hymn of Love	...	...	...	1½d.