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SERVICE AND SACRIFICE.

A SERMON BY REV. B. T. ROBERTS.

"So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen, for fifty shekels of silver."—2 Sam. xxiv, 24.

Sin is always an abomination in the sight of God. It is the unclean thing which his soul hateth. Whosoever is guilty of it, incurs thereby his severe displeasure. He may have been the friend of God. But the favor shown him, gives him no license to commit iniquity. He enjoys the Divine approbation as long as he deserves it, and no longer. When he is led into the commission of sin, he throws himself out of the arms of God, into the hands of the devil. From that time he is dealt with as a sinner. If he gets back to God, he comes repenting as a sinner.

The blessing of Jehovah had rested, for a long time, upon the administration of David, as the ruler of his people. The kingdom enjoyed unwonted prosperity. Its borders were greatly extended. Its enemies were subdued. Its arms were everywhere triumphant. The laws were obeyed. The people were pious, industrious and happy. The heart of the king was lifted up. Satan tempted him to pride, and he yielded to the temptation.

Anxious to know the full extent of his power, he commanded the general of his army to number the people.

Joab expostulated with him, but to no purpose. He reluctantly obeyed. The Lord was angry with David, and proceeded to punish him. "So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel, from the morning even to the time appointed. And there died of the people from Dan even to Beer-sheba, seventy thousand men."

David made a most humble confession of his sin. Directed by the prophet Gad, he went up to the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, there to build an altar, and offer sacrifices to the great God that the plague might be stayed. Read 2 Sam. xxiv, 20-24.

We have invited your attention to our text, to bring out the principle on which David acted; to show its correctness and binding force, and to direct your minds to some instances in which you should act upon this principle.

1. Why did David buy the threshing floor and the oxen? Why did he not accept them as a present? They were freely offered to him. He explains the reason in these words: "Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God, of that which doth cost me nothing."

This, then, is the principle upon which David acted: *we ought not to present offerings to the Lord which cost us nothing.*

room. Here, the poor, and any who wish to attend, have the Gospel preached unto them. Brother James Mathews is the pastor, and is doing a good work.

The story above is devoted to a day-school. In the third story is a dormitory with one hundred beds—neat, clean and comfortable. Here news-boys, boot-blacks, and boys without a home, are lodged for five cents each. They also have good, substantial meals furnished them in the same building for five cents each. Temperance meetings and religious meetings are held with them. Many of them have signed the pledge, promising to abstain from the use of both liquor and tobacco. Those who otherwise would be outcasts, are brought under Christianizing, civilizing influences, and prepared to become useful members of society. Homes are obtained at the West for those who desire it.

The whole cost of the building was about thirty-four thousand dollars. No collections or subscriptions are taken up; as the daughters of Mr. Phelps meet all the current expenses. What a contrast in the results of this unostentatious work of charity, and the much-heralded, unfruitful, benevolent projects of A. T. Stewart!

DYING.

It is a great favor to a saint to be permitted to die among saints. Natural relations, who are out of Christ, cannot take the place of our brethren and sisters in the Lord. Though these may not go with us through the dark valley and shadow of death, they can cheer us to its entrance, and leave us with Him who will go with us, and whose rod and staff shall comfort us.

For fifty years a sister beloved walked with God. Her husband, too, was a devoted Christian. For many years their house was a very Bethel for Christians. At last he died in early old age. The Lord had given them no children, but they brought up as their own, the children of a deceased sister. They were settled and well-to-do in life, but were not Chris-

tians. As they were to have the property, they induced the widow to break up house-keeping, and hired her boarded. She missed the company of the saints to which she had all her life been accustomed, and was surrounded by those who gave her such care as money can purchase. Her physical wants were attended to; but she was sad and lonely, for those who were capable of ministering consolation were made to feel that they were not welcome. She greatly enjoyed an occasional visit from her old friends.

At last she died—died in peace. Her body was laid out on a beautiful quilt which her own hands had fashioned, her head resting on a pillow which she had made for this purpose. The niece, anxious to be ready to move as soon as the funeral was over, procured help and pulled the quilt and pillow from under the body, before the undertaker came to put it into the coffin. She said gray hair was fashionable—and her aunt's was beautiful; so she cut it off to make switches to adorn her own head. Thus the hair of this old saint, who never would go where she could not take Jesus with her, was worn at fashionable balls and parties!

Let my friends be the friends of Jesus.
Let me have them for my companions to
the end of my journey.

"Then round my dying bed,
Assemble those I love,
And sing of heaven, delightful heaven,
My glorious home above."

CORRESPONDENCE.

LOVE FEAST.

LIZZIE CONGER.—I praise the Father,
Son, and Holy Ghost for full salvation. I
feel heaven is mine. Glory!
Railway, N. J.

MRS. S. A. GRANT.—I can testify that I
am walking in the light, and have com-
munion with God, and the blood of Jesus
Christ his Son cleanses me from all un-
righteousness. Praise the Lord for his
goodness and mercy!

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