

**THE HARVEST WITHIN;  
THOUGHTS ON THE  
LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649745784

The Harvest Within; Thoughts on the Life of the Christian by A. T. Mahan

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**A. T. MAHAN**

**THE HARVEST WITHIN;  
THOUGHTS ON THE  
LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN**



THE HARVEST WITHIN

THE  
HARVEST WITHIN

THOUGHTS ON THE LIFE OF  
THE CHRISTIAN

BY

A. T. MAHAN, D.C.L., LL.D.

CAPTAIN, U. S. NAVY

AUTHOR OF "THE INFLUENCE OF SEA POWER," ETC.

"Because I live, ye shall live also." — ST. JOHN xiv. 19

BOSTON  
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY

1909

456827

*Copyright, 1909,*  
BY ALFRED T. MAHAN.

—  
*All rights reserved*

Published June, 1909

## PREFACE

**A**S a man nears the term of life, the question may properly arise whether experience has yielded him results which he should not carry away with him when he dies. It is a question of doubtful answer; for not only are personal inward experiences seldom — almost never — fit subject for communication to others, but even the practical results of such experience, realized in thought and conclusions, may have little value outside the individual, however decisive their influence upon himself. Self deception in such a matter is easy; the sense of proportion is readily lost; one may think too highly of his thoughts as well as of himself.

On the other hand, the fortunate provision that a man shall carry away with him no possession external to himself does not hold in the case of that most profitable of all the assets of living, the fixed and certain practical conclusions, the combined outcome of experience and reflection, which command allegiance and influence conduct. These may have value to fellow-combatants in the battle of life, and this can be assured only by committing them to writing. The effort so to do, moreover, is useful to the person himself; and that in two ways. First,



he will be forced generally to recognize that his thoughts and conclusions are fragmentary in character; that they need arrangement and coördination. Even though he already realize the supremacy of some particular one among them, the others need to be correctly grouped around that one, in their due relation to each other. Secondly, thus confronting admitted principles of action will bring home the shortcoming of conduct, in a manner and to a degree calculated to sober forever any undue self-appreciation.

One clear duty of old age, whether as regards personal character or unfulfilled purposes, is to gather up the fragments that remain; to redeem lost time and lost opportunity; to utilize what is left of powers which may have begun to fail, and the remnants of thought or knowledge lying still at loose ends. Such economy, which makes the householder to prosper, is still more needful to the life; as the one exceeds the other in importance. Never is this more urgently true than when the time, always short, has become surely scant.

That which is offered here is literally fragmentary, in origin and in essential characteristics; the purely occasional results, yielded to reflection and to experience in the course of life, noted as they occurred. It was the purpose of the author to emphasize this fact by a title: *Fragments that Remain*; but this was found to have been used already

by another writer. The attempt certainly has been made to weave these disconnected thoughts into a coherent whole, presenting a certain sequence of arrangement; but there is in this nothing of the elaboration which inheres in the word "system." The utmost that has been sought is the predominance of a particular thought, which, by a process resembling that of natural selection, has come to be the centre around which all else groups itself, in relation and subordination.

That thought is that man to-day is susceptible of an enthusiasm for Jesus Christ, resembling, but surpassing, that which has been shown in past times for this or that historical character in many nations; and that this enthusiasm is love, because it is inspired less by His mighty deeds than by the sense of the excellence of His Person, and by realization of personal relation to Him. In this respect His supremacy is so absolute and unapproachable that He alone among the sons of men stands the adequate object of affection; not to this nation or that, not to this epoch or the other, but to universal mankind and to every age. The single motive, for the honor of Christ, — or as He put it for Himself, for the glory of God, — is alone full of light. It unifies all action and solves all perplexities. Nothing new? No; only always new.

An expression has been attributed to Napoleon, that the enthusiasm, which was stirred in his armies

by his presence on a battle field, was still aroused after eighteen centuries by the Name of Jesus Christ, in myriads who had never seen Him; so that for Him too they were ready to die. Whether truly attributed or not, the words are truth; and they are true because He lives now, and His unseen presence is the life of His followers.

There are many who apply to Christian life the test of our Lord's words: He that hath My Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loves Me. Comparatively, little heed is given to His other saying, which observes the order of true sequence. If a man love Me, he *will* keep My Commandments. Life is impoverished by the conception which puts work first, love second; for this reverses the order of cause and effect. The riches of Christ are unsearchable; but chief among them is the gift of love for Himself. It is a gift, not an acquisition.