

HELP AND FOOD

FOR THE

Household of Faith.

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ERRATA.

Page 61, twelfth line from foot, "see" should be "seed."

" 62, fourth line from top, "following" should be "falling."

" 208, end of eighth line from foot, insert "hand."

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Help and Good

FOR THE

HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.



"NEARER THAN WHEN WE BELIEVED."

(Rom. xiii. 11-14.)

"**S**ALVATION" is a word of such breadth of meaning that we need to see its connection before we can rightly understand its significance in any particular passage of Scripture. For instance, in Jude 5 we have the salvation of the people out of the land of Egypt spoken of. Here it is evident that a physical and temporal deliverance from evil is the thought. Likewise in 1 Tim. iv. 10 the apostle speaks of God as "the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe," evidently referring not to spiritual but to bodily preservation; God, by maintaining in life, providing for and preserving from danger, is the Saviour of all men. In an especial sense can the believer say this.

On the other hand, in Acts xvi. 30, 31, we have an entirely different use of the word. In the question of the jailer we see, not a desire for any physical deliverance, but salvation from the wrath of that God whose power he had just felt and seen. It is the salvation of his soul that he asks for, and which he receives at once, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. A similar use of the word

is seen in 2 Tim. i. 9,—“Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling;” and in 1 Pet. i. 9, where believers are said *now* to receive the salvation of their souls. In this use of the word, salvation is always a *present* possession. It would be a contradiction to all that brings peace to the anxious sinner to tell him that salvation of the soul was future for the believer.

But the salvation spoken of in the passage before us has neither of the meanings we have mentioned. Along with 1 Pet. i. 5, it refers to what is “reserved for us in heaven,” and “ready to be revealed in the last time.” Phil. iii. 20, 21, also speaks of the “Saviour” in this sense, specially linking His coming with the transformation of our “vile bodies.” It is in this complete sense of the word that our salvation is “nearer than when we believed.” Let us now seek to get some idea of its fullness. What does “salvation” mean in this sense? We may not learn any thing new by dwelling upon it, but if old truths come freshly before us and cause us to be indeed waiting for salvation just as Anna and Simeon were waiting for it in Jerusalem, the object of the apostle in the passage will have been gained, so far as we are concerned.

The first thought of salvation is, being brought into a scene which answers to the spiritual condition of the saved. The wicked cease from troubling, the effects and influences of sin are seen no more. Earth, with its sorrows, trials, and groans, is a thing of the past. Our surroundings, instead of witnessing as they do now to the ruin sin has made, will witness to what God has wrought for us. The curse which stamps all things here is then removed, and in its place we have “all things new.” Secondly, our body will answer to this new scene. No longer a mortal body, dead because of sin, to be kept under, and often best showing the power of Christ in its

own weakness and infirmities (2 Cor. xii.)—no longer such a body, but one made like unto His glorious body, in which at last our ransomed spirits will have, not a prison, as now, but a vehicle adapted to all their enlarged capacities. "It is sown a natural body, (*i. e.*, suitable to an animal life here,) it is raised a spiritual body (*i. e.*, suitable to the spiritual life there)." Those who through weakness or sickness or age feel specially the burden of their earthly house surely are warranted in taking special comfort in this aspect of salvation. But thirdly, both of these would be but shadows did they not suggest and necessitate the blessed fact that sin, whether in transgression or nature, is gone forever. This is not the case now, save to faith—as we reckon ourselves to be dead to sin; but with our mortal body goes the sin which can only have sway there. He who came to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself will then, when the redemption of the body takes place, see the full result of His work accomplished.

"No more as here, 'mid snares, to fear
A thought or wish unholy."

Lastly, to which all that has been said is but the introduction, we will be "forever with the Lord," to behold Him, commune with Him, share His glory, and to worship Him and the Father. God and the Lamb! Oh! what will not that mean—at last to be in His presence, where there is fullness of joy! Let us pause, and dwell upon it: words fail, but may the Spirit of God, whose work it is, show us more of these things to come!

And, dear fellow-believers, this glorious salvation is "nearer than when we believed," nearer than last year, nearer than yesterday. What a future to contemplate!

Notice how our gaze is directed,—not backward, at our past life, which would beget only discouragement in every right-thinking person—for we have all come far short of

what we should have been. The backward look would be likely to link us with earth; we are to be "forgetting the things that are behind." Neither are we told to look forward at the time which may yet remain, proper enough in its place, but dangerous to one tempted to have "confidence in the flesh." Plans for the future, needful to some extent, are after all but subordinate. Nor does the apostle lead us to think of the judgment-seat of Christ in this passage, where every one is to receive a reward or to suffer loss. It is sobering and healthful to remember that too in its place. Indeed, all three of these thoughts are right in their proper connection. Here, however, we have the one thought—"the day is at hand."

In the light of that fast-hastening day, the believer is called upon, in the most practical way, to awake: as with the virgins the cry, "Behold the bridegroom cometh!" is to make him arise and trim the lamp. If Zion, in view of her speedy deliverance (Is. lii.), is called to arise, and shake herself from the dust, how appropriate is the call here in view—not of an earthly deliverance, but of an eternal and complete salvation—to "put off the works of darkness," and awaken out of the sleep of the night! As the light of that "morning without clouds" shines into our hearts, how these works of darkness—whether the grosser forms here mentioned or those more subtle ones of strife and envy—will be put off, and that light into which we are so soon to enter clothe us as with a panoply!

Is not this a proper motto for the new year upon which we have just entered: "The time is short." "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh"? There may be but a few days left for service or suffering. Did we but realize what awaits us, did it but come with power to us, how changed the lives of many of us would be! Things which now seem of great importance, and which occupy much of our

time and thoughts, would be seen in their true light. Things which perhaps are to us insignificant now would then appear in all the value of eternity. What calmness in the presence of evil, what joy amid trial, what growth in grace, did we hear this word with power in our souls: "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed"!

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART III.

THE TRINITY OF EVIL, AND THE MANIFESTATION OF THE WICKED ONE.

Commencing Fulfillment of the First Promise [to the Woman's Seed]. (Chap. xi. 19—xii.)

THE trumpets, as we have seen, carry us to the end of all. What follows here, therefore, is not in continuation of them, but a new beginning, in which we find the development of details,—of course as to what is of primary importance, and involving principles of the deepest interest and value for us. Through all, the links between the Old Testament and the New are fully maintained, and we have the full light of the double testimony. On our part, we shall need on this account a more patient and protracted examination of that which comes before us.

The last verse of the eleventh chapter belongs properly to the twelfth. It characterizes what is to follow rather than what precedes, and, when we remember that Israel is upon the scene, is of greatest significance. The temple of God is opened in heaven, and there is seen in His temple the ark of His covenant. From the world below

it had disappeared, and the temple itself been overthrown,—the testimony of His displeasure with an apostate people. Nor, though the temple were replaced, as after the Babylonish captivity had been the case, could the ark ever be restored by man's hand. It was gone, and with it the token of Jehovah's presence in the midst—a loss evidently irretrievable from man's side. Yet if Israel had no longer thus the assurance of what they were to Him, in heaven all the time, though in secret, the unchangeable goodness of God remained. The ark abode, as it were, with Him, and the time was now come to manifest this: the inner sanctuary of the heavens was opened, and there was the ark still seen.

To us who are accustomed to translate these types into the realities they represent, this is all simple. The ark is Christ, and, as the gold *outside* the shittim-wood declared, is Christ in glory, gone up after His work accomplished—the work which had provided the precious blood which had sprinkled the mercy-seat. Israel had indeed rejected the lowly Redeemer, and imprecated upon themselves the vengeance due to those who shed it. Yet, though the wrath came, Israel was neither totally nor finally rejected. The blood of Jesus speaketh better things than that of Abel, and is before God the justification of a grace that shall yet be shown them. The literal ark is passed away, as Jeremiah tells us, never to return; but instead of that throne of His of old, a more magnificent grace has declared that Jerusalem itself shall be called "the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem; neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart." (Jer. iii. 16, 17.)

The ark, then, seen in the temple in heaven is the sign of God's unforgotten grace toward Israel; but the nations are not yet ready to welcome that grace, nor indeed are the

people themselves, save a remnant, who on that account pass through the bitterest persecution. To that the chapter following bears decisive testimony, as it does of the interference of God for them. Therefore is it that when the sign of His faithfulness to His covenant is seen in heaven, on the earth there ensue convulsion and a storm of divine wrath: "there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail."

And now a "great sign" appears in heaven, "a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and in pain to be delivered."

The sign appears in heaven, not because the woman is actually there, but because she is seen according to the mind of God toward her. Who the woman is should be quite plain, as the child she brings forth is He who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron. That is Christ, assuredly, and the mother of Christ is not the virgin, as we see clearly by what follows, still less the Church, of which in no sense is Christ born, but Israel, "of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came," says the apostle. (Rom. ix. 4.) Thus she is seen clothed with the glory of the sun,—that is, of Christ Himself as He will presently appear (Mal. iv. 2) in supreme power, for the sun is the ruler of the day. As a consequence, her glory of old, before the day-dawn, the reflected light of her typical system, is like the moon here under her feet. Upon her head the crown of twelve stars speaks naturally of her twelve tribes,—planets now around the central sun.

The next words carry us back, however, historically, to the time before Christ. She is in travail with Messiah,—a thought hard to realize or understand, except as we realize what the fulfillment of God's promise as to Christ involved in the way of suffering on the part of the nation.

To them while under the trial of law, and with the issue (to man's thought, of course,) uncertain, Christ could not be born; the prosperous days of David must go by; the heirs of David be allowed to show out what was in their heart, and be carried to Babylon; humiliation, sorrow, captivity, fail to produce result, until the voice of prophecy even lapses with Malachi; until the long silence, as of death, is broken by the cry at last, "To us a child is born." Here is at least one purpose, as it would seem, of that triple division of the genealogy of the Lord in Matthew, the governmental gospel, in which the first fourteen generations bring one to the culmination of their national prosperity, the second is a period of decline to the captivity, the third a period of resurrection, but which only comes at last, and as in a moment, after the failure of every natural hope. Thus in the government of God Israel must have her travail-time.

But before we see the birth of the man-child, we are called to look at "another sign in heaven," "a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems upon his heads." These heads and horns we shall presently find upon the fourth beast, or world-empire, but we are not left doubtful as to who the dragon is. Here we find the first in all this part of those interpretations which are given henceforth here and there throughout the book; the dragon is "that ancient serpent which is called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." Thus as the dawn rises upon the battlefield the combatants are discerned. It is Satan who here as the "prince of this world" appears as if incarnate in the last world-empire. "Seven heads" show perfection of world-wisdom; and every one of these heads wears a *diadem*, or despotic crown. The symbolic meaning of the number does not at all preclude another meaning historically, as Scripture-history is every where itself.

symbolic, as is nature also. The ten horns measure the actual extent of power, and infer by their number responsibility and judgment.

The serpent of old has thus grown into a *dragon*—a monster—"fiery red," as the constant persecutor of the people of God, and he draws with his tail the third part of the stars of heaven, and casts them to the earth. The analogy of the action of the little horn in Daniel (viii. 10), as well as the scope of the prophecy before us, would lead us to think here of Jews, not Christians, and certainly not angels, as to whom the idea of casting them to the *earth* would seem quite inappropriate. The "tail" implies the false prophet (Isa. ix. 15), and therefore it is apostasy among the professing people of God that is indicated. False teaching is eminently characteristic of satanic power at all times, and far more successful than open violence.

And the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she was delivered of a son, a man-child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up to God, and to His throne."

The power of Satan, working through the heathen empire of Rome, was thus, with better knowledge than Rome had, in armed watch against the woman and her seed. The census mentioned in Luke as to have gone into effect at the time of Christ's birth, and which was actually carried out after the sceptre had wholly departed from Judah, was in effect a tightening of the serpent-coil around his intended victim. Divine power used it to bring a Galilean carpenter and his wife to Bethlehem, and then, as it were without effort, canceled the imperial edict. Only from the nation itself could come the sentence which should, as far as man could do so, destroy it, and that sentence was in Pilate's handwriting upon the

cross. But from the cross and the guarded grave the woman's Seed escaped victoriously: "her child was caught up to God, and to His throne."

All is thus far easy of interpretation. In what follows, there is more difficulty, although it admits of satisfactory solution. "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared of God, that there they may nourish her a thousand, two hundred, and threescore days."

There Daniel's seventieth week comes in again, and evidently the last half of it. But the prophecy goes on immediately from the ascension of Christ to this time, not noticing a gap of more than eighteen centuries which has already intervened between these periods. How, then, can we explain this omission? and granting it can be explained, what is the connection between these two things that seem, in more than time, so far apart,—the ascension of Christ, and Israel's flight into the wilderness for this half-week of years?

The answer to the first question is to be found in a character of Old-Testament prophecy of which already we have had one example, and that in the prophecy of the seventy weeks itself. The last week, although part of a strictly determined time on Israel, is cut off from the sixty-nine preceding by a gap slightly longer than that in the vision before us, the sixty-ninth week reaching only to "Messiah the Prince." (Dan. ix. 25.) He is cut off and has nothing: the blessing cannot, therefore, come in for them; instead, there is a time of warfare—a controversy between God and the people which is not measured, and which is not yet come to an end. Of this the seventieth week is the conclusion, while it is also the time of their most thorough apostasy—the time to which we have come in this part of Revelation.

This lapse of prophecy as to Israel is coincident with

the Christian dispensation, the period in which God is taking out of the earth (and characteristically out of the Gentile nations,) a *heavenly* people. True, there are Jews saved still,—“there is,” as the apostle says, “at the present time also, a remnant according to the election of grace.” But these are no longer partakers of Jewish hopes: blessed be God, they have better ones; but the nation as such in the meanwhile is given up, as Micah distinctly declares to them should be the case, while he also declares to them the reason of this, and the limit which God has appointed to it. His words are one of the clearest of Old-Testament prophecies to Christ, so clear that nothing can be clearer, and are those cited by the chief priests and scribes themselves in proof of “where Christ should be born.” “They shall smite the Judge of Israel,” says the prophet, “with a rod upon the cheek.” It is His people who do this,—His own, to whom He came, and they “received Him not.” Then he declares the glory of the rejected One: “But thou, Bethlehem-Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me, that is to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting.” (Chap. v. 1, 2.) But what will be the result then of His rejection? This is answered immediately: “Therefore will He *give them up*, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth; *then* the remnant of His brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.”

The last sentence of this remarkable prophecy is a clear intimation of what we know to be the fact, that in this time of national rejection there would be “brethren”—Jewish evidently—of this Judge of Israel, whose place would not be *with* Israel; while at the end of the time specified, such converted ones would again find their place in the nation. Meanwhile, Israel being given up,

the blessing of the earth which waits upon theirs is suspended also: the shadow rests upon the dial-plate of prophecy; time is as it were uncounted. Christ is gone up on high, and sits upon the Father's throne: the kingdom of heaven is begun, indeed, but only its "mysteries," unknown to the Old Testament, "things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." (Matt. xiii. 35.)

Here, then, where we return to take up the thread of Old-Testament prophecy, it is no wonder if the style of the Old Testament be again found. We have again the gap in time uncounted, the Christian dispensation treated as a parenthesis in God's ways with the earth, and the woman's Seed caught away to God and to His throne. Then follows, without apparent interval, the Jewish flight into the wilderness during the three and a half years of unequalled tribulation.

But this does not answer the second question—that as to the connection between the catching away of the man-child and the woman's flight. For this we must look deeper than the surface, and gather the suggestions which in Scripture every-where abound, and here only more openly than usual demand attention.

That which closes the Christian dispensation we have seen to be what is significantly parallel to that which opens it. In the Acts, the history of the Church is prefaced with the ascension of the Lord: that which will close its history is the removal of His people. This naturally raises the inquiry, If Christ and His people be so one as in the New Testament they are continually represented, may not the man-child here include both, and the gap be bridged over in this way? The promise to the overcomer in Thyatira links them together in what is attributed to the man-child—the ruling the nations with a rod of iron; and the mention of this seems to

intimate the time for the assumption of the rod at hand.

This, then, completes the picture and harmonizes it, so that it may be well accepted as the truth; especially as this acceptance only recognizes that which is otherwise known as true, and makes no additional demands upon belief.

The man-child caught up to God and to His throne, the woman flies into the wilderness, into a place prepared of God, where they nourish her for the time of trouble. The woman is the nation as in the sight of God; not all Israel; nor even all the saints in Israel, but those who are ordained of God to continue, and who therefore represent it before Him. The apostate mass are cut off by judgment (Zech. xiii. 8, 9; Isa. iv. 3, 4). The martyred saints go up to heaven. Still God preserves a people to be the nucleus of the millennial nation; and this, of course, it is the special desire of Satan to destroy. They are preserved by the hand of God, though amid trial such as the "wilderness" naturally indicates, and which is designed of God for their purification.

And now there ensues that which in the common belief of Christians had long before taken place, but which in fact is the initial stage of final judgment,—Satan is cast out of heaven.

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out,—that old serpent called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

As I have said, the simplest interpretation of this is counter to the common belief of Christendom. Satan has, according to the thought of many, long been in hell, though he is (strangely enough) allowed to leave it and

ramble over the earth at will. To these, it is a grotesque, weird and unnatural thought that the devil should have been suffered all this time to remain in heaven. Man has evidently been allowed to remain on earth, but then—beside the fact of death removing his successive generations—toward *him* there are purposes of mercy in which Satan has no part. The vision-character of Revelation may be objected against it also, so that the simplest interpretation may seem on that very account the widest from the truth. Does not our Lord also say that He saw "Satan fall as lightning from heaven"? (Luke x. 18.) And the apostle, that the angels which sinned, He cast down to hell? (2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6.) Such passages would seem with many decisively to affirm the ordinary view.

In fact, it is only the last passages that have any real force; and here another has said, "It seems hardly possible to consider Satan as one of these,"—the angels spoken of,—"*for they are in chains, and guarded till the great day; he is still permitted to go about as the tempter and the adversary, until his appointed time be come.*"* As to our Lord's words, they are easily to be understood as in the manner often of prophecy, "I saw," being equivalent to "*I foresaw.*"

On the other hand, that the "spiritual hosts of wickedness" with which now we wrestle are "in heavenly places" is told us plainly in Ephesians (vi. 12, *R. V.*); and in the passage in Revelation before us, no less plainly. For the connection of this vision with what is still future we have already seen, and shall see further, and the application to Satan personally ought not to be in doubt. The "dragon" is indeed a symbol; but "the devil and Satan," is the interpretation of it, and certainly not as figurative as the dragon itself.

*Principal Barry, in Smith's Dictionary. The question as to the class of angels here referred to, this is hardly the place to entertain.

Scripture implies also in other ways what we have here. When the apostle speaks of our being "sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance," he adds that it is to be that "until the redemption of the purchased possession,"—that is, until we get the inheritance itself (Eph. i. 14). But we get it then by redemption, not our own, but of the inheritance itself. Our inheritance has therefore to be redeemed, and this redemption takes place manifestly when the heirs as a whole are ready for it. Now redemption, it is plain, in this case, like the redemption of the body, is a redemption by power,—God laying hold of it to set it free in some sense from a condition of alienation from Himself, and to give his people possession. And if the material include "those who are Christ's at His coming," then the purging of the heavenly places by the casting of Satan and his angels out is just the redemption of the heavenly inheritance.

Elsewhere we read, accordingly, of the *reconciliation* of heavenly as of earthly things (Col. i. 20). And this is a phrase which, like the former, implies alienation previously. And here it is on the ground of the cross: "having made peace through the blood of the cross." In Hebrews, again, as "it was necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens"—as in the tabernacle—"should be purified with" sacrificial blood, so must "the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." (Heb. ix. 23.) The work of Christ having glorified God as to the sin which has defiled not the earth only but the heavens, He can come in to deliver and bring back to Himself what is to be made the inheritance of Christ and His "joint-heirs."

All is, then, of a piece with what is the only natural meaning of this war in heaven. The question of good and evil, every-where one, receives its answer for heaven

as for earth, first, in the work of Christ, which glorifies God as to all, and then, as the fruit of this, in the recovery of what was alienated from Him, the enemies of this glorious work being put under Christ's feet. This now begins to be, though even yet in a way which to us may seem strange: strange to us it seems to hear of war in heaven,—of arrayed hosts on either side,—of resistance though unsuccessful, the struggle being left as it would seem to creature-prowess, God not directly interfering: "Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not."

After all, is it stranger that this should be in heaven than on the earth? Are not God's ways one? And is not all the long-protracted struggle allowed purposely to work out to the end thus, the superior power being left to show itself as the power resident in the good itself, as in that which is the key of the whole problem, the cross of the Son of Man? If God Himself enter the contest, He adapts Himself to the creature-conditions, and comes in on the lowest level,—not an angel even, but a *man*.

Let us look again at the combatants: on the one side is Michael—"Who is like God?"—a beautiful name for the leader in such a struggle! On the opposite side is he who first said to the woman, "Ye shall be as God;" and whose pride was his own condemnation (1 Tim. iii. 6). How clearly the moral principle of the contest is here defined! Keep but the creature's place, you are safe, happy, holy; the enemy shall not prevail against you: leave it, you are lost. The "dragon"—from a root which speaks of "keen sight"—typifies what seems perhaps a preternatural brilliancy of intellect, serpent-cunning, the full development of such "wisdom" as that with which he tempted Eve, but none of that which begins with the fear of God. He is therefore, like all that are developed

merely upon one side, a monster. This want of conscience is shown in his being the devil—the “false accuser;” his heart is made known in his being Satan—the adversary.

These are the types of those that follow them; and Michael is always the warrior-angel, characterized as he is by his name, as Gabriel—“*man* of God”—is the messenger of God to men. If God draw near to men, it is in the tender familiarity of manhood that He does so. How plainly do these names speak to us!

In the time of distress that follows upon earth, Daniel is told that “Michael shall stand up, the great prince that standeth for the children of thy people; . . . and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” Here in Revelation we have the heavenly side of things, and still it is Michael that stands up as the deliverer. The tactics of divine warfare are not various, but simple and uniform. Truth is simple and one; error manifold and intricate. The spiritual hosts fight under faith’s one standard, and it is the banner of Michael, “Who is like God?” Under its folds is certain victory.

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

MARKS OF A TRUE MINISTER.

THE apostle’s attitude of soul in his epistle to the Philippians is full of interest. The moral excellence of his *character* as a minister comes out very strikingly in this epistle. It is not merely that he kept his body under—that he did, surely,—but he could say to these Philippians, “Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and *seen in me*, do.”

I would note a few things:—

The apostle writes from prison; and his sojourn there is used, in the ways of God, to teach him, as a man and servant of Christ, doubtless many a needed lesson. As to the moral results of the trial, I see two things quite distinctly,—two principles that lay at the *foundation* of his character, one might say, viz., God his present portion, and his superiority over circumstances. And when we see how his trial served to display *Christ*, and where such tribulation, as is evident in his case, wrought endurance, we are not surprised, nor is it any longer a question why he should *glory* in it. So fully is God his present portion and unfailing trust, that he has learned in whatsoever state he is therewith to be content. Blessed place! happy portion! Nothing, surely, can ever disturb our souls when God is before us. “When *He* giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?” We have abundant reason to believe that while with these dear saints to whom he writes there was fellowship in the gospel, there was not the happiest condition of things in their midst, for which he is peculiarly sensitive. Yet God and what is good is before his soul,—he is at rest.

It is not a matter of gift here, nor a question of fruit in ministry; by this he is not elated or depressed; he rejoices in fruit, but as seen in and connected with others—even in these dear saints; nor does he allow for a moment evil—what was wrong among them—to hinder that joy. In all this there is moral strength of soul,—inward strength, the result of outward trust. It was “out of weakness made strong;” it is love and devotedness in exercise, and one sees in it all the “way of more surpassing excellence.”

Of great value and importance is this, I need not say; it gives sobriety of spirit, and weight and force to our ministry. And those who minister should see to it that these moral qualities are not lacking. Reputation is

simply what I *might* be in the eyes of my neighbor—and for this I care not. Character is what I am and ought to be before God,—*Christ* being the measure, object, and pattern.

Lowliness, and a hearty appreciation of what is divine in the saints, also marks the apostle in the expression of his heart to them. That there is that which needs correction, warning, and rebuke is doubtless true, but with the *good* will he first and foremost in his soul be occupied. A man of prayer, he watches thereunto, with all prayer and supplication for them; while he rejoices in *their* love and fellowship, (as to need, there was *none* on his part,) still gift came before him in all the savor and fragrance of Christ, because his spirit was in God's presence, and He who is the source of all that is good is before his soul. How much of good and of grace among the saints is missed on our part because we allow evil to overcome us—the fruit of a legal state, that sees clearly enough what ought not to be, but has no power to remedy! Brethren, let us be followers of that which is good.

Thus we see another excellence—lowly grace in an apostle to *receive* and *use* rightly this token of their love and fellowship.

All this moral excellence of character is the result of being before God, and having Him before our souls. Trial there must be while here in the body. As soon as our souls learn the *good* of this, there is triumph, and what we naturally shrink from becomes a source of joy. May the blessed Lord more and more confirm it in our souls, for *His* name's sake. Amen.

C. S. L.

BAD HABITS AND HOW TO CURE THEM.

WE need not be reminded how common a question among saints it is, "How can I get rid of my bad habits?" In the effort to get clear of them, many a day has been misspent, and the saint brought into bondage. Scarcely a Christian you meet but is afflicted with some "besetting sin" (though in Heb. xii. it is not some particular sin, but sin in general, which besets).

The first necessity is, to know that bad habits are *sins*: soft words are not in place when dealing with what crucified the Lord. After they have been judged and confessed as such, we are ready to see the way of escape. It makes no difference what particular form the habit takes,—whether irritability, strife, emulation, envy, or what not,—they one and all spring from a common source. What a relief to find that instead of having many foes to contend with, we have not even one! For sin, which is the root of evil, is not something to be contended with. We would be invariably overcome in that kind of warfare. But we are *dead*—dead by the death of Another. Faith reckons this to be true, and, as a result, finds—as when do we not?—that God is true when He says that "sin shall not have dominion over us, for we are not under law but under grace." Now, the root—the body of sin—being destroyed, for faith, not to sight, the habits are gone too as we walk by faith. This being the case, it is evident that the bad habits will resume their sway so soon as faith ceases to be in exercise. We get rid of them by counting God true, and so at leisure from evil; indeed, to be at leisure from it, we must be occupied with good. "Overcome evil with good." It is as we view the unvailed glory of the Lord that we are changed into the same image. In the sanctuary, in the presence of God, is our abiding place (Ps. xxvii.). Into that holy

place sin and bad habits cannot enter. From His light all the unfruitful works of darkness shrink away. How happy, how natural, is such a life! And yet, alas! we need to watch, lest, as Eve was beguiled by the serpent, we should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. Under the guise of holiness, perfect love, etc., many a soul has really embraced that which is the very opposite of these. If we walk with God, bad habits will not trouble us.

THE FRIENDSHIP OF PILATE AND HEROD.

"And the same day, Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before, they were at enmity between themselves." (Luke xxiii. 12.)

ONE of the characteristics of men in their natural state is, "living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." What can be expected from the carnal mind which is "enmity against God" but enmity against its fellow also? The violence and the hatred and strife we see in the world are but fruits of that departure from Him who alone is Love. And so after conversion—after we have "received the reconciliation," the sweet and precious fruits of the Spirit are seen; and among the first is love, and all its accompanying manifestations of forgiveness of and reconciliation with our fellows. How can the one who has been forgiven much fail to forgive the little offenses against himself? It would argue that one did not realize it for himself if he failed in its exercise toward others.

Here, however, as in many other ways, Satan has a counterfeit of the real, in which while a good deal of the outward appearance is preserved, all that gives character and value is wanting. This is so in a marked degree with the case before us. Pilate and Herod had been at

enmity; they become reconciled. What led to this reconciliation?—what motives actuated them? Sad is the answer—their rejection of Christ. It may be said that Pilate was not so violently opposed to Him,—that He was willing to let Him go, and that Herod would have been glad to see some miracle performed by Him. Still this in no wise affects the fact that Christ was set at naught by Herod, and delivered up to be crucified by Pilate. “He that is not *with* Me is against Me;” and these two, having been specially called upon to decide for or against Him, take their place with His enemies. This brings them together, gives the occasion for their reconciliation. What a spectacle! The Son of God mocked, scourged, and delivered up for crucifixion; and the men who were responsible for it as it were shaking hands over it! After all, is not this what we see in the world at the present day? Are not the very things which link men with one another the ones which separate them from Christ? Not necessarily immoral things, but those which have usurped the place which He would claim, show the enmity which is just as real, though less apparent, as if more flagrant acts had indicated it.

But it is not for the world that we are writing. Is there not a lesson for us as Christians to learn? First, what is that which links us with the world? Is it a common interest in business, or the daily affairs of life, which so absorb as to become our *object*, instead of that love and pity which spring from communion with the Lord? While in the world, we must be engaged in the daily duties of life,—the common affairs that all men must attend to; but to be so absorbed in these as to leave the Lord out is to act as though we were of the world as well as *in* it. This is the friendship of the world, and it is enmity with God, practically. A friendship of this kind is, in measure, of the character of that between Pilate

and Herod. Much of the sociability with the unsaved is dangerously near this. Would those who are now so pleased to have our company like it if we avowed loyalty to Him who is their enemy? Farthest removed from a moroseness and gloom that repel is this frank, happy, confession of Christ which comes from a heart filled with His love. Surely we cannot make rules for ourselves or for one another, but do we not need some exercise of conscience as to this very thing?

But as between saints, is there not need to beware of links of the character of that between Pilate and Herod? That prejudice which separates from some of our brethren and attracts to others is like it. Differences and coolness toward some drawing us closer to those of like mind with us is like it. It is thus that parties spring up amongst God's people, and under the guise of congeniality, etc., confederacies are formed. Further, though not exactly of like character, there is the being held together by rejection of error merely. The Lord never intended us to be occupied with evil,—never would have us drawn together by what we refuse and deny *merely*. Positive truth is what attracts and holds together—truth which sets the Lord Himself before us. Love to Him, worship of Him, this is the constraining bond which the Spirit uses to unite and hold us together. The more we know of Christ (in the *heart*)—the more His truth fills us, so much the closer will we be together. This is a friendship which has neither honey nor leaven to corrupt it, and so abides.

WHAT must have been the feelings of Mary Magdalene when, on going to the sepulchre in search of the dead body of her Lord, she found Him alive! He was such a treasure, that she could turn her back on angels to seek His body. Such love had its reward in the delight which filled her soul when she heard His voice. May our love be more like hers, for He lives for us.



CURRENT EVENTS.

THE WEEK OF PRAYER.

FOR many years it has been customary for the religious bodies composing the Evangelical Alliance, and under the direction of that organization, to observe the first week in January as a special season of prayer. A programme is published, assigning special topics for each day,—such as prayer for the Church, its unity, spirituality, and its service in home and foreign mission work, for the family and for nations, etc. This practice originated in the mission field, in a desire for greater blessing on the work there and upon the churches at home. Often it has been a time of real and marked blessing; for when was our God ever sought in truth, even if not “after the due order,” and did not richly reward the seekers? Surely it is the duty as well as privilege of Christians every where to remember those who are thus engaged, and to pray for them. It is not, therefore, in any spirit of criticism that we would examine this observance in the light of Scripture. We know that God’s Word, though sharper than any two-edged sword, only lops off unsightly and useless excrescences, never injures what is the real fruit of the Spirit.

We would suggest, as a danger to be guarded against, that the regular recurrence of a set time each year do not become a mere matter of form. If the “set times of Jehovah” (Lev. xxiii.) could degenerate into “feasts of the Jews” (Jno. ii.), how much greater the danger in the case of times merely of human appointment! In all things, we are apt to follow habit and precedent, and not

the leadings of the Spirit of God. The moment a practice becomes habitual and fashionable, it loses the freshness and spontaneity which are ever the characteristics of a work of God.

Then, too, while it is right to pray for rulers and governors, and for the Church and its work, to mix these two, and to pray that nations as such may become Christianized, is only to repeat the old error of looking for a millennium without Christ,—to degrade the Church from a heavenly bride to an earthly nation. It is a re-assertion that the "course of this world" is upward and not downward. Alas! that this is the common faith of the professing church, is but too evident.

What a sad denial of the *need* of prayer for unity is the existence of the various sects, and members of these coming together to pray "that they may be one," without apparently the slightest exercise of conscience as to how displeasing to God their own position is. Surely it is well for all who pray for unity to remember the words of the Psalmist—"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me," and of the apostle, who in asking the prayers of the saints, assures them of a good conscience on his part, "in all things willing to live honestly." How can prayers for unity be intelligently earnest and sincere, when those who make them continue to hold and practice that which means disunion? Here, as in all things, there must be truth if we would not mock God, and a readiness to act for Him and so remove the hindrances which prevent His answering our prayers. What refreshing, what power, what a testimony, would result from a spirit of true prayer amongst God's people, manifesting itself in obedience to His word! May He awake His people to these things!

REVISION OF THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.

WITH what is *merely* denominational, we would feel that we had very little, if any thing, to do. But when events occur which involve the truth of God, or show either an awakening of conscience among His people or the reverse, it is certainly well to see what we can learn from them. For some time past there has been considerable agitation among Presbyterians as to making certain changes in their Confession of Faith. The object is, to secure changes such as the removal of objectionable statements in the chapter on Election, and to bring out more clearly the precious truth of God's love. There have been extremists, on the one hand, who would make sweeping alterations, not having much sympathy with the system of doctrine contained in the book, while on the other there are many, and those representing the most conservative element in the church, who deprecate making any changes at all. The general sentiment, however, is, that certain changes of the character above indicated should be made, and a committee of the General Assembly is now at work to this end.

One might well ask, Why should there be any such creed at all? At best, if strictly correct in doctrine, it usurps a place which should be occupied only by the inspired Word of God, thereby making the claim, practically if not verbally, of Rome—that the church is the teacher of doctrine, which is stated too obscurely in Scripture to be understood. Premising this, which would do away with all necessity for revision, we would notice here two elements at work,—one which would do away with precious truth, and the other desirous of stating that truth more clearly. These discussions necessitate examination of Scripture; and so far, we can be thankful, for God's Word studied for light always gives it. It may

be that some will be led to see the unscripturalness of creeds from this very necessity for revision. Soon saints will see, in the light of the judgment-seat of Christ, that this was not required of them, and that instead of being helps, creeds are but barriers to keep God's people apart. The practical lesson for those who see this now is to show by their own skillful use of the *Word itself* how needless any creed would be. Alas! wide-spread ignorance of Scripture prevails. Would that it might be remedied!

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 1.—“I have a difficulty in understanding 2 Thess. ii. 3, 7, seeing the general teaching that the saints being caught away and the Holy Spirit gone with them, so the restraint being off, the mystery of iniquity would have full course, headed by the man of sin. But in *Help and Food*, April, 1889, in an article, ‘Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven,’ there was a different application of the third verse. In speaking of the separation (p. 91), we are told to look a little more closely at the manner of it. Gather together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them. It is a separation of tares, so as to leave the wheat distinct for the ingathering. On the 93rd page, we are told to distinguish the tares from the mere formalist and unfruitful professor of the truth, and yet the formalist will not escape, etc. Here is a simple question of good wheat for the granary or tares for the burning. Nothing else is in the field at all, all seem to have taken sides. And as a warrant for such an interpretation we are pointed to the second epistle to the Thessalonians.—95th page, ‘This passage exhibits the man of sin as the distinct head and leader of the latter-day apostasy. The coming of the Wicked one is declared to be with terrible power of delusion, which will carry away captive the masses of unconverted among professing Christians, until none of that middle class remain.’ How are we to understand it? Does the delusion precede (to such a degree) the appearing of the Wicked one as to cause the separation? or does it mean that the appearing of the Wicked one causes it? The latter is the way I thought the writer meant it until reading November *Help and Food*,

where it speaks of the apostasy (p. 285) having its beginning under the fifth trumpet. This, then, does not harmonize with the thought in April number, 1889, that the unconverted among professing Christians will be carried away by the coming of the Wicked one, until only two classes remain in the field, because we know we shall be home in glory before the fifth trumpet sounds.

"But apart from all this, it seemed strange to me why the apostle should tell those Christians that day would not come until the falling away came first, if no Christians would be here when the falling away came, which, according to the general teaching, will be the case."

A. DOYLE.

Bedford, N. S.

Ans.—There is often a difficulty in the turning a parable (if I may so express it,) into direct prophecy, as the aim of the parable is rather to give moral principles for practical application, than the order of events. The statement in the paper on the "Mysteries" is more guarded than our correspondent has understood it to be. The passage reads, "All seem to have taken sides, before the solemn close of the time of harvest, either manifestly for Christ, or as manifestly against Him." It is not said that this is so before the wheat is taken away. The tares are bound in bundles before that, but *how* the paper refuses to say. The binding in bundles is angelic action, not apostasy, and tares are not necessarily open apostates. They are such as have received some satanic error, but have not necessarily openly rejected Christ, (which is *the* apostasy), though naturally on the road to that.

I do not believe *the* apostasy can come while the Spirit of God is here. Signs of its being at hand are all around us now, but it is not *come*; and I see not why the apostle should not point out to Christians that the day of the Lord had not come because the apostasy had not, though we shall not be here when it does come.

I quote a passage from the paper in question, which will show fully the view intended to be given there:—

"Thus terribly shall the history of Christendom close. *The true saints once taken out of it*, the door of grace will be closed forever on those who have rejected grace. *They will be given over to become, as they speedily will become*, from being unbelievers of the truth, believers of a lie."

F. W. G.

THE EARLY AND THE LATTER RAIN.

THE Israelite was entirely dependent for the fruit of the earth upon the rain. That which marked the superiority of his land (or, rather, God's land) over the land of Egypt was that, while the latter had its river, and water-courses, yearly overflowing and bringing fruitfulness, his land was watered with the rain of heaven, and so also was one where water sprung from hillside and valley. "For the land whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs: but the land whither ye go in to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year, even unto the end of the year." (Deut. xi. 10-12.) But from this very fact, while thus blessed with unsurpassed fertility when there was abundance of rain, if that was withheld, famine was the inevitable result. Blessed position for them, had they been but faithful to Him who never could disappoint those who looked to Him! We know that temporal prosperity was for Israel the sure index of their spiritual condition, hence as soon as unfaithfulness and sin on their part reached a climax, rain failed, and barrenness and poverty resulted. This was foretold while yet they were in the wilderness: "If thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God . . . thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust." (Deut. xxviii. 15, 23, 24.) It was alluded to in Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple: "When heaven is shut up, and there is no

rain because they have sinned against Thee." (1 Kings viii. 35.) It was illustrated in the history of Ahab. It was used as an argument by the prophets in leading Israel to repentance: "Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the Lord our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: . . . Your iniquities have turned away these things." (Jer. v. 24, 25.) Sometimes, the more plainly to mark His dealings, He caused it to rain in one part of the land and not in another: "And I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: . . . Yet have ye not returned unto Me, saith the Lord." (Amos iv. 7, 8.) The rain was needed at and soon after sowing time to cause the seed to sprout and grow—this was the early rain: it was also needed toward the close of the season, to bring to maturity what had progressed so far. If the early rain were withheld, there could be no sowing; if the latter rain failed, there could be no reaping.

Passing from the literal to that of which it was the type, we find Israel's history, both past and future, an illustration of God's dealings, as based upon their state. Beginning with the deliverance from Egypt, and planting in the land (which, in the mind of God, were consecutive events), we have what might be called "the early rain"—"the love of thine espousals. . . . Israel was holiness unto the Lord." (Jer. ii. 2.) Under Samuel, David, Jehoshaphat, and other faithful ones, we have more showers of refreshing connected with this period of their history. A long period of spiritual death succeeds, until again God brings near a cloud, heavier, fuller of rain than any before; what would, in fact, have been (and will yet be) a cloud of the latter rain. The Lord Jesus Himself was presented to them, ready to pour forth all the rich blessings which are yet in reserve. The time of fruit was not to be yet, and rejecting Him they have been left in

drought ever since, and will be until they repent, and having their sins blotted out, times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. Meanwhile the vineyard, so long unfruitful, has been thrown open for the boar of the forest to waste (Isa. v.) But what was in hardness refused, God, whose gifts and calling are without repentance, has yet in reserve for them. "He shall send Jesus which before was preached unto you." He, their true King, whose favor is as a cloud of the latter rain, shall come. He shall come as rain upon the mown grass, and poor Israel shall at last blossom and bud and fill the face of the earth with fruit. How beautiful it is to see all nature rejoicing, the trees of the field clapping their hands, the desert blossoming as the rose, shadows of that blooming forth and fruit-bearing of what will indeed be then God's "pleasant plant"! The nation at last, as a "watered garden," will say to Him, who long and often came seeking fruit in vain, "Let my Beloved come into His garden, and eat His pleasant fruits." (Song iv. 16.)

It is well, however, to mark the stages of this blessing. "In those days, and at that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward." (Jer. l. 4, 5.) "I will pour upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, . . . every family apart, and their wives apart." (Zech. xii. 10, 12.) When Israel repents, the latter rain will come; nay, their very repentance is, as it were, the first droppings of that mighty shower which bring all past flowers of promise to fruit of accomplishment. "Thou visitest

the earth and waterest it: Thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God which is full of water: Thou preparest them corn, when Thou hast so provided for it. Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: Thou settlest the furrows thereof: Thou makest it soft with showers: Thou blessest the springing thereof. . . . The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing." (Ps. lxxv. 9-13; Isa. lxii. 4, 5; Hos. ii. 19-22.)

But deeply interesting and delightful as the consideration of all this is, have we not truth here which will apply to the Church of God? Earthly things are types of heavenly, and "principles remain unchanged. Beginning at Pentecost, we have the early rain—that shower which fell on dry soil and quickened dead souls, by the incorruptible seed of the Word of God, into life. How fresh and bright all was at the first! Neither property, as in the case of Barnabas, and many others, nor life itself, as with Stephen, could be withheld. But in a little while it had to be written of some, "I am afraid of you," of others, "Thou hast left thy first love." The subsequent history of the church has been but a repetition of Israel's departure from God, with resulting barrenness, and darkness deepening on, till God in mercy granted some measure of recovery. But it may be asked, Does not the Spirit *dwell* in the Church; do we have to wait "till the Spirit be poured out upon us from on high?" Surely not; yet where self-will and unbelief hinder and quench the Spirit, the *effect* is much the same as though He were not present. So we see to-day a dryness, not merely in the professing church, but even among God's own people. Then the longing question rises in the hearts of those who "sigh and cry," Is there not something for the Church to answer to the latter rain in Israel? True, our coming Lord will forever banish all drought;

but *ere* He comes, is there nothing of a general awakening amongst the saints of God—a bringing to maturity of some, at least, of that promise of fruit there was at the beginning? We read that after the midnight cry had gone forth, *all* those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. May there not be something corresponding to this? The cry has gone forth, but has there been such a general response as we might be led to expect? We would not dictate to our ever blessed God, but we would learn from all His ways of love not to limit Him. Is there to be no going forth of the gospel in greater power and blessing, to gather in many precious souls ere the day of grace ends? We may not answer definitely, but at least for us as for Israel the path is plain,—repentance, prayer, returning to the Lord, putting off all ornaments (all boasting in attainment) to see what He will do with us.

Coming nearer home is the wondrous testimony raised up in these last days, once characterized by faith, love, and hope, singleness of eye, devotedness of heart, loyalty to the Person of our ever blessed Lord—is this light to flicker out, quenched by pride, strife, worldliness? Enough has occurred, and is occurring, to make one tremble; on the one hand assumption, and a high hand, dangerously resembling Diotrephes, in 3 John; on the other, looseness and indifference to Christ's person and honor, which needs to heed the stimulating word in 2 John. What is to become of the testimony? Is it any sign of a spiritual mind to quietly fold our hands and say, "God never restores a ruined testimony?" True, perhaps, but may He not strengthen and freshen the things that remain, and recover very many of His scattered sheep? What limit is there here, but that which coldness and unbelief imposes? If there is straitness, we know where it is. If the heart of an apostle was enlarged unto his

brethren, what shall we say of His heart who gave His own blessed Son?

To come nearer home still: to each one individually, there was a time when Christ was the chiefest among ten thousand, perhaps He is less so now. Once, God's Word was rejoiced in as when one findeth great spoil; now, perhaps, a hasty occasional glance, in a perfunctory way, is all that is given to it. Once, prayer, alone and in fellowship with others, was the "vital breath and native air." God was very near, unseen things were very real. Now, perhaps, all this is changed. Something has turned the heart from Christ, and oh! what leanness! It will not do to put off these things from us with a general acknowledgment that we all need a closer walk with God. We need to ask ourselves if this is true of us, and if so, does God intend that we should continue in such a state till death takes us to Christ, or He comes for us. Surely there is not a line of scripture to warrant such conclusion. Oh! beloved brethren! our God would have us each and all to taste and drink more deeply from the eternal fullness of that well which is even now within us. Let there be hearty confession, true lowliness, a rending of the heart—a cry to God, and would not that of itself be the beginning of a season of blessing to our own souls, overflowing into other souls, until, who knows where the blessed result would end? Shall we say of these things as they did of Ezekiel's message, "Doth he not speak parables?" or shall we bow our knees with our hearts in a whole-hearted prayer, "O Lord, revive Thy work"?

AMALEK fell upon the feeblest of Israel—the laggards in the rear. Those who are pressing forward in all the energy of faith and love are not troubled with "fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." Are we lagging? The next thing will be some failure—some sin. The *heart* first faints before the steps falter. Let us press toward the front.

GRACE MULTIPLIED.

I.

“**P**ETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: *Grace* unto you, and peace, be multiplied.” (1 Pet. i. 1, 2.)

I call particular attention to the expression “Grace unto you . . . be multiplied, which may be divided into three parts—“grace,” “unto you,” and “be multiplied.”

We have in this first epistle of Peter a sevenfold “multiplication” of “grace unto us;” and seven, as we know, is significant of completeness—a measure filled full, and in this sevenfold multiplication of grace I think we shall find that each number of the series is significant, or is an index, of the special grace involved in it.

The number 1 manifestly belongs to God as Sovereign, the Almighty. “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord.” (Deut. vi. 4.) “One Lord, and His name one.” (Zech. xiv. 9.) This sovereign Ruler is acting in grace, not now in judgment, or even on the principle of law, but in *grace*,—His throne is a throne of grace (Heb. iv. 16). This grace has a special application to the “strangers” addressed in our epistle: it is “unto” them. They are the specific objects of this grace, or favor. It is the character of their relation to this omnipotent One, they are in His favor. They may not have the favor of any of earth’s potentates, since they are “strangers” in it, but they are in the favor of the living God. This grace is what we are to multiply—our *multiplieand*, so to speak.

II.

"Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you." (*vv.* 9, 10.)

This is clearly number 2—the number of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Second Person of the Trinity, who left His throne in heaven's highest glory, and came down into a world of sinners, linked up some of those poor sinners with Himself, and went back to the bright glory He had left, not taking them with Him, but leaving them in the scene of sin and suffering,—not removing the furnace, or bringing temporal deliverances, but allowing the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than usual, and affording them grace so that they could pass through it unscathed, and even turn it to account to bring glory to Him, as, *e.g.*, Acts xvi. 24–34.

This is grace number 2, beloved. And how wonderful, is it not? And how well He who stamps it with His character knows how and when to minister it. No marvel if the prophets of old "inquired and searched diligently" as to it, and even if "the angels desire to look into" it. May *we* be more diligent in *our* search into such wondrous grace. Number 2 is the number of the book of Exodus, the book of deliverance, and deliverance is clearly stamped upon this our second multiplication of grace.

III.

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the *grace* that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (*v.* 13.) The number 3 is the number in which God was fully revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It also denotes fullness, perfection, reality.

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear (be manifested), then shall ye also appear (be manifested) with Him in glory." (Col. iii. 4.) What wondrous grace will be brought unto us then, beloved! God will be fully displayed and owned *as* God, and we shall be fully displayed and owned as His sons in glorified bodies. We see it not yet, it is true; but well may we "hope" and "patiently wait for it." (Rom. viii. 25.) Surely the number 3 is rich in meaning here, speaking to us of the "reality," "fullness," and "manifestation" awaiting the sons of God (*cf.* Rom. viii. 19).

IV.

"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the *grace* of life; that your prayers be not hindered." (Chap. iii. 7.)

The number 4 is almost interpreted for us in the above verse. The *fourth* book of Moses—Numbers—speaks of practical walk through the wilderness (this world), and of the poor earthen vessel, which indeed, if He do not fill, can only manifest its weakness in sin and failure.

How beautiful and how precious the grace which stoops to serve us here in our poor human associations, while walking through this valley of weeping! And shall we not do well to remember, brethren, that it is not unto the *weak* vessel we are to give honor, but unto the *weaker*, thus reminded that we ourselves are the weak?

V.

"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold *grace* of God." (Chap. iv. 10.)

The number 5 denotes responsibility,—stewardship. It is man's number as a responsible human being. The five digits on each hand and foot, and the five senses with

which he is put into communication with the scene around him, show this. The fifth book of Moses,—Deuteronomy—deals largely with responsibility.

The human hand is a wonderful thing; the very rocks become plastic under it, the wilderness is made to blossom by it, the lightning is caught and harnessed to man's chariot-wheels, we may truly say, by it. Let us examine it more closely, and see if it will not tell us, not only that we *are* stewards, but how we may be "*good stewards.*"

It has five digits, composed of a 4 + 1. The 4 in the presence of and yielding to the 1. Only thus is work performed really. Four is the symbol of weakness—of the earthen vessel. One is the number of God, the almighty One; so in the human hand we have a living, practical illustration of weakness yielding to strength—impotence controlled by Omnipotence. *Herein, beloved, is the secret of successful stewardship.*

So we are stewards, stewards of the various grace of God. We have had a fourfold multiplication of grace put into our hands, and now we must "trade" (Matt. xxv. 16). When Moses was asked "What is that in thine hand?" he replied, "A rod." (Ex. iv. 2.) But in our hands we have a fourfold (universal) application of the grace of God.

Our stock-in-trade is just our circumstances—whether sickness or health, poverty or wealth, joy or sorrow—*every thing*, we are entitled to take from the blessed hand of Him who loves us (*cf.* 1 Cor. iii. 21).

Taking, in this way, every burden from Him, whose love could withhold nothing, whose wisdom could omit nothing, and whose power would stop short of nothing which would be for our good, we should realize that it was *His* burden, and should find it "light." (Matt. xi. 30.) What burden could be aught but light if He imposed it? The *care* of it, however, we must leave with Him, as He

well knows we could not carry that, so He thus yokes Himself with us—He takes His part of every burden, we take the thing itself as put upon our shoulders by the hand of infinite love, as that in which we are to display His power; he takes the care of it (1 Pet. v. 7). What a sweet and blessed “yoke”! Surely it cannot but be “easy”! Thus “yoked” and thus “burdened,” we are ready to trade with the all-various grace intrusted to us; and if the human hand tells us plainly that we *are* stewards, it tells us no less plainly how we may be “*good*” stewards of the various grace of God.” Impotency bows implicitly to Omnipotence,—the 4 yields to the 1. And if we stoop, we find ourselves stooping to One who has, in serving us, stooped lower than we ever can.

May we value the grace that has been put into our hands, “inquire and search diligently” into it, and be like the angels who “desire to look into” it.

As we succeed in our stewardship, the mighty, secret power by which we are furnished and sustained, is made manifest, and God is glorified. (Read *vv.* 11–19 of chap. iv.)

VI.

“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth *grace* to the humble.” (Chap. v. 5.)

The number 6 speaks of God’s limit upon man’s will and work. “*Six* days shalt thou labor.” (Ex. xx. 9). If 6 be divided by 2 (the enemy’s number), we have 3 (God displayed); so, as God’s hand is submitted to, good is brought out of evil—“the eater brings forth meat.” (Ju. xiv. 14). How wonderful that God can make even this number 6 yield grace,—man’s number, which when fully developed, produces 666, the number of the willful one, the man of sin! (Rev. xiii. 18.)

VII.

"But the God of all *grace*, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." (Chap. v. 10.)

The number 7 speaks of a measure filled full, and how appropriately "the God of all grace" comes in here to fill it! indeed, who but He *could* fill it? If our "multiplicand" was the *grace* of God, our multiplication ends with the *God* of *grace* Himself; and this is perfect—the circle is complete.

But still there is an—

VIII.

"By Sylvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true *grace* of God wherein ye stand." (v. 12.)

This is like the eighth day, or like the octave in music, and carries us back to what we have been going over. In our number 1 we could say, "This is the true grace of God wherein ye stand;" and so in number 2, number 3, and so on.

It will be seen that the sevenfold series we have been looking at is a $3 + 4$. The first three multiplications of grace presenting what is objective—*outside* of us, ending with manifestation in glory with the Lord Jesus Christ. This is perfect in itself: there is no going any higher. We can go no farther.

The next is a series of 4, and presents what is *subjective*, grace *in us*,—*i. e.*, in the earthen vessel (4).

How marvelous is the grace of our God! He stooped to serve us at the cross, He will stoop to serve us again in the glory, and day by day, and day and night, He stoops to serve us, making each circumstance subserve His glory and our blessing.

May we be apt scholars in this divine arithmetic, and not merely hearers of the Word, but doers thereof, that God may in all things be glorified through Jesus Christ our Lord.

J. B. J.

SEVEN TIMES AND AN EIGHTH TIME.

(Some Suggestions.)

IF the very frame-work of Scripture, and the relationship of its parts to one another, is based upon the meaning of numbers, as now taught and increasingly evident, it will be interesting and profitable to search and find examples and illustrations of this. It will be to the glory of God that we should in this fresh development be impressed with His handiwork as well as instructed and sanctified by the truth so illustrated. But the suggestions are made as such, and therefore open to objections and corrections, but trusting they will commend themselves as scripturally based, and simple.

Attention is called to three examples. In Matthew (omitting the temptation), we find the Lord is on the mount seven times before the cross, and the eighth time after He rises from the dead.

In Genesis, God covenants with Abraham seven times; and then "after these things," when He offers up Isaac, and receives him in a figure from the dead, the covenant is renewed an eighth time.

And in Joseph's history, typical of Christ dealing with Israel, he communicates in that character with his brethren seven times; and then, when Jacob has passed from the scene, an eighth time.

I refer first in detail briefly to this latter scripture.

Joseph tells his brethren (Gen. xxxvii. 6) his dream about their sheaves making obeisance to his.

In his second dream he tells them how the sun and moon and eleven stars made obeisance to him; and they hated him. Is not this the double witness the Lord spoke of to Nicodemus—"If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?" The Old and the New Testament give the complete witness of God to convict the unbeliever.

Heavenly glory as well as earthly were typically predicted.

Thirdly, Joseph sent to them in love by the father, and rejected and cast into the pit, is raised to the right hand of power, unknown to these despisers of grace.

The next three communications are by the brethren being compelled to *go to Joseph*. Twice they go down to Egypt, and a third time get outside the city and have to turn back, the cup being found in Benjamin's sack, when, after deep and affecting exercises on their part (Gen. xliv. 18—Judah's prayer) Joseph proclaims himself.

Three times (as three days), throughout Scripture, sets forth complete heart-searching experience, and deliverance at the close, by God who raises the dead. (Abraham; Esther iv. 16; Paul; waters of Marah; and many other examples of three days and three times.) *So in the case before us.* Three times they denied and rejected him; three times they have to come to him, and the third time pass through distress (fearing the effect upon their father of the loss of Benjamin as well as Joseph) similar to Joseph's and their father's when Joseph was rejected. Their third was marked by complete hatred and rejection; Joseph's third by complete mercy and tender welcome.

But we have only reached a sixth, not a seventh, communication. It is short of completeness, for Jacob has not yet been brought—has not yet been persuaded that the rejected Joseph lives. All this tells us beforehand,

in a wonderful way, how tender and patient the Lord will be in His dealing with Israel at last, to recall them to repentance, and how slow of heart they will be to believe. A remnant will become missionaries to the rest. All is *incomplete* until Israel as a whole (all Israel) shall be restored. The powers of the whole world will be at their service to help them in returning to the land of their fathers.

All this is set forth in the seventh communication (Gen. xlvii.).

"And *Israel* took his journey, with all that he had." Not now "Jacob." He is called "Jacob" previously in this narrative—halting and doubting and fearing; but now "*Israel* took his journey." A prince once more—power with God and with man—he comes to Beersheba, the well of the oath, where Israel's (Abraham's) supremacy over the Gentiles (Gen. xxi. 31) was shown in the Philistines making suit to Abraham, and where a centre of worship was established in the name of Jehovah as the everlasting God. And God spoke to him in a vision of the night, and called him "Jacob"—He calls him "Jacob," *but at Beersheba*, which assures of final and everlasting blessing and supremacy. He is not to fear to go down into Egypt. From Beersheba, though only Jacobs, we can face the world, leaving all behind, sure as to the end. "And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father to Goshen (Gen. xlv. 29), and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while." All is now *complete*. And now Israel, like Simeon in Luke, says to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive." The nation at large will at last use the language of Simeon—"Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."

It is truly a *seven*—nothing more to be desired: the

heart is full, and finally at rest. God has tenderly and patiently led up to a desired end. Ararat has been reached: the ark rests, and the world is to be possessed and governed in peace, and filled with blessing from the presence and glory of Christ. The once rebellious and hateful are now reconciled to the One long before rejected, but who all through this long and terrible experience had never ceased to love them and to deal on their behalf, to accomplish His purpose. All Pharaoh's resources are now at the service of Jacob and his sons, being the brethren of Joseph.

"Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." (Isa. lx. i.) "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising . . . thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side." "All they from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and incense. and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord . . . and I will glorify the house of My glory . . . Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of Jehovah thy God, and to the holy One of *Israel*, because He hath glorified thee. . . . I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations . . . I, the Lord, am thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer the Mighty One of Jacob . . . The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory . . . the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. . . . They shall inherit the land forever."

"And Joseph placed his father and his brethren (Gen. xlvii. 11) and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, *in the best of the land*, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded."

Thus complete as a history and as a type is the portion before us. But there remains an eighth communication,

"And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, 'Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him.' And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, 'Thy father did command before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father.' And Joseph wept when they spake unto him. . . . And Joseph said unto them, 'Fear not: . . . as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, *to save much people alive.* . . .' And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them."

In what has already been before us we have had presented the completeness of God's dealings with Israel to restore them—that general thought; but now, in this *eighth*, we have made prominent Christ in resurrection recognized, and to whom they are reconciled. Jacob having *passed away*, they were brought face to face with Joseph,—that is, the remnant of Israel, in the last days, realizing the utter failure of the nation, and that the scattering of the nation had written death upon all natural hopes, their heart is turned to Christ, to find in Him, exalted and glorified, not an avenging Judge, but a Shepherd and Saviour and Friend.

Nothing can hinder the accomplishment of His will; and the long night of Israel's sorrow, sure to end in His presence in everlasting joy, lights up the whole world's history with a glow of deepening interest. If He so deals with Israel, much more will He not forsake His Church. The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. He will present it to Himself, in heavenly glory, a

glorious Church, with no blemish to remind of the shame and sorrow of the past. E. S. L.

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART III.—Continued.

THE TRINITY OF EVIL, AND THE MANIFESTATION OF
THE WICKED ONE.

*Commencing Fulfillment of the First Promise [to the
Woman's Seed]. (Chap. xi. 19–xii.)—Continued.*

THE dragon is cast out: the war in that respect is over; heaven is free. But he is not yet cast into hell, nor even into the bottomless pit, but to the earth; and thus the earth's great trouble-time ensues. Satan comes down with great wrath, because he knows that he has but a short time. How terrible a thing is sin! How amazing that a full, clear view of what is before him should only inspire this fallen being with fresh energy of hate to that which must all recoil upon himself, and add intensity of torment to eternal doom! Even so is every act of sin as it were a suicide; and he who committeth it is the slave of sin (Jno. viii. 34).

A great voice in heaven celebrates the triumph there. "Now is come the salvation and power and kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accused them before our God day and night." The salvation spoken of here is not, apparently, as some think, the salvation of the body; for it is explained directly as deliverance of some who are called "our brethren" from the accusation of Satan. The voice seems, therefore, that of the glorified

saints, and the "brethren" of whom they speak, the saints on earth, who had indeed by individual faithfulness overcome in the past those accusations which are now forever ended. Satan's antipriestly power, as another has remarked, is at an end.

Yet he may, and does, after this, exercise imperial power, and stir up the most violent persecution of the people of God, and these still may be called not to love their lives unto death. It is not here, then, that his power ceases: they have conflict still, but not with "principalities and powers in *heavenly* places." (Eph. vi. 12.) Heaven is quiet and calm above them, if around is still the noise of the battle. And how great is the mercy that thus provides for them during those three and a half years of unequalled tribulation still to come! Is not this worthy of God that, just at the time when Satan's rage is greatest, and arming the world-power against His people, the sanctuary of the soul is never invaded by him: the fiery darts of the wicked one cease; he is no more "prince of the power of the air," but restricted to the earth simply, to work through the passions of men, which he can inflame against them.

Accordingly to this he gives himself with double energy: "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man-child." But God interferes: "And there were given unto the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the face of the serpent."

The words recall plainly the deliverance from Egypt. Pharaoh king of Egypt is called thus by the prophet, "the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers," (Ezek. xxix. 3,) and is himself the concentration of the malice of the world-power; while God says to delivered

Israel at Sinai, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians; and how I bare you on eagle's wings, and brought you to Myself." (Ex. xix. 4.) The reference here seems definitely to this: it is not, as in the common version, "a" great eagle, indefinitely, but "*the*" great eagle,—the griffon, perhaps, than which no bird has a more powerful or masterly flight. Clearly it is divine power that is referred to in these words: in the deliverance out of Egypt there was jealous exclusion of all power beside. Israel was to be taught the grace and might of a Saviour-God. And so in the end again it will be when He repeats, only in a grander way, the marvels of that old deliverance, and "allures" the heart of the nation to Himself.

Miracle may well come in again for them, and it may be that the wilderness literally will once more provide shelter and nourishment for them. Figure and fact may here agree together, and so it often is; the terms even seem to imply the literal desert here, just because it is evidently a place of shelter that divine love provides, and sustenance there; and what more natural than that the desert, by which the land of Israel is half encompassed, should be used for this?

That which follows seems to be imagery borrowed from the desert also. Like the streams of Antilibanus, many a river is swallowed up in the sand, as that is which is now poured out of the dragon's mouth. If it be an army that is pictured, the wilderness is no less capable of the absorption of a nation's strength. The river being cast out of his mouth would seem to show that it is by the power of his persuasion that men are incited to this overflow of enmity against the people of God, which is so completely foiled that the baffled adversary gives up further effort in this direction, and the objects of his pursuit are after this left absolutely unassailed.

But those who so escape, while thus securing the

existence of the nation—and therefore identified with the woman herself,—are not the whole number of those who in it are converted to God; and "the remnant of her seed" become now the object of his furious assault. These are indeed those, as it would seem, with whom is the testimony of Jesus, which is, we are assured, "the spirit of prophecy." (Chap. xix. 10.) These are they, perhaps, who amid these times of trouble go forth, as from age to age the energy of the Spirit has incited men to go forth, taking their lives in their hand that they might bring the word of God before His creatures, and who have been ever of necessity the special objects of satanic enmity. They are the new generation of those who as men of God have stood forth prominently for God upon the earth, and have taken from men on the one hand their reward in persecution, but from God on the other the sweet counterbalancing acknowledgment. It is of such the Lord says, "Blessed are ye when they shall reproach and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you." (Matt. v. 11, 12.)

Noticeable it is that it is in heaven still this new race of prophets find their reward. The two witnesses whom we have seen ascend to heaven in a cloud belong to this number; and those who in Daniel as turning many to righteousness, shine as the stars for ever and ever (Dan. xii. 3). Earth casts them out, and they are seen in our Lord's prophecy as brethren of the King, hungering and athirst, in strangership, naked and sick and in prison (Matt. xxv. 35, 36, 40). Heaven receives them in delight as those of whom the earth was not worthy,—a gleanings after harvest, as it were, of wheat for God's granary,—a last sheaf of the resurrection of the saints, which the twentieth chapter of the book before us sees

added to the sitters upon the thrones, among the "blessed and holy" now complete. How well are they cared for who might seem left unsheltered to Satan's enmity! They have lost the earthly blessing, they have gained the heavenly; their light has been quenched for a time, to shine in a higher sphere forever. Blessed be God!

We may follow, then, the new development of satanic enmity without fear. We shall gain from considering it. Their enemy and ours is one and the same: it is Satan, the old serpent, the ancient homicide, and we must not be "ignorant of his devices." His destiny is to be overcome, and that by the feeblest saint against whom he seems for the present to succeed so easily.

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

A THREEFOLD CORD.

"Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same."
(Heb. ii. 14.)

IF Satan has turned the truth of God into a lie, that is no reason why we should neglect or overlook any thing that is really God's: especially when that truth is concerning the blessed Son of God. Blasphemies have been taught regarding His humanity in more ways than one; some asserting that His nature was subject to sin and decay and death; others, that He was man from all eternity. Shocking as all this is to the worshiper of Jesus, we must not be deterred from dwelling with adoring wonder on "God manifest in the flesh." "The Word was made flesh." In the manger at Bethlehem, in the carpenter-shop at Nazareth, weary at the well, asleep in the storm, agonizing in the garden, we see not only that eternal life which was with the Father, but which was

manifest to us through the vail of a real though perfect humanity. He whose delights were with the sons of men would be made like unto His brethren. Yet the carefulness of the Spirit of God in shielding His holy person from the faintest suspicion of taint, is seen in the use of the word "took part," in the passage quoted at the beginning. The children "had communion in" flesh and blood—they were in it of necessity. He voluntarily, as One from without, "took part,"—a different word. Still He was a man,—a perfect man; One fitted to sympathize with His people. He is not ashamed to call us brethren. But though this is the first strand in the threefold cord of itself it was entirely insufficient. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and *die*, it abideth alone." The body which was prepared for Him was a body in which to die. "He took part of flesh and blood that, through *death* He might destroy him that had the power of death." All thought of men being united with Him in His incarnation,—of their being elevated to His level by that, or any thing of the kind, is therefore vain. So His death is the second strand in that cord of love. He who knew no sin, was made sin for us. Those whom He came to save were *dead*, so He takes His place *there*; they dead *in* sins, He dead *for* sins. As the Samaritan came where the wounded man was, so our blessed Lord came where we were—at a distance from God. But oh! how His death has annihilated all distance! how it has slain all enmity! That love which sought us thus, grasped us to Himself; and the third strand, His resurrection, is the full manifestation of the power of that cord which binds us fast, held to His bosom, by One who will never loose His hold. Blessed be His precious name!

As has been frequently noticed, it is after His resurrection that He calls us "brethren." "Go to My brethren." (John xx.) "I will declare Thy name unto My brethren."

(Heb. ii.) The gift of the Spirit, uniting us to Him, is God's seal upon the perfectness and strength of this three-fold cord. Flowing from such relationship is our heavenly position, our heavenly destiny. As the power of this cord is felt, it will draw our hearts out of the world as not belonging to it, up to heaven where He is. Let us have our minds fixed on Him, to "know the power of His resurrection."

"Drawn by such cords, we'll onward move,
Till round the throne we meet,
And, captives in the chains of love,
Embrace our Saviour's feet."

"HE WAS CRUCIFIED THROUGH WEAKNESS."

WEAKNESS is always touching. Cold indeed were our hearts, could they contemplate unmoved Him who was crucified through weakness. Our selfishness might lead us to dwell rather upon the benefits we receive through His death,—these surely we never can nor should forget,—but love will remember that He said, "Could ye not watch with Me one hour?" that He seemed to ask for sympathy when He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." We know He wishes us now to look back and see not merely *what* He suffered and secured for us, but *how* He passed through it.

Isaac was bound by his father and laid upon the altar. There is no struggle, as though he were unwilling, but there is the suggestion in the cords, of strength all gone, as our Lord says, "He weakened My strength in the way."

Joseph, when he came on his mission of love, was bound by his brethren. In their repentance they say, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we

saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us and we would not hear." That anguish was but the type of the deeper anguish of Him who said, in view of being in the hands of enemies, "Reproach hath broken My heart; . . . and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none." As His enemies surround Him, divine power flashes forth, they fall to the ground, but it is at once succeeded by that weakness of submission in which He yields Himself into their hands. So all the way through that dark scene, at the priest's palace, in the judgment-hall, it is in weakness we see Him. "He is led as a lamb to the slaughter." The derision of the crowd before Him, and of the thieves beside Him, fail to bring out the strength we know is there. It is the perfection of weakness. Death comes, the culmination of all weakness. He lies in the loving hands of Joseph and others without a throb or motion in answer to their loving ministrations. It is the weakness of death.

Can the soul fail to worship and adore, as we see Him thus crucified through weakness? We may not say much here, but how holy, how solemn is the thought! The Son of God lies here in the weakness of death. We well know why. The strong man held us as his goods. This One frees us, but only, though stronger than he, by becoming weak. As we see that tomb, and the One who lay there, can we fail to say, "Thou art worthy, for Thou wast slain"? and as we think of that "wondrous cross," can we fail to say and *mean*, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ"?

"By weakness and defeat
He won the mead and crown,
Trod all our foes beneath His feet
By being trodden down."

Only at Thy bidding, Lord;
 Joyful to obey Thy word.
 Only thus can we fulfill

All Thy will.

H. McD.

FRAGMENTS.

MAN's hatred crowned Jesus with thorns, in mockery of His kingship. It had nothing to give the Lord of glory, the Maker of earth, but the fruits of the curse which sin had brought here. Man's love binds that blessed head in a napkin, as Jesus was to be laid away in the rich man's tomb. It spoke of love and care and reverence, but also of utter helplessness and hopelessness—the laying away of One whom they were never to see again—here at least. "We trusted that it had been He who would have redeemed Israel." This love, human and mistaken as it was, was marked by the Lord. The napkin lies by itself.

God has crowned Him with glory and honor. He has given Him "beauty for ashes." He wears now what neither human hatred nor love put upon His head, but what divine glory has put there. "We see Jesus, . . . crowned with glory and honor."

THE VOICE BEHIND US AND THE OBJECT BEFORE US.—We have a calling on high of God in Christ Jesus. That is the object before us. No matter what the attainment in knowledge or grace, we press toward the mark. Nothing short of resurrection and a place with Christ where He is will satisfy God's purpose for us. Surely, with such an object, our steps onward should be neither few nor feeble. But should the eye be turned from Christ, and earthly things absorb us, how soon the walk

becomes faulty, and we wander from the path ! It is then we hear a voice, not before us, but behind, recalling us to the forsaken path, and saying, "This is the way ; walk ye in it." In the path again (never out of it), the eye is directed to Christ on high. The voice is *behind* us when we turn to the right hand or to the left. We can only walk with God in *His* path. The moment we forsake that, we turn from Him, and find Him no longer alongside of us, but behind, recalling us to Himself. How great is His faithfulness, who thus not only has set a mark on high (and *what* a mark !), but who watches each step we take here, and provides for our restoration !

CHILD of the Eternal Father,
Bride of the Eternal Son,
Dwelling-place of God the Spirit,
Thus with Christ made ever one;
Dowered with joy beyond the angels,
Nearest to His throne,
They, the ministers attending
His beloved one:
Granted all my heart's desire,
All things made my own;
Feared by all the powers of evil,
Fearing God alone;
Walking with the Lord in glory
Through the courts divine,
Queen within the royal palace,
Christ forever mine;
Say, poor worldling, can it be,
That my heart should envy thee?

G. Tersteegen.

(From "*The Quiet in the Land.*")

JUST FOR TO-DAY.

JUST for to-day, my Saviour,—
 To-morrow is not mine;
 Just for to-day, I ask Thee
 For light, and help divine,
 To-morrow's care I must not bear,
 The future is all Thine.

To-day I bring my measure
 To Thee, that Thou might'st fill
 And bless it, Lord, and teach me
 To trust and to be still.
 To-day I'd be, my God, for Thee,
 And do Thy holy will.

Just for to-day, my Saviour,
 For e'er the morrow break
 Thy voice may call me unto Thee,
 And I shall no more walk
 The desert path with need of faith,
 But face to face shall talk.

And if I have enough, Lord,
 To-day, why should I grieve
 Because of what I have not,
 And may not need to have.
 Each day, I pray Thee, have Thy way,
 And I will trust Thy love.

H. McD.

THE COVENANTS WITH ABRAHAM NUMERICALLY CONSIDERED.

JUST seven times—no more, nor less,—God covenants with Abraham before Isaac is offered up; and the eighth and last time when Isaac is received in a figure from the dead. In this the meaning is plain—completeness of testimony, and all founded on resurrection. Let us now consider each covenant (or repetition of the

covenant) in detail, and see whether each one does not fall numerically into its place. Both the first and second are found in the following verses:—

I. Gen. xii. 1–7.—“Now the Lord had said unto Abram, ‘Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing, . . . and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.’ So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken unto him, . . . and into the land of Canaan they came. And Abram passed through the land . . . unto the plain of Moreh. . . .”

II. “And the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, ‘Unto thy seed will I give this land:’ and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.” I dwell but briefly on these. In the first, appropriately to the number one, we have the announcement in sovereign grace of what God will do; nothing even as to how He will do it. It is the one perfect thing presented to the mind,—God’s call and promise, and Abram’s perfect obedience. In the second covenant, “unto thy seed will I give this land,” we have the way of redemption announced, that is through the Seed, that is Christ (Gal. iii. 16). This answers to the second book of Moses,—Exodus—where redemption is the subject, and the Redeemer is the Second Person in the Trinity (Matt. xxviii. 19). The necessity of redemption (though the less prominent thought here) suggests the evil meaning in this number, —sin,—alienation from God,—and so not oneness, but division. But blessing is the subject here—blessing through the Son.

III. The third covenant is beautifully instructive. “And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, ‘Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the

place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward, for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever; and I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth. . . . Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it, for I will give it unto thee.' Then Abram removed his tent and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the Lord." Here we reach the plains of Mamre, the place where Abraham afterward (chap. xviii.) entertains the Lord (the three); that is, we have reached communion with God, as in Leviticus, the third book of Moses, we have the sanctuary and priesthood. And "walk through the land" and "seed as the dust" show liberty and fruitfulness on resurrection-ground, to which our number brings us.

It is when we see that *we are* alive unto God in Christ risen, that we know the liberty in which Christ has made us free, and have our fruit unto holiness (Rom. vi. 22). Communion, liberty, and holiness. None are free but those who have the living God as one to whom they live in holy fear. Otherwise it is bondage in some form.

On the third day Jonah was cast up upon the dry land of liberty. Before that, it was the depths where all was darkness and helplessness, and the cry for deliverance. It is inasmuch as Christ was raised from the dead that we can walk in newness of life, having been baptized unto His death. Either we walk in the way of death, or else in newness of life in Christ risen from the dead. Every Christian should say, The doctrine of Romans vi. has set me free. (Rom. vi. 17, 18.) *We are alive in Christ* in Romans vi. We are told to "walk in Him" in Colossians ii. In no other atmosphere can we breathe and live. "From the place where thou art" was the word to Abram. The standing being known, he could look to all

points of the compass. We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ in heavenly places (our Canaan). We belong to heaven, let us freely enjoy our possession, but it must be "from the place where thou art." Abram had overcome and turned away from what had overcome Lot; otherwise he would have had no "ear to hear," and no power to see the "vision of the Almighty." (Num. xxiv. 4.) God could not tell Lot to view the land. May our eyes not be closed to the heavenly vision.

IV. In chap. xv. we have the fourth renewal of the covenant. Now this portion is separated from the three foregoing covenants by the words "after these things," a phrase which does not occur again until just before the eighth and final covenant. We can therefore group the first three and the last four of the seven, and then the eighth. This being the case, there must be something that characterizes the four as a group in comparison with the three. It is this, prominently, whatever else there is, namely, that in the four, man's responsibility, or exercise of soul in the believer comes in; for such is the case from the fourth to the seventh, Abram or Sarah have a question or a doubt, whereas in the first three God alone speaks, man is silent. First, God declares His purpose, then accomplishes it in and through man in the seven as a whole. God manifest in the flesh is the great mystery of godliness, and all is based upon the *eighth*. He is "received up into glory." The Old Testament answers to the *four* and the New Testament to the *three*, the order reversed in the whole history of redemption; first, man is on the scene, then God; yet in the Old Testament, by itself, the order is the same as in the *three* followed by the *four*,—that is, the promise is followed by the law. God announces His purpose, then His people (Israel) are tested and redeemed through faith, and all by Christ risen from the dead.

Taking the whole seven (covenants) together, the three followed by the four, we have this: "We are saved by grace (the first three), through faith" (the last four).

It may be well to note at this point the tests and exercises of man's heart in the last four. In the first three, as already seen, there is an entire absence of it. But in the four we have the following: Abram says (chap. xv.), "I go childless;" God says, "So shall thy seed be," pointing to the stars. "He believed in the Lord" and was counted righteous. He says, "How shall I know I shall inherit the land?" and then, called to offer the sacrifice, gets a glimpse of the cross, enters the deep sleep and darkness, and has a vision of the furnace and lamp,—trial and guidance of his people, and the announcement that after *four* hundred years, in the *fourth* generation his people would be redeemed.

In the fifth covenant (chap. xvii.) Abraham laughs at the thought of Sarah having a child, cleaves to Ishmael (like Paul to Jerusalem in bondage), is circumcised with his house.

In the sixth (chap. xviii.) he entertains the three, answers to his responsibility, but Sarah doubts and laughs.

In the seventh (chap. xxi. 12) Abraham is grieved that the bondwoman and her son are to be cast out, but submits to God and to the word, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." In all this God's people are portrayed in their exercises and failures and final rest of faith.

But in the first three not a hint of this, it is purely the sovereign purpose of God declared.

In the first eight chapters of Romans we have what answers to the *four*, only in the latter part of the eighth we have the three, "Whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He justified, them He also glorified." Romans being thus linked with Ephesians, but ending where Ephesians begins. On the whole, Ephesians is like the first three, Romans the last four.

How marvelous is this frame-work of Scripture! men (as Abraham and others) living their lives through events, ordinary events of the day as well as extraordinary, and these events coming to pass and following into their place in a scheme of lessons for our instruction, with exact precision in each minute detail.

The Lord willing, we may dwell more particularly upon the covenants that follow, from the fourth onward.

E. S. L.

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART III.—Continued.

THE TRINITY OF EVIL, AND THE MANIFESTATION OF THE WICKED ONE.

The Resurrection of the Fourth Empire. (Chap. xiii. 1-10.)

SATAN being now in full activity of opposition to the woman and her seed, we are carried on to see his further efforts to destroy them. Working, as from the beginning, through instruments in which he conceals himself, we find ourselves now face to face with his great instrument in the last days; in which too we recognize one long before spoken of in the prophets, especially by him to whom in the book of Revelation we have such frequent reference—the apocalyptic prophet of the Old Testament.

It is indeed the fourth beast of Daniel without dispute to which the word of inspiration now directs our attention. "I saw," says the apostle, "a beast coming up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads the names of blasphemy."

The four beasts of Daniel's vision answering, as every one knows, to the *one* human figure seen by the king of Babylon. In his eyes there is in it at least the likeness

of man, although there is no breath, no life. To the prophet afterward the world-empires appear on the other hand full of life, but *it is bestial*. One of the chapters between supplies the link between the two: for Nebuchadnezzar is himself driven out among the beasts, as we see in the fourth chapter, for a disciplinary punishment until he knows "that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men." In a pride which has forgotten God, he has become but a beast which knows none. He is therefore driven out among the beasts until seven times pass over him. The prophet sees thus the powers of the world to be but beasts—"wild beasts" indeed, as here.

As the fourth beast, moreover, the successor and heir to those that have been before it, the last empire not only shows still this bestial nature. It combines in itself the various characters of the first three. It is in general form like the leopard or Greek empire, agile and swift in its attack as the leopard is known to be. But it has the feet of the bear, the Persian tenacity of grasp, and the mouth of the lion, the Babylonian ferocity. Beast it is clearly, yet not in simple ignorance of God as the beast is: its seven heads are seen to have on each of them a name of blasphemy.

In its ten horns it differs from all before it; and these, we are explicitly told, (xvii. 17,) are "ten kings" which "give their power unto the beast." In the vision now we find these kings actually crowned. They are in existence when the beast rises from the sea, that is, from the commencement of the empire in some sense—not of old Rome, that is certain, for old Rome never commenced in such a manner. It must then be Rome as new-risen among the nations in the latter days.

The later chapter, to which we have just now referred, speaks plainly of a time when the beast that was "is not;" and for centuries, we are well aware, the empire has not

existed. But the same prophecy assures us that it is to be again; and in the vision before us we find it accordingly risen up, as of old time, from the sea,—that is to say, the restless strife of the nations. As we have seen, however, that is not the only way in which it is seen to rise again: for in the history of the witnesses it has been spoken of as "ascending up out of the bottomless pit," and this is repeated in the seventeenth chapter, "the beast . . . shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition." Are these two ascents, then? or only one, looked at from two sides?

Again of its heads, one is said in the present chapter to be "wounded to death," but "its deadly wound was healed;" and afterward the beast is spoken of as having had the "wound by a sword" and living (*v.* 14). Are these still various ways of expressing the same thing, or not? and is there any way of deciding this?

Certainly, the long collapse of centuries during which the beast "was not" could hardly seem to be described as its having a wound and living, or as a deadly *wound* which could be healed. Let us look more closely at the prophecy, or rather at the different prophecies about this, and see what may be gathered.

In Daniel we have no mention of the time of non-existence, or of a plurality of heads upon the beast, but the ten horns show us that the empire is there before us also as it exists in the latter days; as it is plain also that it is in this form that the judgment there described comes upon it. But the prophet considering these ten horns, sees, rising up after them, another little horn in which are developed those blasphemous characters which bring down its final judgment upon the beast. It speaks great words against the Most High, and wears out the saints of the Most High, and thinks to change times and laws; and these are given into its hands until a time and times and

the dividing of a time,—that is, for the last half week of Daniel's seventy, just before the Lord comes and the judgment falls.

Now this last horn rises up after the first ten are in existence, and therefore the empire in its latter-day form; and if this little horn be that whose "dominion" brings judgment upon the beast, then it would seem that the eleventh horn and the eighth head of Revelation must be the same.

The seven heads are not in Daniel, nor is the eleventh horn in Revelation. But we may learn in both of these details by means of which we can compare them. Thus, as to the heads, five had fallen when the angel spoke to John (xvii. 10): one existed, the imperial; another was to come and last but a short time, and then would be the eighth, or *the* beast in its final form, identified with its head here, as morally at least with the little horn in Daniel.

We have anticipated somewhat, and seem obliged for our purpose to anticipate, what is given us only in the seventeenth chapter, before the history of these latter days becomes in measure clear to us. Let us seek first to get hold of the point of time which the interpretation contemplates as present. When the angel says to John, "The woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth," we know that at the time of the revelation there was one city, and but one, to which his words could apply. It was Rome that ruled over the kings of the earth, even as Rome fills out his description also in another respect, being notoriously the seven-hilled city. That Rome is in fact the city spoken of, is, spite of the effort of a few to find another application, the verdict of the mass of commentators of all times, and this interpretation of the woman seems given by the angel as what would need no further explanation.

The ten horns, on the other hand, he states to be future: "the ten horns are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet." Here we see that the point of view is still that of the apostle himself. And when it is said of the heads, "five are fallen, and one is," Livy, as is well-known, has given the five different forms of government under which Rome had been before that sixth, the imperial, which existed in the apostle's day. The point of view seems here quite plain.

On the other hand, "the beast that was and *is not*" may seem to be opposed to this. But if that could not be said in the apostle's day, that the beast was not, it could be as little said of the day of the fulfillment of the vision. Thus, "was, is not, and shall be," merely pictorially presents the history of the beast, and does not at all give us the stand-point, as the other expressions do.

It is a curious coincidence, that if in Daniel's vision of the four beasts we connect the four heads of the leopard with the other three of the remaining ones, we have just seven, and it has been argued that these are, in fact, the seven heads upon the beast in Revelation; but then *six* should have fallen, and not five, when the angel spoke. The sixth also would be the last Grecian head, and the Roman would be future. That the heads are successive is quite plain, and there seems no room for any other application than that of the sixth head to the emperor of Rome.

The seventh would follow at an uncertain period in the future, and the application here has been various—to the exarchate of Ravenna, to Charlemagne, to Napoleon. It is not needful to enter into any elaborate disproof of these, as that putting together of prophecy, of the necessity of which the apostle warns us, will show sufficiently how inadmissible they are.

"The beast that was and is not, even he is the eighth,

and is of the seven," says the angel: "*one* of the seven," Bleek with others takes it to mean; "*sprung* from the seven," says Alford. But the last, if we are to interpret the sixth as we have done, can scarcely be maintained. If we are to say, "*one* of the seven," then we may tentatively suppose it to be the seventh revived; and put in this way, other passages would seem to throw light upon it.

The seventh head was to continue but a little while; and *one* of the heads—it is not stated which—was to be wounded to death and live, as we have seen. It is on this account that the world wonders after the beast, and this is clearly at the end: so that it is either the eighth head itself that is wounded and revives, or else it is the eighth head which is the seventh revived, as we have just supposed. This thought unites then and makes plain the different passages.

The beast (under this eighth head) "practices" forty and two months, the last half week of Daniel's seventy. Yet the "prince that shall come" makes his covenant with the Jews for the *whole* last week, in the midst of which he breaks it (Dan. ix. 27). Does not this show that not only are the seventh and eighth heads as heads identical, but individually also? and does it not confirm very strongly as truth what at first appeared only to be supposition?

In this manner Daniel's prophecy of the little horn would seem to describe his second rise to power, after having fallen from being the seventh head of the beast to a rank below that of the ten kings. From this, partly by force, partly by concession, gained no doubt by the aid of him who discerns in the fallen ruler a fitting instrument for his devilish ends, he rises to his former pre-eminence over them all, filled with the animosity against God with which the dragon, "prince of this world," has

inspired him, and the world wondering and ready to worship.

Thus the picture seems complete and the outline harmonious in all its details. It agrees well with what has been before suggested—the rise of the seventh head under the first seal, its collapse under the fourth trumpet, its revival through satanic influence under the sixth. Its judgment takes place under the seventh, but the details of this are unfolded in the latter part of Revelation. We see that the conspiracy of the second psalm, of the kings and rulers "against the Lord and His Anointed," is by no means over. Nay, the Gentile power that wrote defiantly His title on His cross is risen up again, and with even more than its old defiance. The long-suffering of the Lord has not been to it salvation. The exhortation, "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way," has not been heeded. Rome still vindicates its title to its position as the head of a hostile world. "I gave her space to repent, and she will not repent," is as true of her in her civil as in her ecclesiastical character.

The revival of the last empire is Satan's mockery of resurrection; yet God is over it and in it, commanding her from her tomb for judgment. And with her, other buried nations are to revive and come forth to the light. Greece has thus revived. Italy has revived. Israel, as we well know, is reviving, and for her also there is not unmingled blessing, but solemn and terrible judgment that will leave but a remnant for the final promise surely to be fulfilled. Israel were foremost in the rejection of their Lord, when first He came to His own, and His own received Him not. It was they who used Gentile hands to execute the sentence which they lacked power to carry out. And it is strange indeed to find, in these awful last days of blasphemy and rebellion, the Jew still inspiring the Gentile in the last outburst of infidel pride and law-

essness : the second beast in the chapter before us is at once Jewish, and by its lamblike appearance and its dragon-voice, antichristian.

And this is that to which, unwarned by the sure word of prophecy, men are hurrying on. The swiftness of the current that is carrying them, owned as it is by all, is for them "progress," while it is but the power felt of the earing cataract. "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not scape!" So said the lips that uttered that lament over Jerusalem, which with added force may speak to us to-day, "How often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wing; and YE *would not!*"

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

EXPIATION.

A FOOLISH question has been asked, "What righteousness is there in an innocent being suffering for the guilty?" It is a foolish question. There is no righteousness in my paying my friend's debts. It is kindness, love; but it meets the righteous claims of his creditor. The claims of a holy God are maintained—indifference of evil; and that is of the last importance for the conscience and heart of *man*; it gives him the knowledge of what God is in holiness. There is no true love without it. Indifference to good and evil, so that the ill-doer is let pass with his evil, is not love, and the association of right and wrong, by God's authority, the greatest possible evil. Now, good and evil are elevated to the standard of it in God's nature. We walk in the light, God is in the light, and the blood of Jesus Christ His

Son cleanses from all sin. The glory of God is maintained, and the heart of man placed in association with the perfectness of that nature, and in peace with the perfect knowledge of His love. Take away the character of judgment or righteousness exercised as regards evil, and you obliterate the authority of God—the creation-place, and responsibility of man.

Anon.

THE LATE CARDINAL NEWMAN.

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Ps. cxix. 105.)

IF a soul be led aright in his spiritual or ecclesiastical path, he must be led according to God's Word, and, of course, it is needful to take heed to that Word in order to have its leading. A person may be very sincere, yet if led by his own thoughts, they will likely be the thoughts of a heart which is not to be trusted, and the path chosen is one that suits the flesh, or the tastes of the person, and not the path of faith at all.

One cannot question the sincerity and earnestness of J. H. Newman, when, "becalmed at sea, in the Straits of Bonifacio, between Sicily and Marseilles, June 16th, 1833," he wrote the following beautiful lines:—

Lead kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom
 Lead Thou me on.
 The night is dark, and I am far from home;
 Lead Thou me on.
 Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
 The distant scene; one step enough for me.
 I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
 Shouldst lead me on.
 I loved to choose and see my path; but now
 Lead Thou me on.
 I loved the garish day, and spite of fears
 Pride ruled my will. Remember not past years.

So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on

O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone;

And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

This hymn is given as it came from the pen of Newman. It is worthy of remark, however, that it does not afford any intimation that he was seeking to be led simply by the Word of God. And the way he was led would more than incline one to suspect that he was not thus seeking, for surely that Word could never lead into the church of Rome, where it has so little place, its place being usurped by papal tradition and dogmas.

A. Midlane, in noticing this lack of reference to the Word, and thinking of the way the author had gone, wrote a hymn, using the same metre, and style, but giving the Word of God its place. Being at West Cowes, Isle of Wight, on the morning of the Lord's Day, April 6, 1884, he writes, "I was meditatively wandering on the pebbly shore of the Solent, dwelling on the strains of Newman's hymn,—'*Lead Kindly Light*,'—and of the subsequent career of that highly intellectual man. I had previously seen him arrayed in all the glory of a cardinal, at a requiem mass, and I was wondering at the strange lead of that '*Kindly Light*.' Burdened with this thought, I opened my pocket-book, and wrote the hymn as it now appears, before the time of the morning service." I give what he wrote.

Thy Word, Thy precious Word, alone,
Can lead me on;

By this, until the darksome night is gone,
Lead Thou me on!

Thy Word is light, Thy Word is life and power,
By it O guide me in each trying hour!

'Tis all I have; around no light appears—

O lead me on!

With eyes on Thee, though gazing through my tears,

Lead Thou me on!

The good and best might lead me far astray;

Omniscient Saviour, lead Thou me, I pray!

Whate'er my path, led by Thy Word 'tis good;

O lead me on!

Be my poor heart Thy blessed Word's abode,

Lead Thou me on!

Thy Holy Spirit gives the light to see,

And leads me, by the Word, close following Thee.

Led by aught else, I tread a devious way;

O lead me on!

Speak, Lord, and help me ever to obey;

Lead Thou me on!

My every step shall then be well defined,

And all I do, according to Thy mind.

A. Midlane.

He says, "The thought my heart was wishing to give expression to was, that any light save from the Word of God must be a delusive one, and that only the light of life, the Word of God, can be a real '*Kindly Light*,' and lead the soul on with Him who said, 'I am the light of the world.'"

Some who were contemporary with Newman, and equally learned, were, like him, deeply exercised as to their ecclesiastical path, and Rome was put before them; but being in subjection to the Word of God, and diligently and prayerfully studying it, they were led a very different way. One of them, who has finished his course with "intense joy," tells us in his writings that he was thus kept, and that the tenth chapter of Hebrews was specially helpful to this end. And well it might, for it assures us that Christ "by one offering hath perfected forever them that are sanctified,"—that their sins are remembered no

more,—that “where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sins,” and that they have “boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus;” thus needing no priest but the High-Priest, by whose blood they have this intimate and blessed nearness to God. Indeed they are the only priests recognized in the apostolic epistles, excepting, of course, the Peerless One “that is passed into the heavens.”

Yes, the Word of God is alone authoritative. It is the beacon-light for our guidance through this dark scene. It is the only light we have; but, blessed be the Giver, it is like His grace, sufficient. We do well, then, to take all heed to it, until the day dawn, and the Morning Star shall arise to gladden the hearts of His waiting ones, when they shall be like Him and with Him forever. Surely, then, it is for each of His own to pray, while He tarries, “Order my steps in Thy Word;” “O send out Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles.” In this way we may count on God to lead us in “a plain path;” and also use us in aiding others who are seeking the true path in this day of difficulty, and want of subjection to His Word.

R. H.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF ASA.

(2 Chron. xiv.-xvi.)

1. (CHAP. xiv. 1-8.) Asa began his reign brightly. Receiving the kingdom from his father Abijah, he first purged it of all those evils allowed and practiced by that strange mixture of sudden outbursts of faith, coupled with a walk in the ways of his father Rehoboam (1 Kings xv. compared with 2 Chron. xiii.). In passing, it is well to notice that while all that is good in Abijah is spoken of, Scripture fails to state that he did that which was

right in the eyes of the Lord, the usual designation of the "good kings." His case, like that of many others, rests with Him who alone knows the secrets of men, and who will in due time bring all things to the light. We can hardly think of his not being a child of God, but an unfaithful walk leaves a cloud of uncertainty, which nothing but God's Word can remove, as, for instance, "just Lot." With Asa, however, there is no such hesitation or silence. His reign begins in such a way that we see in it a type at least of the time when "a king shall reign in righteousness," who shall banish all that offends out of His kingdom. Strange altars are removed in order that God alone may be exalted. And as a natural result when God is thus acknowledged, strength and blessing come in. Instead of war, quiet prevails, and that not a quiet of indolence, but of building up and preparing for future attacks of the enemy. How much those ten years of rest meant for Judah is seen in the significantly large army, and the well-appointed cities for defense. The numerical significance of this *first* section in his life seems plain. God is recognized as sovereign and alone the object of worship, and the rest tells of the absence of foreign elements to cause disturbance. Applying these types to our own experience, we see here, doubtless, the soul in its first love, and the corresponding jealousy for God's honor, a jealousy that allows nothing to usurp His place; God is enthroned in the heart, and (blessed result!) rest fills it. "When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" From out this quiet grows up the spiritual man, strengthened, prepared for conflict, and ready for every good work.

2. (Chap. xiv. 9-15.) But the enemy will not, if possible, long leave either the individual or a nation in the enjoyment of this prosperity. So we find the immense army of the Ethiopians (descendants of Ham, and so

closely connected with the Canaanites, the original enemy in the land, and with the Egyptians, the former oppressors of the nation) coming up to do battle. It has been often remarked that Satan overreaches himself, and here we see an illustration of it. The very multitude of the enemy precludes all hope of successful resistance, and drives the king and people back upon One who alone could be a help in time of trouble. It was the apparent weakness and insignificance of Ai that gave occasion for Israel's self-confidence. "Make not all the people to labor thither; for they are but few" (Josh. vii. 3) shows that Israel had forgotten the lesson of Jericho, where weakness won the day. Have we not all been at times thus misled? some little thing, some habit or association to give up, some duty to do—these, or things like them, have seemed so easy that like Peter we have only found out our utter helplessness by our failure. Here, however, the enemy gives no room for any such vain confidence. But would that we ever, in all conflicts, realized our weakness as did Asa! "Lord, there is none beside Thee to help, between the mighty and him that hath no strength: help us, O Lord our God; for we rely on Thee." (R.V.) We well know the result. When did weakness cry to the Mighty One and not receive an answer? The mighty army only furnishes rich spoil for the victorious host of the Lord. Satan's attacks resisted thus in weakness counting on God, result in greater strength, fuller and deeper views of that blessed One. In service too, as we see in Philippians i., doors apparently closed only open the way to fresh fields. It is not, we believe, straining the meaning to see that this section of the life of Asa is appropriately a *second*. The enemy, and deliverance by God, give us Exodus in miniature.

3. (Chap. xv.) The happy victory and result above noted gives occasion for the prophecy of Azariah, who

turns the light of God on what has taken place. His address is full of encouragement, but also of warning. "The Lord is with you, while ye be with Him, and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you. . . . Be ye strong, therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded." (Chap. xv. 3, 7.) Spurred on by such wholesome words, the good work is continued by Asa, and the abominations still lurking in the hidden places are purged out as inconsistent with that holiness which becometh God's house. The altar of sacrifice is also renewed. We may be sure that no matter how faithfully in the past self-judgment has been carried out, there will be room for careful watching and further progress. Others of the Lord's people are now attracted to Him, by the bright light shining in Jerusalem. "They fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him." If we are faithful to the Lord, happy in the enjoyment of His presence, we will soon find others drawn to Him. Sacrifice follows next, and the entering afresh into a covenant with the Lord. "And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought Him with their whole desire; and He was found of them: and the Lord gave them rest round about." Did we thus turn to Him with the *whole heart*, with *all our desire*, how deep and full our joy would be! Under the power of this fresh consecration, Asa knows no one according to the flesh—the idolatrous queen-mother is deposed. It is only when devotedness is thus complete that faithfulness in the home is possible. Another long rest succeeds this revival, and the dedication of precious things is completed by bringing them into the house of God. How bright and fresh all this is! It reminds us of revivals of God's truth at all times—self-sacrifice, devotedness, and corresponding rest and peace.

Perhaps the reader can recall similar experiences in his own history. This also seems appropriately a *third* section—holiness, sacrifice, God's centre, and God's house.

4. (Chap. xvi.) Had Asa died at this point, there would have been nothing painful to note. Had he continued faithful, his pathway would have been as the bright light. But alas for human stability! The closing section is, as its number would indicate, a record of testing and failure. He who knew what to do when the overwhelming hosts of Ethiopia threatened him, is driven to the desperation of unbelief by the building of a city by Baasha, king of Israel—threatening the prosperity of his kingdom, it may be, but one would say not near so dangerous as the previous attack. Had not all his experience taught Asa confidence in God? Were not thirty-six years of peace and victory resulting from that confidence enough to check the first feeling of fear? One would think so, but unbelief has no reason; the moment rein is given to it, the simplest danger drives one to all the folly of a panic. The precious things but a short time before brought into the house of God are taken and sent to His enemy, that the league with Baasha may be broken, and one established with Asa. In the eyes of the world this might seem like wise policy, but it begins by robbing God of His glory. Is this the same man who so nobly witnessed for God, linked now with God's enemies?—a friend of the world? Dear brethren, there are many Asas. Apparently all is successful. Baasha leaves off building Ramah and retires to his dominions, while increased strength seems to come to Judah, for store-cities are built of the material intended for Ramah. But apparent results never are the tests of the moral quality of an action. God's house has been robbed and an alliance with the world formed; nothing can counterbalance these. A faithful messenger is sent to warn the fallen king. Even now had there

been brokenness in Asa—a bowing to the rod as David had done,—there would doubtless have been restoration. But unbelief is a thing not to be tampered with, and he who but a short time before had threatened to punish with death those who would not seek the Lord, now imprisons the faithful servant, thus linking himself with Herod. But evil, like leaven, spreads. At the same time he oppresses some of the people. He who had been a gatherer must now be an oppressor, a scatterer. God's reproof being unheeded, He sends affliction that His wanderer may be recalled. But the exceeding greatness of his disease in his feet drives him to the physicians, not to the One who heals as well as smites. Refusing reproof, unexercised by affliction, there is but one thing more—he must be taken away. Beloved brethren, what is sadder than such a close? a death without previous restoration! That light which had shone so clearly grows dim and dimmer, till at last it is gone entirely, and the man is gone—to meet God. “Ah!” you say, “but he was a child of God for all that.” True, but so far from lessening the gloom which gathers about his close, it deepens it, as far as the all-important question of God's honor is concerned. From an unsaved man evil is expected, but the same evil in a child of God causes the world to blaspheme. They made great burnings for Asa, but that did not blot out the record we have been considering,—a record for our admonition. Let us beware of the beginnings of unbelief. Asa did not fall into open immorality like David, nor into idolatry like Solomon. His fall was less glaring, perhaps unnoticed, but he goes down to the grave like Solomon—with no record of recovery. He sets the example of that amalgamation with the world which is the blot on the good name of Jehoshaphat, which is the deeper, darker blot on the Church to-day, beginning with Pergamos and ending with the wretched lameness of Laodicea,—a lame-

ness which, unlike that of Mephibosheth hidden beneath the king's table, is all the more apparent by reason of the human expedients resorted to for its healing. Is it not in mercy that our God gives us these lessons, that we may avoid the snares into which His people of old fell? Let the time past in our lives suffice for failure. Let us be, not like Demas who goes out of sight with this attached to his name—"Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world;" but like Mark who, though faltering at first, is at last "profitable for the ministry." It is the joy of our God to restore His wandering ones. Hear Him saying, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely."

We have a striking allusion to Asa in Jer. xli. 9. The remnant of faithful Jews who desired to remain in the land, in subjection to Nebuchadnezzar, are slain by Ishmael, and their bodies are buried in the pit "which Asa the king made for fear of Baasha king of Israel." Thus the monument of his unbelief becomes the grave of God's few—fitting ending of unbelief,—which never stops until there are none left on God's ground—an ending linked with the beginning.

MISSIONS TO THE ORTHODOX.

THERE is a strange resemblance between these journeys through Protestant Germany, and Wesley's journeys, fifty years later, through Protestant England. We have the same stories related of mobs and riots, of peltings with stones and mud, of indignant magistrates and clergy, and of many and true conversions to God.

When the burgomaster at Duisburg desired the chief magistrate to seize the preacher and stop the preaching, the magistrate astonished him by the answer, "It would

be better to stop the drinking and reveling and gambling than the preaching of God's Word."

The burgomaster, however, summoned Hochmann to give an account of himself, which he readily did. "This I confess to thee," he said, "that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets, and have hope toward God that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust."

A preacher who was present then charged Hochmann with various offenses, amongst them, that he refused to meet any at the Lord's table who were not, according to him, born again; also, that he neglected the services in the churches.

Hochmann answered, "The preachers are in the habit of preaching open blasphemy, falsehoods, and errors, therefore I no longer go to the churches, for if I did, I must stand up and protest."

"The Church," proceeded Hochmann, "can only consist of living members of Christ, and children of God, to be recognized by the mark of love. But no remains of the true worship of God is now to be found, either amongst Lutherans or Reformed. Therefore, according to the epistle to the Corinthians, from such assemblies we must withdraw."

"What religion do you belong to in that case?" asked the preacher.

"We belong to Christ, the Head of the Church," replied Hochmann, "and to no sect."

"The king of Prussia desires to unite the Lutheran and Reformed churches," said some one who was present.

"I desire to belong to those who are united by the Lord Jesus Christ," said Hochmann.

The end of the matter was, that Hochmann was forbidden to preach, and the clergy preached loudly against

him. In consequence, crowds came in increasing numbers to hear the preaching of Hochmann.

At Wesel, in the winter of 1709-10, these crowded meetings lasted often a great part of the night. Here again Hochmann was summoned before the town council. He had written a letter to the preachers of Wesel, in which he had said that at the Reformation, Great Babylon had not fallen, but had been divided into three parts—Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed. He had asked the preachers to search and try whether they were the true anointed priests of the Lord—whether God Himself, and the Lord Jesus Christ, the glorified Head of the Church, had sent them to preach His blessed gospel.

The description already given of the Lutheran and Reformed clergy will prove that there was sufficient need for such questions. The witness of Spener, himself a Lutheran pastor, may also be given in this place.

"The art of preaching," he says, "is taught to the students of theology, as if this were the sum and substance of all that is needed for them. It is as though all were under a spell of enchantment, which blinds them to every thing but the art of elaborate discourse, leaving them perfectly unconcerned as to the matter respecting which they are to speak. They are like people absorbed in the art of making artistic and ornamental shoes, entirely forgetting to inquire where the leather is to come from, or, indeed, whether leather is needed at all, so that for the leather they have to go begging and borrowing, and failing to obtain it, stitch together the most elegant shoes of paper, parchment, or other useless materials."

"It is not to be wondered at," writes Dr. Hoffmann, after thus quoting Spener, "that the Lutheran church at that time, looked at from almost every point of view, presented the appearance of a vast ruin. The schools and

universities, devoid of the spirit of piety, intent rather on heathen than on Christian learning, had become the abode of coarse lawlessness and wild extravagance, producing a fair stock of theological prize-fighters, of correct orthodoxy, and of stiff pedants, but few men of Christian piety fit to teach or guide the people committed to their care.

"On the contrary, the ignorance, the coarseness, the disreputable lives of most of the preachers, had an effect disastrous to the last degree, in corrupting society at large, already demoralized enough by the effect of the Thirty Years' War. Drunkenness, rancorous lawsuits, profligacy, and beggary gained ground every where, accompanied by just such a trust in a pharisaical religion of ceremonial works as the Protestants had so loudly condemned in the Roman Catholics.

"To receive the sacrament, quite apart from any effect upon the inner life, was regarded as a means of salvation; and, as one of the most excellent of the earth at that time expressed it, 'Modern Christianity has four dumb idols—the font, the pulpit, the confessional, the altar. Men put their whole trust in an outside Christianity; that they are baptized, that they go to church, that they get absolution, that they take the sacrament; but as to the inward power, they utterly deny it.'"

It was considered necessary that a preacher should be a theologian. That he should be a Christian in heart and life was of small importance.

"Miserable theology!" wrote Witsius, himself educated as a theologian, "good for nothing but to hide from men the knowledge of their wretchedness, and thereby to keep them at a distance from Christ and from their eternal salvation."

For Hochmann's letter to the preachers he was called to account. He said that in writing these things he had

but directed them to Jesus their Saviour, exhorting them to believe in Him whilst yet it is called "To-day."

"No one preaches or teaches here without being ordained," said the burgomaster.

Hochmann replied, he could take his orders from none but Christ, and that he was constrained by the Holy Spirit to take every opportunity of bringing souls to Him—if hundreds, or thousands, so much the better. The burgomaster, after consulting with the town council, gave his final sentence: Since Hochmann belonged to no recognized sect, and since he was about to betake himself to the unorthodox territory of Wittgenstein, he must be banished from Wesel.

He wrote from his hermitage to the preachers of Wesel that he was praying earnestly for them, that instead of having their heads filled with theology, they might have their hearts filled with the love of Jesus, and that they might be thoroughly converted; for it grieved him deeply that they should attempt to teach others the way of salvation, whilst they did not know it themselves, nor see that a man must be born again before he can enter the kingdom of God.

If Hochmann made many enemies during his journeys, he also made many friends, beside the counts of Wittgenstein and their families, who were deeply attached to him.

One friend, with whom he often spent a few days, describes his little visits with love and affection. "Hochmann," he says, "was very simple and retiring in his daily life. When he stayed with friends, he generally remained quietly in his bedroom all the forenoon, unless he was called for. After dinner he devoted himself to any friends who were there, and talked with them about the things of God and heaven, with much blessing to those who heard him. If a stranger came in, it was his custom to hold out his hand and say, in a manner most

tender and loving, 'Do you too love the Lord Jesus?'

"Otherwise he spoke very little, and in all his ways and habits he gave the impression that he was living in a holy seclusion, in the continual presence of God. He took little notice of outward things, much less did he interest himself in any thing apart from God, and in worldly news. But he had no appearance of any forced silence or reserve. On the contrary, he always had a cheerful, unburdened spirit, and, at the same time, a perfectly well-bred and loving manner toward all.

"And because his whole inner occupation and object was this, to penetrate by love into the inmost depths of the sweetness and the love of the heart of God, and because his whole soul was so deeply buried, as it were, in that love, embalmed in it, and filled with it, no outward crosses and persecutions seemed to move or disturb him. He was dead to himself, and dependent as a little child upon God.

"And this fountain of the spirit of Christ being thus unsealed to him, the living waters flowed forth from him; and in the watered garden of his heart all manner of pleasant fruits and flowers grew and ripened and blossomed to the glory of God, and to the refreshment and for the sweet perfume of others of the Lord's members.

Such was Hochmann. And as years went by, it seemed the stillness and the rest of his Friedensburg softened and stilled his spirit, and made him seem, it was said, as one already glorified. He spent much time in prayer, and became more deeply humble and loving as he drew nearer to the end of his pilgrimage. For a while we will leave him in his peaceful hermitage, and return to the restless, pleasure-loving, but unsatisfied boy, now sent forth from his home into the busy life of Mulheim.

(From "*The Quiet in the Land.*")

“TAKE AWAY THE DROSS

*From the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel
for the finer.”*

HE sitteth o'er the fining-pot
With patient tender love.
He doth not set another there
The work to bend above.
But on the molten surface rests
His ever loving eye;
His hand doth gauge the furnace fire,
Nor doth He heed our cry.
But at the perfect moment, when
Upon that molten mass
He seeth there reflected bright
The impress of His face,
His own right hand removeth it.
“It is enough,” he cries;
And thus from out our broken hearts
All nature's dross He tries.

H. McD.

THE STUDY OF THE PROPHETS.

IN God's mercy, much of the hidden treasure in this portion of His Word has been brought to light. Truths therein contained as to the work of Christ and His person; as to Israel's history, whether passing through the great trouble of the future, or entering upon that time of blessing so often dwelt upon in Isaiah and elsewhere; truths as to judgments on the nations, and their future destiny—have been rescued from the obscurity thrown over them by a so-called spiritual interpretation, and the result is a greatly increased knowledge of what is called prophetic truth. Now all this is matter for hearty thanksgiving, nor would one say a word to hinder the acquisition of fresh truths in this

direction—nay, the first point we would emphasize is that Christians should study the prophets more constantly and more carefully. Alas! this deadly ignorance! what will arouse God's sleeping people to gather the manna lying within their very grasp? Dear fellow believer, let us read, let us study our Bibles more!

But our present purpose in calling attention to the study of the prophets is to notice especially their immense importance in disclosing what is of inestimable value in the personal and practical walk. Under the Puritans, indeed, this was almost the sole use to which they were put, as their writings would show. We should see to it that light in other directions does not eclipse what was already shining—above all, that the dispensational or doctrinal part of God's word does not supplant what is practical. He would never have one side of His truth displace another. Let us, then, look at a few of the truths in the prophets which are of distinctively practical and personal importance.

1. The majesty and holiness of God. The prophet ISAIAH enters upon his special service after having had such a view of God's glory as brought him to his face in self-abhorrence (Isa. vi.). Like Job, he had heard of Him by the hearing of the ear, but when his eye saw Him, he abhorred himself and repented in dust and ashes. But our blessed God does not reveal Himself to dazzle or to smite, so we see grace mingling with the glory. It is only sin which makes us not at home in His presence, and the coal from off the altar speaks to us of a holiness which has found food there, and does not burn but heals the sinner. Sweet type of that work (and the fragrance of His person who did it) in which God's holiness was so vindicated and manifested that it now comes forth to kiss away sin from defiled lips. In HABAKKUK (Chap. iii.) we have a most magnificent description of God's majesty.

"His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise. . . . His brightness was as the light. . . . He stood and measured the earth, . . . and the eternal mountains were scattered, the everlasting hills did bow." All His enemies are scattered, but though the believer is filled with awe, he says, "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, . . . yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." God seen and known in this way becomes an object of worship and reverence. Is there not an awful absence of that fear of God which is not only the beginning of knowledge, but the characteristic of His people at all times? The love which casteth out fear never casts out godly fear. Assurance and trembling go together, as 1 Pet. i. and Phil. ii. would show us. Were God ever before our hearts in His holiness and majesty, self-pleasing,—yea, sin in all its forms, could have no place; conscience would be active the path of obedience would be plain and not difficult to walk in. Nor would joy, liberty, and praise be wanting. But the flippancy, looseness of walk, hastiness of tongue, would be gone. No flesh can glory in His presence. May we not say, "Lord, increase our *fear*," as well as "Lord, increase our *faith*"? Then, too, we would go forth to the world with the message of grace, and our word would be with power—we would be a savor of life or of death.

2. The tenderness of God: Perhaps we little realize the tone of tenderness which pervades the prophets. There is so much of holy indignation against sin, so many warnings of judgment, that we fail, perhaps, to notice the tender pleading that often accompanies the severest denunciations. HOSEA speaks from God's heart to that of His people. In chap. ii., after describing Israel's unfaithfulness like that of a wife untrue to her husband, and the resulting judgments, God says, "Therefore, behold, I

will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably to her." (Heb., "to her heart.") What tenderness is here manifested! He cannot let the record of her sins go down without accompanying it with the promise of future blessing. Then, too, when there seems to be a desire to return to the Lord, but not full and deep, how His love pleads! (vi. 4.) In looking back over Ephraim's past history, "I took them in My arms, but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love. . . . How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?" He cannot, so He will not, execute the fierceness of His wrath. He will roar as a lion, and His people shall follow Him, trembling indeed, but turning from Egypt and Assyria. Again in the fourteenth chapter, the very words of penitence are put in their lips, and God's answer is given in anticipation, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely." JEREMIAH, too, that dark book of judgment, has beneath that the pleading of One who would have been a husband to Israel, and who recalls the love of her espousals. Even now, spite of public unfaithfulness, He pleads with her to return. And when still obdurate, the tears of the messenger mingle with the judgment pronounced in God's name. EZEKIEL, in the sixteenth chapter, has a most faithful portrayal of Israel's history under the figure of the unfaithful wife, beginning indeed in the infancy of one to whom God said "live," who, as she grew up, was adorned with His comeliness, but who turned it all to strangers. Faithfully is the dark picture drawn, but we know that every stroke gives pain to a love which is neither blind nor insensible. After all is laid bare, love triumphs over sin; and we are pointed on to a time when the poor wanderer will be brought back, nevermore to lift the head in pride, and nevermore to dishonor Him who has won her back. How good it is to apply this to

one's personal history, and to take that lowly place of self-loathing so befitting those with whom divine tenderness has dealt.

3. Here, too, we must notice how intensely personal and individual God's dealings are. HAGGAI brings a message to us as well as to the returned Jews, when he says "Consider your ways." May we not in this book learn some of the reasons why spiritual prosperity is at a low ebb—each looking after his own house, and letting that of the Lord lie in neglect? "All seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ." ISAIAH, chap. lviii., exposes the formality of a fast which is such only in name, and stirs up the conscience of any who have an ear to hear, pointing away from religiousness such as the Pharisee afterward boasted in, to the practical fruits of a real experience. This unvailing of all shams is one of the prominent characteristics of the prophets—all is vain except that lowly, broken heart, never despised wherever seen. May we not take to heart that rebuke, "The temple of the Lord are these"? Ecclesiastical assumption and pride, so common, alas! are but a stench in God's nostrils. Our place, like DANIEL'S (chap. ix.), is one of humiliation and confession, a real mourning and a real seeking God's face. He would hear.

4. The buoyant spirit of hope breathing all through these books. Blacker pictures of earth's destiny could not be drawn even by the pessimist. Nations pass across the scene to execute judgment on God's people, or on another nation, only themselves to feel the power of that arm which wielded them as His sword, in their own destruction; but spite of slaughter, famine, earthquake, never for a moment is lost the truth that God's purpose is being fulfilled—that He is above all—convulsions of nations and of nature, unfaithfulness of His people—and that after all disorder peace will at last reign. Let us ever

remember this in a day of ruin and reproach like the present, and stand firm.

5. Lastly, the prophets are fragrant of Christ. His person, humiliation, sorrow, death, and coming reign are put before us constantly : had we eyes to see, doubtless we would find much more of Him there. It is by occupation with Christ that we grow like Him, and the spiritual exercise entailed in searching for and finding Him in these books is most beneficial.

But we have only gleaned a few things from these books. What a field do they offer for prayerful research! They were written for a time of failure, and are, therefore, specially appropriate for the present time. Written primarily for God's earthly people, they contain principles for all time. Do we not much need that heart-work,—that exercise which would result from letting these books search and try us?

"CONSIDER."

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works." (Heb. x. 24.) *"If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."* (Gal. vi. 1.) *"For consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."* (Heb. xii. 3.)

IN these passages, three objects are presented for our consideration: our brother, ourselves, and the Lord.

Cain's question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" is for the child of God answered in the first verse quoted—"Let us consider one another." We are not only members of His body (Eph. v. 30), and so united to our glorified Head, but from that very fact are members one of an-

other, and are to have the same care one for another (1 Cor. xii.) Indifference to his brother's spiritual condition is impossible for the Christian. "If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it." Selfish indeed is that heart which has room only for its own interests, that sees unmoved by concern the coldness or failure of a fellow-Christian. Such a state of itself is proof of a low condition. We are to consider one another, and this not in a merely incidental way in passing, but to thoroughly look at and examine the condition. This is the thought conveyed in the word in the Greek. It is the boast of Rome that in the confessional, she gains a full and intimate knowledge of the walk, and even thoughts, of her followers. But here, as in much else, she has only the counterfeit of what is true. The tyranny, insolence, and wickedness of the confessional cannot be too strongly condemned; but a counterfeit must, in some particulars, resemble the real,—and Protestantism, in exalting the right of private conscience, has gone to the other extreme in the almost total neglect of discipline, and godly care for one another. Farthest removed from the spirit of a prying busy-body is that loving and watchful care suggested by the passage we are considering. The object of this care is also stated: "To provoke unto love and good works." The word translated "*provoke*" is suggestive. The literal meaning is "to sharpen," and we are reminded of that passage, "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." (Prov. xxvii. 17.) It is by rubbing two knives together that they are sharpened, and so godly care and intercourse stir up the people of God. Love and good works are what we are to provoke to, the root and the fruits. Alas! we know what it is to provoke to anger, but how little of this kind of stirring up! The Lord arouse us all to this. There may be real self-denial required to carry it out. Rebuke

may be necessary, faithfully pointing out the wrong, checking the hasty zeal; and much wisdom and prayer is needed.

This we find in the second exhortation, "Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." A busy-body might be defined as one who meddles in the affairs of others without any conscience. In morbid physical conditions a person will eat earth, or ashes, with relish. Alas! how great an appetite many have for evil, not to remedy it, but apparently for its own sake! Now the remedy for this is suggested in the passage before us, "Considering *thyself*." What am I? What have I been doing? What am I capable of doing? These and such like searching questions will have the effect of giving us "low thoughts of self;" we will "each esteem others better than ourselves." Considering himself, the apostle could say, "Unto me, who am *less than the least* of all saints." It has often been remarked that if we are to wash our brother's feet, we are to take a lower place than he—to be his servant; we can only do this as we realize that we also may be tempted, that we have often failed. Beloved, how little fault-finding there would be if we first considered ourselves! How little of that carping spirit of criticism which magnifies the errors of a brother, and dwells upon evil! How little of that harsh inflexible spirit of so-called righteousness which will exact the "pound of flesh" at all costs! The severest judges are those who do not judge themselves. Even in a matter requiring discipline, God often has first to humble those who would act for Him. See in Judges, where He permits all eleven tribes, who would deal with Benjamin for permitting terrible sin, to be beaten once and again, until thoroughly broken they come with tears and sacrifices, and ask, "Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of Benjamin, *my brother*?" (Ju. xx. 26-28.) Now they are in the place of acknowledged

weakness, and from that go forth in power for God. In principle, the Lord often has to say to us, "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone." This does not mean that we are not to attempt the restoration of a brother, but that it must be done in the spirit of self-consideration, or it will be worse than useless.

· Lastly, we are to "consider Him." The word here is much stronger than the other two. It might be rendered "reckon up," "reason about fully," "consider attentively." No mere glance at the Lord is necessary, but a fixed and constant gaze. Here He is set before us in view of the trials and persecutions of the way. What did He do? did He grow weary and faint? Nay, "For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross and despised the shame." If He were ever before us, our walk would be more like His, unswerving from the path. How easily we are turned away by a frown, or a sneer! Specially is this the case in what we are considering—our dealings with our brother. The flesh in him stirs it up in us often times in a way that shows we are not "considering Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself." What meekness He showed in the presence of those who spat upon, smote Him on the head and buffeted Him! No word of self-vindication in any angry way, no answering back, all shows us the One who "was led as a lamb to the slaughter," and who "left us an example that we should follow His steps. . . . Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." If He did this in presence of *sinners* can we not bear the little we may meet with in *saints*? There is no excuse for us, if we fail in this—and it is just here where so much hurt and damage, not only to our own souls but to the Church, has come in. How blessed it is that the Holy Spirit would ever keep our eye on

Christ, from the first time when we looked to Him lifted up on the cross (Jno. iii. 15) and got life and peace, in every trial and step of the way, till no longer by faith, but face to face we see Him, having been made like Him. In view of that day, we can well afford to wait in patience and weakness during this "little while."

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART III.—Continued.

THE TRINITY OF EVIL, AND THE MANIFESTATION OF THE WICKED ONE.

Antichrist. (Chap. xiii. 11-18.)

ALONG with the resurrection of the imperial power, we are now shown in the vision the uprise of another "wild beast," which we have nowhere else brought before us in this character. We shall have, therefore, more attentively to consider the description given, and what means we have for identification of the power or person who is described, so that the prophecy may be brought out of the isolation which would make it incapable of interpretation, and may speak at least with its full weight of moral instruction for our souls.

The one seen is "another wild beast," and this character is clear enough. The empires of Daniel are "beasts," in that they know not God; the thought of the *wild* beast adds to this that savage cruelty, which will, of course, display itself against those who are God's. Inasmuch as the other beasts are powers—empires,—it would seem as if here too were a power, royal or imperial; but this would not be certain, unless confirmed by other intimations.

It is seen rising up out of the *earth*, and not out of the

sea. The latter symbol evidently applies to the nations,—the Gentiles; does not then this power rise out of the nations? It has been thought to mean a settled state of things into which the nations now had got,—a state of things unlikely at the period we are considering, and which would seem rather imageable as quiet water, than as "earth." Looking back to that first chapter of Genesis, in which we should surely get the essential meaning of these figures, and where typically the six days reveal the story of the dispensations on to the final Sabbath-rest of God, we shall find the earth, in its separation from the waters on the third day, speaking of Israel as separate from the Gentiles.* If this be true interpretation, as doubt not, it is an *Israelitish* power with which we are here brought face to face. Political events to-day local to a Jewish resurrection, as something in the near future scarcely problematical. Daniel's words (chap. xii. 1) which apply to this, make it sure that this will not be all of God, but that "some" will rise "to shame and everlasting contempt." Prophecies that we have already to some extent considered, intimate that Jewish unbelief is yet to unite with an apostasy of Christendom, and culminate in a "man of sin, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." (2 Thes. ii. 3, 4.) Thus we may be prepared to find here a blasphemous persecuting power rising up in the restored nation. And this may help us to the awful significance of what follows in Revelation—"and he had two horns like a lamb, and spake as a dragon."

"Two horns *like a lamb*:" the "Lamb" is a title so significant in the present book, nay, of such controlling

* See "Genesis in the light of the New Testament," or "The Numerical Bible."

significance, that any reference to it must be considered of corresponding importance. The two horns, then, are of course an intimation that the power exercised by the one before us—for the "horn" is a well-known symbol of power—is two-fold, in some sense like that of a lamb: how then? What is the twofold character of the power here? It seems as if there could be but one meaning: Christ's power is twofold, as manifested in the day that comes; He is a priest upon the throne,"—a royal Priest, with spiritual authority as well as kingly. This the blasphemous usurper before us will assume; and this manifests him, without possibility of mistake that one can see, as ANTICHRIST.

He is betrayed by His voice: his speech is that of a dragon; he is inspired, in fact, by Satan. There is no sweet and gracious message upon His lips. It is not He who has been man's burden-bearer, and the sinner's Saviour. No gentleness and meekness, but the tyranny of the destroyer; no heavenly wisdom, but Satan's craft, utters itself through him. Arrogant as he is, he is the miserable tool of man's worst enemy, and his own.

"And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast in his presence." He is the representative of the newly constituted empire of the west, not locally merely, but throughout it; and thus, as standing for another, he is still the awful mockery of Him who is on the throne of the world, the Father's representative. This is developed by the next words to its full extent: "and he causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed; and he doeth great signs, so that he maketh fire to descend from heaven upon the earth before men." Here the very miracle which Elijah once had wrought to turn back the hearts of apostate Israel to the true God he is permitted to do to turn men to a false one. Men are given up to be de-

ceived: God is sending them (as it is declared in Thessalonians) "strong delusion, that they may believe the lie . . . because they received not the love of the truth." The Word of God, announcing this beforehand, would, of course, be the perfect safeguard of those that trusted it; and this very miracle as it would appear, would be a sign to the elect, not of Christ, but of Antichrist. But to the men that dwell upon the earth, a moral characteristic distinguishing those who as apostate from Christianity have given up all their hope of heaven, and who are all through this part specially pointed out, heaven itself would seem to seal the pretensions of the deceiver. "And he deceiveth the dwellers upon the earth, by means of the signs which it was given him to do in the presence of the beast, saying to the dwellers upon earth, that they should make an image to the beast who had the wound by the sword and lived. And it was given him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause those that would not worship the image of the beast to be slain."

Is an actual image of the beast intended here? or is it some representative of imperial authority, such as the historical interpreters in general (though in various ways) have made it out to be? Against the latter thought there is in itself no objection, but rather the reverse, the book being so symbolical throughout. But it is the second beast itself that is the representative of the authority of the first beast; and on the other hand an apparent creation-miracle would not be unlikely to be attempted by one claiming to be divine. Notice, that it is not "life" he gives to it, as in the common version, nor "spirit," though the word may be translated so, but "breath," which as the alternative rendering is plainly the right one, supposing it be a literal image.

Our Lord's words as to the "abomination of deso-

lation standing in the holy place" (Matt. xxiv. 15), are in evident connection with this, and confirm this thought. "Abomination" is the regular word in the Old Testament, to express what idolatry is in the sight of God; but here it is established in what was but awhile before professedly His temple. For until the middle of Daniel's seventieth week, from the beginning of it, sacrifice and oblation have been going on among the returned people in Jerusalem. This was under the shelter of the covenant with that Gentile "prince" of whom the prophet speaks as the "coming one." At first, he is clearly therefore not inspired with the malignity toward God which he afterwards displays. Now, energized by Satan, from whom he holds his throne, and incited by the dread power that holds Jerusalem itself, he makes his attack upon Jehovah's throne itself, and as represented by this image, takes his place in defiance in the sanctuary of the Most High.

The connection of this prophecy with those in Daniel and in Matthew make plain the reason of the image being made and worshiped. The head of the Roman earth, and of this last and worst idolatry, is not in Judæa, but at Rome; and he who is in Judæa, of whatever marvelous power possessed, is yet only the delegate of the Roman head. Thus the image is made to represent this supreme power, and the worship paid to it is in perfect accordance with this. Here in Judæa, where alone now there is any open pretension to worship the true God,—here there is call for the most decisive measures. And thus the death-penalty proclaimed for those who do not worship. Jerusalem is the centre of the battle-field, and here the opposition must be smitten down. "And he causeth all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and bond, that they should give shem a mark upon their right hand and upon their forehead, and that no one should be

able to buy or sell except he have the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of his name."

Thus, then, is that "great tribulation" begun of which the Lord spoke in His prophecy in view of the temple. We can understand that the only hope while this evil is permitted to have its course is, that flight to the mountains which He enjoins on those who listen to His voice. Israel have refused that sheltering wing under which He would have so often gathered them, and they must be left to the awful "wing of abominations" (Dan. ix. 27, *Heb.*) on account of which presently the "desolator" from the north swoops down upon the land. Still His pity whom they have forsaken has decreed a limit, and "for His elect's sake, whom He hath chosen, He hath shortened the days."

Why is it that *breath* is given to the image? Is it in defiance of the prophet's challenge of the "dumb idols," which "speak not through their mouth"? Certainly to make an image speak in such a place against the Holy One would seem the climax of apostate insolence. But it only shows that the end is indeed near.

What can be said of the "number of the beast"? The words, "Here is wisdom: let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast," seem directly to refer to those whom Daniel calls "the wise," or "they that understand among the people," of whom it is said, concerning the words of the vision "closed up and sealed till the time of the end," that "none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." The "wise," or "they that understand," are in Hebrew the same word—the *maskilim*, and remind us again of certain psalms that are called *maskil* psalms, an important series of psalms in this connection, four of which (lii.-lv.) describe the wicked one of this time and his following; while the thirty-second speaks of forgiveness and a hiding-place in God, the

forty-second comforts those cast out from the sanctuary, and the forty-fifth celebrates the victory of Christ, and His reign, and the submission of the nations. Again, the seventy-fourth pleads for the violated sanctuary; the seventy-eighth recites the many wanderings of the people from their God; the seventy-ninth is another mourning over the desolation of Jerusalem; the eighty-eighth bewails their condition under a broken law; and the eighty-ninth declares the "sure mercies of David. The hundred and forty-second is the only other *maskil* psalm.

Moll may well dispute Hengstenberg's assertion that these psalms are special instruction for the *Church*. On the other hand, the mere recital of them in this way may convince us how they furnish the very key-note to Israel's condition in the time of the end, and may well be used to give such instruction to the remnant amid the awful scenes of the great tribulation. In Revelation, it will not be doubtful, I think, to those who will attentively consider it, that we have in this place a *nota bene* for the *maskilim*.

Can we say nothing, then, as to the number of the beast?

As to the individual application, certainly, I think, nothing. We cannot prophesy; and until the time comes, the vision in this respect is "sealed up." The historical interpreters, for whom indeed there should be no seal, if their interpretation be the whole of it, generally agree upon *Lateinos* (the Latin), which has, however, an *e* too much, and therefore would make but 661. Other words have been suggested, but it is needless to speak of them: the day will declare it.

Yet it does not follow but that there may be something for us in the number of significance spiritually. The 6 thrice repeated, while it speaks of labor and not rest,—of abortive effort after the divine 7, declares the evil in its highest to be limited and in God's hand. This number

is but, after all, we are told, "the number of a man;" and what is man? He may multiply responsibility and judgment; but the Sabbath is God's rest, and sanctified to Him: without God, he can have no Sabbath. This 6, 6, 6, is the number of a man who is but a beast, and doomed.

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

"THE REBELLIOUS DWELL IN A DRY LAND."

WHEN Dathan and Abiram (Num. xvi.) were acting out their rebellion against Moses as leader (type of Christ in His kingly authority), they let slip the secret of their thought both about the land of Egypt they had left, and the wilderness they were in. "Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of the land that floweth with milk and honey?" What a description to give of that land of brick-kiln bondage and divine judgments! How rebellion blinds the eyes! Whenever self-will is at work, the world, in some form or other, becomes the attraction, rather than Canaan: so that in the case before us, the very attractions of that land of promise are given to Egypt—Heaven's blessings ascribed to earth, not so uncommon in these days. As to the wilderness, Moses was going to kill them. It was not the place through which they were hurrying on to a rest sure and prepared; rather it was a place to die in—its dreary wastes marked their horizon, and there was no faith to see beyond. How different the view of faith! However trying and terrible the wilderness might be, springs are found in it, the valley of Baca becomes a well, and water ever flows from that Rock which follows them, "and that Rock was Christ;" while beyond it lies that land—not very far distant to its vision—which is "the glory of all lands." This is the normal attitude of the child of God;

but let self-will get to work, and how soon all comforts flee, and we find out how true that word is, "The rebellious dwell in a dry land." Rebellion is against God's authority. It may be direct, as in Jonah's case, but far oftener it is concealed beneath the resistance, apparently, of the human instrument who makes known God's will. But God marks it, and when His Word is refused, no matter by whom presented, that marks rebellion in its essence. Blinded by prejudice, the person resists, he says, the man who bears the message, but he is really despising not man but God, who will most surely deal with him.

But perhaps the subtlest form of rebellion is that of resisting self-will *by* self-will. Here is Diotrephes acting with a high hand, and we resist him with a high hand,—we fight him with his own weapons. Now will in action is rebellion; for submission to God is ever our part, no matter how great the provocation may be. Need we be surprised, then, that the result of strife is dryness? If we were more honest with ourselves, doubtless much that passes for righteous zeal and care for the Lord's honor, is only self-will, and in the things of God what can be worse? But call it by what name we please, the tell-tale barrenness shows what is the matter. I have been unjustly dealt with by a brother, and I am applying Matt. xviii. to him, but I lose in my own soul the sense of God's presence, because I am not seeking *His will*, but self-vindication. Or the person toward whom I may be thus acting resents my treatment, and he too, instead of learning *God's mind* in allowing this trial (even if wrongly dealt with) to come on him, lets self assert itself and we are *both* rebellious and of course in a dry land. Nothing but subjection to God will do, under all circumstances of trial, whether sickness, disappointment, misrepresentation or whatever may make life bitter and hard. How our

blessed Lord ever bowed to His Father, taking even the cup of death not from the hands of His enemies, but from the One whom it was His meat and drink to serve. No trial but would yield the "peaceable fruits of righteousness," if we received it from a Father's hand of love, in true submission to Him. Ah! if we saw God in it all.

Is there not in this, a call to many individuals, to many assemblies of God's people as well? Who will heed it, and look away from all second causes to God, in imitation of Him who could say, "The Lord God hath opened Mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away My back. I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheek to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting"?

THE COVENANTS WITH ABRAHAM NUMERICALLY CONSIDERED.

IV.

BEFORE going on to the fifth covenant, a brief further consideration of the fourth may be called for, to bring the more clearly before the mind the real correspondence between the subject of this covenant and its numerical position. Let us look at the predictions as to Abram's descendants. "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And He said unto Abram, 'Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years. . . . And in the fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.' And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces." (Gen. xv. 12.)

In this, we have a wilderness testing and experience, corresponding to what is recorded in Numbers, the *fourth* book of Moses, which records the wilderness-journey of Israel; the "great and terrible wilderness" corresponding also to the captivity in Babylon, as recorded in Daniel, which, as shown in recent teaching, is a *fourth* book in the prophetical Pentateuch. As a type, this terrible experience of four hundred years and four generations tells us of the present time of Israel's exile and dispersion, which will end with their final everlasting regathering to their land at the Lord's appearing. This vision is seen when the sun had gone down and it was dark—the condition of Israel and of the world while the Lord delays His return. In the meanwhile, there is the furnace, and the lamp passing between the pieces of the sacrifice. All is secured to God's people, above all their failure, by the cross; and yet God must deal with them in all the trials of the wilderness-journey and experience, that they may know Him in His holy character, and that His word alone can guide them. "Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire." (Heb. xii. 28, 29.) So in Daniel we have the furnace, and in 1 Peter, the *fourth* part of the New-Testament Pentateuch, we have the "furnace" and the "fiery trial."

All is in beautiful harmony, and deeply impressive.

The world-number 4 ("the four quarters of the earth," Rev. xx. 8) is stamped upon this lesson. Whether Israel in Egypt, or in the wilderness, or in Babylon, or now in their long exile, or the Church of God now, His people must ever learn their own hearts, and God's power and holiness and love as they pass through the world to the promised inheritance. The sun has gone down. It is dark indeed. But we have the lamp—the "burning

lamp,"—"a cloud and darkness" to the world, but "light by night" to us. (Ex. xiv. 20.)

Let us remember the words of the wilderness-apostle of the New Testament: "Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. i. 6.)

The world is an awful scene, and it intervenes between God's chosen ones and their rest and glory at last. We can understand Abram's "horror of great darkness," and compare it with Daniel's "*night*-visions," and his "cogitations" that "much troubled" him, and his "fainting," and "being sick." (Dan. vii. 13, 28 and viii. 27.) "The whole creation groaneth," and "we ourselves groan within ourselves," awaiting the realization of our hope. "But we reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to us." The sorrow and distress is no secret; but the end is sure and near, and the Lord Himself has gone before. This cheers us—draws out our hearts—gives courage. The ark was in advance as they entered the Jordan that they might see it; and so we must see Jesus as having gone on before, and through all, into God's presence for us, that we may have a strength and courage to follow that is not our own. "It is God that worketh in us." Notice the exhortation that introduces this fourth covenant (Gen. xv. 1)—"Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." Let us face what remains for us of the wilderness way in the power and joy of this word, "Fear not." Just because God is for us.

V. The fifth covenant brings before us (Gen. xvii.), consistently with the meaning of this number, responsi-

bility. "Thou shalt keep My covenant." (v. 9.) "Walk before Me, and be thou perfect." (v. 1.) "Every man-child among you shall be circumcised." (v. 10.) How prominently man figures here! and it is here that Abram gets his new name, by the addition (as noticed by another,) of a *fifth* letter, and that the fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. He is now Abraham, a father of many nations: fruitfulness in responsibility. And if the five fingers of the hand speak of this responsibility, and the *four* fingers, helped by the firmness of the thumb, tell of man in weakness dependent on the One who has power, how clearly is this before us in this fifth covenant!—Abraham ninety years old and nine, "as good as dead" (Heb. xi. 12), and He who speaks to him is "the almighty God." How could the meaning of the number be more strikingly illustrated, both as to responsibility and the way in which alone man can fulfill it—weakness leaning upon Him who has promised, judging Him faithful. "Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable." (Heb. xi. 12.) And so we are exhorted (Heb. x. 23), "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He is faithful that promised."

May this secret of victory and peace and joy be ever with us. It is the Lord Almighty who has called us into the path of lowly but fearless obedience. He has promised to be a Father to us, and we His sons and daughters. (2 Cor. vi.) If we are to realize this precious relationship, we must pay diligent heed to His call. May it be ours to do so each day, and in all things. Infinite will be our gain and great the reward, (Heb. x. 35.) He is faithful that promised, and He is the Lord Almighty. It is before Him we are to walk.

It is important to note that just *where responsibility is*

the theme, circumcision is enjoined as an absolute necessity. Let us carefully ponder this. When we are awakened to a sense of obligation to serve God, our impulse is to trust in ourselves. Hence we must learn that to trust in ourselves is to trust in the flesh; so, on the other hand, to deny the flesh is to not trust in ourselves, and that in every thing, at every step, in things great and small. Dependence—looking up—the sense of weakness—cleaving to the Lord constantly and continuously,—that is, faith ever in exercise—walking by faith and not by sight.

It is not a task to perform—a legal effort, but a principle according to which we are to live—to endure as seeing Him who is invisible. It is the power of the Spirit, leading us in truth and righteousness. “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.” Never can we take a step by faith without finding that God is most surely with us in power and blessing. He is “the almighty God;” we are to walk before Him, and to be perfect.

“In whom ye are circumcised, . . . in the putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.” “Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.” “Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth—fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness (or unbridled desire), which is idolatry; for which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.”

We are the “elect of God, holy, and beloved.”

E. S. L.

(To be continued.)

PROGRESS.

"Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all." (1 Tim. iv. 15.)

"Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"
(Luke ii. 49.)

WE have here two expressions which are in Greek the same; literally, "Be *in* them,"—"I must be *in* the things of My Father." There is but one way to make progress in the things of God, and that is by being absorbed in them at all times. One hour of deliberate or permitted turning from His things to the world in any form will mar communion and hinder growth. Whatever we may be doing, we are to be *in* the things of God, as in an atmosphere. There is nothing hard in this. Will love refuse to be constantly occupied with its object? Nothing will be neglected if we are thus wholly engaged in God's thoughts and His service. It is the *divided* heart that makes trouble. The very word for "care" in the Greek (*merimna*) speaks of the heart being divided—drawn in two directions. *One* object, *one* business is all we have. See our blessed Lord in the things of His Father in those years of childhood, as well as in His public ministry.

WORD STUDIES IN THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

IT is the characteristic of man's work, that, no matter how perfect it may appear, a minute inspection brings out inaccuracies. The exact opposite is true of all God's works. Compare, for instance, man's *machinery* with God's. Man makes a pump to draw water, and noise and labor must be used to operate it, to say nothing of its

getting out of order. God's evaporation has worked silently and perfectly from the beginning. Take man's *art*. His picture may be beautiful at a distance; but approach it, use a magnifying-glass, and it only reveals coarseness and imperfection: not so with God's paintings, on the flower, in the rainbow, etc. The more minutely they are examined, the more their beauties appear, and new beauties are discovered. The rose is beautiful to all; but let the botanist pull it apart, put it under the glass, and the very pollen-dust conveys its lesson to him of One who is perfect in wisdom and skill. But we are told, "Thou hast magnified Thy *Word* above all Thy name;" so that the worshipper in the nineteenth psalm has his gaze turned from the heavens to the Word of Jehovah. If, therefore, we find that God's world invites minute analysis and microscopic examination, we find too that His Word invites no less to the same. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but *My word* shall not pass away." If we can tear the flower apart and find each part perfect, so we can take His Word, and if seeking to find beauties in its parts—its very words, we will not be disappointed. In these "word studies," it is purposed to thus in a measure dissect and examine the constituent parts of the epistle. It may seem like mechanical work, but if it shows us divine accuracy reaching down beneath the surface, our confidence will be increased, our conviction deepened that "the *words* of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." (Ps. xii. 6.)

1. *Agapao*—to love, *Agape*—love, *Agapētos*—beloved. The strongest term for love. *Phileo* is the love of a *friend*. See Jno. xxi. 15-17, where our Lord asks Peter the three-fold question, "Lovest thou Me?" The first two times He uses the strong term *agapao*, and is answered by Peter with the weaker one—*phileo*, when He adopts the weaker too and meets with the same reply from Peter. *Agapao*

is used in Jno. iii. 16 for God's love to the world, Jno. xvii. 26 for the Father's love for the Son, 1 Jno. iv. 19 for our love to God, and 1 Jno. iv. 7 for our love to one another.

Phileo is used in Jno. v. 20 of the Father's love to the Son, indicating *friendship*, no secrets, as in Jno. xv. 15—"I have called you friends" (*philous*).

Eph. i. 6—"Accepted in the *Beloved*." (*Egapemeno*, participle of *agapao*.) This gives the *sphere* and character of the grace shown: it is the *beloved Son*, as in Jno. xvii. 26.

Chap. ii. 4—"His great love (*agape*) wherewith He loved (*agapao*) us." This gives us the *source* of the *love*—*God*, illustrating 1 Jno. iv. 10: nothing in us but sin.

Chap. iii. 19—"The love (*agape*) of Christ which passeth knowledge;" shown in chap. v. 2—"Christ loved (*agapao*) us, and gave Himself for us, a sacrifice." Here the *work done* for us Godward is spoken of as well pleasing and acceptable to God, while in chap. v. 25, 26, etc., the work done *in* us at the first and *with* us at the last is given; and ver. 29 gives the care here during our stay—all spring from the love of Christ; well may we say "it passeth knowledge." So we have His love shown in a fourfold way, leading Him to a work (1) acceptable to God (God glorified, His righteousness manifested), (2) sanctifies us by the Word, (3) presents us glorious to Himself, (4) nourishes and cherishes us. Whichever way we look—at the cross up to the glory or around on our path, we see the love of Christ to us: to fathom it would be to exhaust the fullness of God.

Chap. i. 4 gives us the *purpose* of God toward us—that we should be blameless before Him *in love*. The effect of His love will be finally to manifest us in perfect love. But this love is manifested *here* too, even at the beginning of the Christian life, as in chap. i. 15, their love (*agape*).

toward the saints is spoken of. In chap. iii. 18, they are to be rooted and grounded in love (*agape*) so as to understand Christ's love. This does not mean that we exercise love before we understand Christ's love, but that we grasp and enjoy and return that love in order to know more of it. Chap. iv. 2 shows us the practical working of love in the body—the way to keep the unity of the Spirit; thus the body grows, as in chap. iv. 15, 16. Also chap. v. 2, where Christ's love is set as the model for ours—and the parting benediction leaves love with them, even those who already love our Lord Jesus (vi. 23, 24). So in the practical relation of husband to wife it is *love*, to illustrate Christ's love to the Church. Thus by this word we have set before us love in its *source* (God), channel (Christ), character (work of Christ), present effects (toward one another and God), and eternal results (holiness with Christ before God in love). "Walk in love."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 2.—"Please explain Mark xiii. 32, last clause. Why did not the Son know?"

Ans.—It was as *Son of Man* that our Lord knew not the day and hour of the judgments and the setting up of His kingdom. Mark, as we know, gives us the Lord as Servant, and it is in beautiful harmony with this view of Him that He is ignorant of the "times and seasons which the Father has put in His own power." In Phil. ii. we see how He who was in the form of God, that is, was divine, did not for this reason think it robbery, or rather, something to be grasped and held fast, to be equal with God—equal in the glory of *position*, in the glory of His *person*, He ever was and will be equal with God. He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant. That is what we have in this verse—the Son in the place of the servant and prophet of God and as such knowing only what the Father was pleased to make known to Him.

Q. 3.—Mark xlii. 35. "Has the Lord here divided this dispensation into watches? If so, how are they to be seen?"

Ans.—While the language might seem to refer to several clearly marked epochs in the dispensation, is it not likely that the Lord simply uses the various watches of the night to press home the all-important need of being ready *whenever* He might come? At the same time the midnight has doubtless passed, and indeed the cock-crowing,—sign of approaching day, has been heard. All about us points to the solemn yet blessed fact that "the night is far spent, and the day is at hand." If the apostle John could say in his day, "It is the last hour," how much more can it be said now?

Q. 4.—Luke xli. 58. "Who is the adversary? and who is the magistrate, and the judge, and the officer?"

Ans.—In the similar passage in Matt. v. 25, the "magistrate" is not mentioned, and I do not know that in this verse he differs necessarily from the judge, unless it be a more general term. The subject here is Israel, to whom the times should have indicated that judgment was impending. The "adversary,"—the law, "even Moses in whom ye trust"—was bringing them to the ruler or judge—God, the judge of His people. John the Baptist, and our Lord Himself, had been preaching as the adversary or legal accuser of the people, showing them their sins and calling them to repentance. But while this was the case Israel was only "on the way to the magistrate," there was yet time to be "reconciled" by repentance and acceptance of Christ as Messiah. This they refused to do, rejecting our Lord and delivering Him over to be put to death by the Gentiles. So the prediction of the Lord has been fulfilled: they have been delivered to the judge—judicially dealt with by God, who has handed them over to the "officer," or executor of His will—any instrument He may see fit to use, in this case, the Gentiles, by whom the Jews have been oppressed ever since. They will continue in "prison"—under the judicial dealings of God—till they have passed through the full measure of retributive judgment under the earthly government of God, culminating in "the great tribulation," after which God will speak comfortably to Jerusalem for she will have "received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

REFORMATION TIMES.

CONANT'S "History of English Bible Translation."* The above title hardly conveys to the reader the extensiveness and interesting character of the work we are about to commend. We therefore place at the head of this notice the words "Reformation Times," to call attention to the subject really presented in the book.

To the Scriptures we should turn first of all both for doctrine and instructive history; but the history of the Church is also profitable—full of suggestion, instruction, comfort, warning.

We shall be the better prepared for the fight and furnished for the journey by acquaintance especially with Reformation history; and, as "history repeats itself," acquaintance with one period affords a very full supply of instruction,—above all when that period is marked by events, under the hand of God, that are among the most interesting and remarkable in the world's history.

History, we know, is a mirror in which we see reflected our own selves, and the communities in which we live,—giving object-lessons illustrating the precious teachings and warnings of the Word. Such, of course, is life to us in general, and all that we meet with and hear and see—"Wisdom crieth aloud in the streets." A fool has no heart for wisdom, and the world is blind to the meaning of its own history; but the lessons are continued nevertheless, and the great examination-day will come, and folly will meet its doom, and God will be glorified in all the records of the past. "A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself, but the simple pass on and are punished." (Prov. xxii. 3.)

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another

* May be had at same address as this magazine. Price, 25 cts.

thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest doest the same things." (Rom. ii. 1.) So solemn and weighty are the lessons of history in the light of Scripture.

Wickliffe and his times and Tyndale and his times are really the subjects brought before us in the book of which we speak, only that the author had in mind prominently the history of our English Bible in connection with the sufferings endured by such witnesses, (sufferings of persecution by the malice of Satan, and persecution, in Tyndale's case, to death,) that we might have God's Word in our own tongue. Hence the title, "History of English Bible Translation;"—no mere reference to a work of scholars and students, but a living picture from the pages of history of a deadly conflict like that of David with the Philistine giant. A conflict in which prominently these two men stood up against the enemy when the people of God in general were trembling and ready to flee,—such is the goodness of our God to us.

They were not associated in time: Wickliffe was the pioneer—a hundred and fifty years before the time of Tyndale and the Reformation. Wickliffe had grace from God to stand single-handed for the truth, bearing fearless witness for God and for Christ; and when at last driven from Oxford by persecution to a measure of retirement at Lutterworth, he made diligent use of the occasion to produce the work of his life,—a translation of the Latin Bible into English; so that, under the unerring and merciful providence of God, the apparent diminishing of opportunity, as so often the case, afforded him the real opportunity of his life. But none will wonder at this who know the meaning of the cross, and its results. There, defeat was victory; and on that line God is leading His people, and will to the end. None can fight against God. He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. We have but to stand still, and see the salvation of God.

Tyndale's work, though not greater, was in a yet stormier time, when by the Reformation God was about to give deliverance to His people from an "iron furnace" and from bondage. Things had come to a head, and the conflict the fiercer. Wickliffe's translation was only in manuscript, and from the Vulgate. At this period, the study of Greek had been introduced, and the art of printing. The way was prepared of God, and Tyndale, having forsaken England for Antwerp and Cologne for safety, translated the New Testament into English, and found means by English merchants to send his little messengers back to England.

When we consider the great results that followed the arrival of this little book in the Thames, and the persecution that arose by the heads of church and state, we see on the part of the enemy the same malice at work behind the scenes that is presented to us in the twelfth chapter of Revelation, where the dragon stands ready to devour the man-child, and on the other hand, for our joy and comfort, the folly of all efforts to hinder the purposes of God. There we may rest with peaceful expectation of the end. As a tender plant is nourished, the providence of God sheltered in the main the silent progress of the truth from Wickliffe's days until the Reformation a hundred and fifty years after, when, we may say, the time for warfare by full-grown men had come, and victory in deadly conflict. If at such a time distress increased, and the awful clamor of the enemy, it was the heat of battle that precedes victory and peace, however defective the results through failure among the faithful themselves.

Wickliffe's work was more preparatory; Tyndale's and Luther's, at a time of more rapidly accomplishing events toward the approaching end. But he that sowed and he that reaped can rejoice together.

Since writing what precedes, an interesting introductory review in a work on revivals* came to notice only to-day,—no doubt, of the Lord. We venture to add an extract in continuance and development of the theme just now briefly suggested in our last few words. Like a bird's-eye view of a country, we get in the following extract a comprehensive and spiritual view of an important era in church-history, and an impressive lesson of how God is ever working to an end, however little noticed by men, and even at times by His own.

“Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people,” deepening as if to endless night. If a star or two appeared, it was only to be quenched apparently in clouds of devastating war. None could see a harbinger or promise of returning day at the period when the secret work of Providence was ripe, and the morning watch came unperceived, and God said, “Let there be light!” Then Wickliffe, the morning star of the Reformation, arose before the dawn, in the fourteenth century, clothed in the light of a reopened Bible. Soon after, in the beginning of the fifteenth, John Huss caught the reflection, and added to it the flame of martyrdom. The revival of letters advanced: twenty-universities arose in less than a hundred years. In the midst of this movement the art of printing was given, imparting an impetus to literature which had been otherwise inconceivable, and providing the swift and subtle agent by which the infant Reformation was to surprise and overpower its great adversary unawares. At the same juncture, the Mohammedan power, overwhelming the eastern metropolis, swept the remnant of Greek learning into Europe. Finally, in and about the last quarter of the same memorable century, Luther, Zwingle, Cranmer, Melancthon, Knox, and Calvin, with other mighty champions of the truth, were born. Little thought the simple mothers what they had in their cradles. But God’s time was at hand, and the final preparations for His work were now masked under the form of a few poor men’s babes.

“O God, when Thou wentest forth before Thy people,—when Thou didst march through the wilderness, the earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God. . . . The Lord

*“Narratives of Remarkable Conversions and Revival Incidents. Review of Revivals from the day of Pentecost to the great awakening in the last century. Rise and progress of the great awakening of 1857-58.”

gave the Word; great was the company of those that published it." In the beginning of the sixteenth century, the unlooked-for heralds came, proclaiming free salvation by Christ crucified: first, Lefevre, Farel, Bricounet, Chatelain, and their friends in France; then Zwinglius in Switzerland; and almost at the same moment, the giant of the Reformation, Martin Luther, in Germany;—each attended by a host of zealous and able coadjutors both in church and state. Ecolampadius, Melancthon, Calvin—preachers, scholars, princes, and nobles: soon Tyndale, with his printed English Testament in England; Patrick Hamilton, Geo. Wishart, and John Knox in Scotland; John Taussen in Denmark; John Laski in Poland; Olaus Petri and Laurentius in Sweden; and humbler names without number in every quarter;—all these arose at once, or within little more than a quarter of a century, by the mysterious workings of the Spirit and providence of God, filled Europe with their doctrine, and triumphantly established the truth of the gospel in the countries now protestant within periods varying from ten to fifty years from the date of this marvelous uprising.

Much, indeed, of what is commonly called "the Reformation" belongs to a kingdom that is only of this world. Political power and ambition, political alliance and protection, political means and appliances, were the bane of its spirituality and purity; and while these elements seemed indeed to preserve it from extinction, it is probable that in some cases, as in France, they were also its ruin. The struggle for liberty beginning in the struggle for divine truth, was long identified with it, and fastened its changing fortunes upon the cause of the gospel. The progress of the kingdom of Christ through this stormy chaos of good and evil is what all can witness but none clearly trace, save the all-wise Being who directs both the operation and the result. Now, however, the confusion is measurably cleared; the vexed elements have gradually settled and separated; the contradiction in nature which severs the heavenly from all earthly kingdoms begins to be apprehended, and we can contemplate the Reformation proper in distinction from the mere politico-religious changes attached to it. To contemplate this pure heavenly object, we must seek it in the hearts of God's people. Eminent illustrations of its power and quality will be found in another part of this volume, exhibiting the essence of the Reformation, which history cannot represent. So much of the historical Reformation was the mere creation, or rather fiction, of law, that the measure of true religious improvement effected in the Protestantized churches is often left extremely dubious. But here, in the inner life, whose records are preserved to us, we have

veritable unambiguous substance. Here is the revived power of the doctrine of the cross of Christ: here is the secret of a revolution equal, and we may hope more than equal, to that which in a similar length of time (three centuries) had at first broken the power of paganism as that of popery is now broken, and placed Christianity on the throne of the Cæsars. Here is once more a supernatural wonder, an operation of the Holy Ghost,—in common language, a *revival*, a restoration of life, a spiritual resurrection, of the most amazing and glorious character. Scarcely less sudden and overwhelming than the descent of Pentecost, with the subsequent general spreading of the gospel by Paul, and perhaps hardly inferior to the same in the multitude of its converts and the number and piety of its martyrs, while to all appearance beyond comparison with it in the permanence of its impulse and the magnitude of its immediate fruits. It is identified with the primitive revival in its central principle—Christ crucified, and closely resembles it as a spiritual spring-time awakening at the word of God out of the profoundest depth of wintry desolation; *but not without a patient sowing of precious seed long previous*, and an unconscious softening and preparation of the common heart by divine Providence. The reforming preachers came to a people long involved in night; but it had been a night of storm and tempest,—no stagnant, putrescent, Asiatic calm. The mass of men were strangers to leisure for luxurious vices and corrupt philosophies: their minds were vigorous, simple, and earnest; neither were they hardened by habit to a disregarded gospel. The excessive wickedness in high places, which had almost blotted out the memory of true Christianity, had saved the common people from that most deadly, depraving, and indurating form of sin, the disbelief and contempt of revealed truth and a crucified Saviour. The news of such a Saviour once announced, flew like the winds among “a people prepared for the Lord” more perfectly than we can guess, by the very miseries of their state; and being welcomed with exultation, were cherished with a tenacity which death and torture could not relax.

Let us notice the solemn truth of the words, “that most deadly, depraving, and indurating form of sin, the disbelief and contempt of revealed truth and a crucified Saviour.” This the people at large, then, were not ruled by. But how is it now? If then the people were “prepared for the Lord,” are they not now, in pride and folly,

being prepared for Satan and apostasy? Let the leaders of thought be warned of their wickedness, and of the judgment of God. May His grace prevail mightily in hearts mislead, ere the darkness of night and the woes of judgment are upon them

E. S. L.

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART III.—Continued.

THE TRINITY OF EVIL, AND THE MANIFESTATION OF THE WICKED ONE.

Antichrist. (Chap. xiii. 11–18.)—Continued.

WITH this picture in Revelation, we are to connect the prophecies of Antichrist which we have elsewhere in the New Testament, and which we have briefly considered. The apostle John has shown us distinctly that he will deny the Father and the Son,—the faith of Christianity,—and (not that there *is* a Christ, but) that *Jesus* is the Christ. He is thus distinctly identified with the unbelief of Israel, as he is impliedly an apostate from the Christian faith, in which character the apostle plainly speaks of him to the Thessalonians. He is a second Judas, "the son of perdition," the ripe fruit of that "falling away" which was to come before the day of the Lord came,—itself the outcome of that "mystery of iniquity" (or "lawlessness") then at work. He is the "wicked," or "lawless one,"—not the sinful *woman*, the harlot of Revelation, but the "*man* of sin."

Every word here claims from us the closest attention. The sinful *woman* is still professedly subject to the man, antichristian, because in fact putting herself in Christ's place, claiming a power that is His alone. Nevertheless,

she claims it in His name, not in her own. The pope assumes not to be Christ, but the vicar of Christ. The real "*man* of sin" throws off this womanly subjection. He is no vicar of Christ, but denies that Jesus is the Christ. He sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Yet, even as Christ owns, and brings men to worship, the Father, so Antichrist brings men to worship another, as Revelation has shown us. There is a terrible consistency about these separate predictions, which thus confirm and supplement one another.

We see clearly now that the temple in which he sits is not the Christian church, but the Jewish temple, and how he is linked with the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel and by the Lord, an abomination, which brings in the time of trouble lasting till the Son of Man comes in the clouds of heaven as Saviour of Israel and of the world.

The abomination is mentioned three times in Daniel, the only place that is equivocal in its application to the last days being that of the eleventh chapter (v. 31). The connection would refer it there to Antiochus Epiphanes, the Grecian oppressor of Israel, who, near the middle of the second century before Christ, profaned the temple with idolatrous sacrifices and impure rites. It is agreed by commentators in general that the whole of the previous part of the chapter details in a wonderful manner the strife of the Syrian and Egyptian kings, in the centre of which Judæa lay. From this point on, however, interpreters differ widely. The attempt to apply the rest of the prophecy to Antiochus has been shown by Keil and others to be an utter failure. The time of trouble such as never was, yet which ends with the deliverance of the people (chap. xii. 1) corresponds exactly with that which is spoken of in the Lord's prophecy on the mount of Olives; and the "time, times, and a half"

named in connection with the abomination of desolation, and which the book of Revelation again and again brings before us, are alone sufficient to assure us that we have here reached a period future to us to-day. The connection of all this becomes a matter of deepest interest.

That the whole present period of the Christian dispensation should be passed over in Old-Testament prophecy is indeed not a new thing to us ; and the knowledge of this makes the leap of so many centuries not incredible. If, however, the "time, times, and a half," or twelve hundred and sixty days, from the setting up of the abomination, contemplate *that* abomination set up by Antiochus, more than a century and a half before Christ, then the reckoning of this time is an utter perplexity. Yet, what other *can* be contemplated, when in all this prophecy there is none other referred to? To go back to chaps. viii. or ix. to find such a reference, overlooking what is before our eyes, would seem out of question. What other solution of the matter is possible?

Now we must remember that the book is shut up and sealed until the "time of the end,"—a term which has a recognized meaning in prophecy, and cannot apply to the times of Antiochus, or to those of the Maccabees which followed them. It assures us once more that the prophecy reaches on to the days of Matt. xxiv.; and that the abomination of desolation there must be the abomination here. Yet how can it be? Only, surely, in one way : if the application to Antiochus, while true, be only the partial and incipient fulfillment of that which looks on to the last days for its exhaustive one, then indeed all is reconciled, and the difficulty has disappeared. This, therefore, must be the real solution.

What we have here is only one example of that double fulfillment which many interpreters have long since found in Scripture prophecies, and of which the book of Revela-

tion is the fullest and the most extended. There may be a question here as to how far the double fulfillment in in this case reaches back. With this we have not to do, for we are not primarily occupied with Daniel. It is sufficient for our purpose, if we are entitled to take the abomination of desolation here (as it certainly appears that we are bound to take it,) as in both places the same, and identical with that which we find in the New Testament.

Going on in the eleventh chapter, then, to the thirty-sixth verse, we find the picture of one who may well be the same as the second "beast" of Revelation. If at the first look it might appear so, a further consideration, it is believed, will confirm the thought of this. We must quote the description in full.

"And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished, for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the Desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honor the god of forces; and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain."

If we take the prophecy as closely connected, at least from the thirty-first verse,—and we have seen that there seems a necessity for this,—then this king is described in his conduct after the abomination of desolation has been set up in the temple; and this strange, and it might seem contradictory character that is ascribed to him, would seem to mark him out sufficiently, that he sets himself up

above every god, and yet has a god of his own. This is exactly what is true of the antichristian second beast: and there can scarcely be another at such a time, of whom it can be true. But let us look more closely.

First, he is a king; and the place of his rule is clearly, by the connection, in the land of Israel. Thus he fills the identical position of the second beast. Then he does according to his own will, is his own law—"lawless," as in Thessalonians. His self-exaltation above every god naturally connects itself with blasphemy against the God of gods, spite of which he prospers till the indignation is accomplished,—that is, the term of God's wrath against Israel, a determinate, decreed time. This is the secret of his being allowed to prosper, that God wills to use him as a rod of discipline for His people. Israel's sins give power to their adversaries.

The next verse intimates that he is a Jew himself, an apostate one, for he regards not the God of his fathers. It is not natural to apply this to any other than the true God, and then his ancestry is plain. Then too the "desire of women," put as here among the objects of worship, is the Messiah, promised as the "woman's seed." Thus his character comes still more clearly out.

Yet, though thus exalting himself, he has a god of his own, the "god of forces," or "fortresses." And we have seen the second beast's object of worship is the first beast; a political idol, sought for the strength it gives, a worship compounded of fear and greed. Thus it is indeed a god whom his fathers knew not, none of the old gods of which the world has been so full, although the dark and dreadful power behind it is the same: the face is changed, but not the heart.

Indeed strongholds are his trust, and he practices against them with the help of this strange god: this seems the meaning of the sentence that follows. "And

whosoever acknowledges him he will increase with glory, and cause him to rule over the multitude, and divide the land for gain."

In all this we find what agrees perfectly with what is elsewhere stated of the "man of sin." There are no doubt difficulties in interpreting this part of Daniel consistently all through, especially in the connection of the "king" here spoken of with the setting up of the abomination in the thirty-first verse. For it is the *king of the north* who there seems to inspire this; and the king of the north is throughout the chapter the Grecian king of Syria, and the part he plays is clearly that which Antiochus did play. From this it is very natural that it should be conceived (as by some it is) that the king of the north and Antichrist are one. If this were so, it would not alter any thing that has been said as to the application of the prophecy, although there might be a difficulty as to a Grecian prince becoming a Jewish false Christ.

But there is no need for this; nor any reason that I am aware why the perpetration of the awful wickedness in connection with Jehovah's sanctuary should not be the work of more than even the two beasts of Revelation. It is certainly striking that in chap. viii.; where the rise of this latter-day Grecian power is depicted, the taking away of the daily sacrifice is linked in some way with his magnifying himself against the Prince of the host (v. 11). It may not be positively asserted that it is done by him, (as most translators and interpreters however give it,) yet the connection is so natural, one might almost say, inevitable, that, had we this passage alone, all would take it so. How much more would one think so when the eleventh chapter seems so entirely to confirm this?

Let it be remembered that Greece was one of the provinces of the Roman empire, and as such would seem to be subject to it upon its revival, whether or not the

bond with it be broken before the end. Why not a combination of powers and motives in the commission of this last blasphemous crime, even as in the cross Jew and Gentile were linked together?

The instrument is no doubt the antichristian power in Judæa, but the Grecian power may none the less have its full part, and both of these be in subordination to the head of the western empire.

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

THE OLD CREATION AND THE NEW.

(Gen. i. and Jno. xx.)

A COMPARISON of these two chapters will reveal much of contrast and much of similarity.

The former affords a perfect picture of the old creation;* the latter gives a no less perfect picture of the new.

In Gen. i. 2 we see that what had left the Creator's hand in a perfect condition (comp. v. 1 and Is. xlv. 18) is now desolate—waste; while in Jno. xx., first part, we see that man whom He had made upright, made to hold sweet communion with, was so utterly a ruin (*tohu*—"ruin" is the word used both in Gen. i. 2 and Is. xlv. 18), that he did not recognize his Creator; even the people He had singled out for Himself, and especially favored, would not have Him.

In Gen. i. we get physical ruin and creation, as we say; in Jno. xx. we get moral ruin and new creation.

In Gen. i. 2 we read, "And the earth was without form and void, and darkness upon the face of the deep." If we allow "the earth" to typify Israel, and "the deep" to typify the world as such, what could be more desolate or

*The term "old creation," although not quite accurate, is restricted here to the six days' work.

formless than that loved and cared-for people, who, when their Messiah came to them, could say, "Not this Man, but Barabbas"? and what more dark than the human heart, as manifested at the cross (Jno. xix.)? But in Gen. i. 2 the Spirit of God hovers over the waters, so in Jno. xx. Jesus does not go instantly to heaven, He lingers, although not a soul to welcome Him as He emerges from His borrowed grave (see Prov. viii. 31).

In Gen. i. God is about to display His wisdom and power in fashioning from those unpromising materials an abode for man, indeed, an abode for *Himself*, may we not say? In Jno. xx. the blessed Head of the new creation is about to form, out of *such* materials, "a habitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph. ii. 22.)

In Gen. i. there is a sevenfold process, six days of work and the desolate scene is made to blossom and bear fruit, so that on the seventh, He can view it all with perfect satisfaction and rest. In Jno. xx. there is also a sevenfold process, seven utterances of the Risen One, leading on to millennial rest. Marvelous utterances, these first words of the First-born from the dead! Each utterance, we shall find, corresponding with its numerical place:—

I. "Woman, why weepest thou, whom seekest thou?" (v. 15.)

Light has come in. Why did the blessed Lord ask Mary why she wept, and whom she sought? Did He not know? Surely, He did. Why do we ask our children, as they begin to lisp their first word, "Whose dear little baby are you?" but to hear them say, as we well know they will say, "Papa's" or "Mamma's"? We love to hear those words, and the blessed Lord longed to hear the confession from Mary's lips, "If thou have borne *Him* hence, tell me where thou hast laid *Him*, and I will take *Him* away." How precious to the Lord must have been

that threefold confession of "Him" who so filled her heart!

II. "Mary!" (v. 16.)

Only one word, but how much is expressed by it!

"He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." (Chap. x. 3.)

"For I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine." (Is. xliii. 1.)

On the second day of creation, waters were *separated* from waters. Thus the number 2 is easily read here, speaking of redemption or salvation (see Exodus, second book of Moses), separation *to*, or relationship, not the ground of it, but the *position*, the *fact*.

She therefore owns Him Master.

III. "Jesus saith unto her, 'Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God.'" (v. 17.)

On the *third* day of creation, dry land appeared, the waters being gathered together, and there was grass, herbs, fruit. The *third* book of Moses speaks of the sanctuary, of *access* to God.

3 is the number which speaks of *solidity* (length, breadth, and thickness); the sanctuary is a cube, as also the holy city—"the length, breadth, and height of it are equal." Jesus arose on the *third* day; thus it speaks of resurrection and the manifestation of God's power. It is also the number of persons in the Godhead. God thus fully revealed in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

If we take Mary to be typical of the Church, in the chapter we are looking at, the number 3 is very fruitful as showing the Church's place.

(a) She stands on resurrection-ground. Not now linked with an earthly Messiah. She is not to touch Him, for He is *not yet* ascended to His Father. This implies

(*b*) that her proper contact with Him will be when He *has* ascended. Meantime she (*c*) is sent forth to tell where He is gone.

This series of three,—*i. e.*, the first three utterances, gives the Church's place very fully.

Called, chosen, and sent, to speak of Him who has brought her into His own relationship with His Father and His God.

IV. "Peace be unto you." (*v.* 19.)

On the *fourth* day of creation, the sun, moon, and stars appeared. They were to "rule the day and to rule the night, and to *divide* the light from the darkness" (see Jno. viii. 12; Eph. v. 8).

In the fourth book of Moses, we have the ordering of Jehovah's camp. In this fourth utterance of Jesus, we have a perfect picture of the assembly, viewed from the *subjective*, or *practical* side. The assembly is gathered, the world, the religious world, outside, Jesus in the midst, peace is proclaimed, and they are reminded of His death. Peace here, is peace *with* God, that peace which is made by the blood of His cross.

"Jesus in the midst." "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. xviii. 20.)

On the fourth day of the old creation, the sun was put into his place as centre of our planetary system, the *solar* system,—*i. e.*, *his* system. And what an important place! No light, no heat, no day, no summer, no season, no *life* indeed without the sun; and even night itself would be blacker still without his reflected light. Mercury, Venus, the Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune all revolve around the sun as their centre, who can imagine the ruin which would ensue upon his displacement! There is a lesson for us here of deepest practical importance.

If the number 4 is the first number which allows of simple division, and speaks thus of weakness, yet here we may learn how in our very weakness *His* strength is made perfect (2 Cor. xii. 9 *cf.* Rom. vi. 19), just as on the other hand, in the fourth book of Moses, we see failure on every side where, thinking themselves strong, His people displace Him.

V. "Then said Jesus to them again, 'Peace be unto you; as the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.'" (v. 21.)

On the fifth day of creation, the waters are made to bring forth abundantly. "And God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas; and let fowl multiply in the earth'" (Gen. i. 22).

In the fifth book, *responsibility* is pressed: "Go in and possess the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers." (Deut. i. 8.)

So here in this fifth utterance of the risen Head of the new creation, we have responsibility, *stewardship* (comp. chap. xvii. 18) and the peace of God.

VI: "And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.'" (vv. 22, 23.)

On the *sixth* day God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.

So here, in this sixth utterance of the risen Lord, we get a picture of the Church's privilege and responsibility, leading on to the seventh day, the rest at the end, and how near that end we may be!

"Peace be unto you." (v. 26.)

In the old creation, the seventh was the day of rest; here, it speaks of millennial rest, the remnant (Thomas, type of the saved remnant of the Jews at the end of this dispensation), not present till then, comes in at the end.

They are unbelieving now, but ere long will *see* Him, as He comes to the earth, will see His wounds, and will say, "My Lord and my God" (comp. Zech. xiii. 6; xii. 10-14; Rev. i. 7).

VIII. "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (v. 29)

This is the eighth utterance, but like the octave in music, it carries us back to the beginning.

To sum up :—

The first three utterances appear to give the *objective* side, the Church in His mind. This is perfect in itself. The remaining four give the *subjective*, *man's* side (4—earthen vessel).

We have the new *day*—*first* day, . . . vers. 1, 19, 26.

new *name*, ver. 16.

new *relationship*, ver. 17.

Peace *with* God, ver. 19.

Peace *of* God, ver. 21.

Peace at the end—mellennial, ver. 26.

I cannot do better in closing this superficial study than use the words of another :—

"Good and precious Saviour, we do indeed rejoice that Thou hast now fulfilled all things, and art at rest with Thy Father, whatever may be Thy active love for us. Oh, that we may know and love Thee better! But still we can say in fullness of heart, Come quickly, Lord! Leave once more the throne of Thy rest and of Thy personal glory, to come and take us to Thyself, that all may be fulfilled for us also, and that we may be with Thee and in the light of Thy Father's countenance and in His house. Thy grace is infinite, but Thy presence and the joy of the Father shall be the rest of our hearts, and our eternal joy."—(*Synopsis*, vol. iii., p. 454.)

J. B. J.

THE COVENANTS WITH ABRAHAM NUMERICALLY CONSIDERED.

VI.

THE sixth covenant is with Abraham at his tent-door (Gen. xviii.) in the plains of Mamre, when visited by the three men. He was privileged to entertain the Lord Himself; and this tells us he was walking in communion with God; and no sooner are we ready to receive the Lord than is He in grace and love ready to visit us, and assure our hearts of His fellowship and approval. "We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." (Jno. xiv. 23.) And Enoch "had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Heb. xi. 5.) "And if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with Me." (Rev. iii. 20.) "I will come in to him, and will sup with him" comes first—before "and he with Me." This is grace. So Mary goes to Elizabeth,—the one who has the greater revelation and honor to the other. So the one who knows most of grace and fellowship is the one who will be the first to manifest love and fellowship to others, and kindle in other hearts an answering warmth—a manifestation of what it is to "dwell in God" (1 Jno. iv. 12), and "walk in love," as "*imitators* of God." (Eph. v. 1—*R. V.*)

May we have the door open, then, to fellowship with God, and we shall have the heart open toward one another. We shall truly love one another, and have the wisdom of God in all our ways with one another.

Let us note that Abraham was "in the plains of Mamre"—that place where he dwelt and worshiped after he had gained a victory over the temptation that drew Lot away to Sodom (Gen. xiii. 18).

It is holy ground—associations of victory and communion—"Mamre," "in Hebron," meaning "*vigor in company*," or, may we not say, "*communion*" (Young's

Concordance). Thus "the plains of Mamre" link the third and sixth covenants together in some way; and is it not (in this, at least,) prominently that God is the God of resurrection? As to the third, the number suggests it. As to this one—the sixth, the assurance of a son when naturally there was no hope, because nothing was "too hard for the Lord" very plainly declares it. Where, then, is the difference between the two covenants as to their teaching? Is it not this, that in the third it is simply the complete manifestation of the power of God (promised), whereas in the sixth it is the assurance of this manifestation in the face of death (Abraham and Sarah being beyond hope,) and of unbelief (Sarah's laughter), as at the grave of Lazarus there was the groaning and the weeping and unbelief, but just there and then the word of the Son of God went forth, "Lazarus, come forth!" Man comes forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, the evidence of the awful power that had been holding him captive—the power of an enemy; but the power of a greater delivers, and in the hour of his apparent victory Satan is overwhelmingly defeated.

Thus in the sixth covenant the evil significance of this number is very clearly present; it is short of seven, it is imperfection—sin—Satan's work. But in this portion, as elsewhere, the prominent thing is nevertheless the power of God above sin and Satan; to keep within bounds, and reap glory to Himself by entire victory and blessing at last.

This good side in the meaning of the number may be reached as suggested (in "Numerical Structure,") by the meaning of 2 (strife, division, evil,) multiplied by 3,—that is, evil subject to the power of God. But however it may be, this position in Gen. xviii. is certainly, as a matter of fact, the sixth covenant. It is a *sixth*, and its teaching is surely distinctly and prominently the power of

God over sin and death and unbelief—the work of the enemy.

Another thing to note is, that man is here brought into fellowship with God about all this; which agrees too with its occurring under the last *four* covenants, not under the first *three*. But whatever the teaching numerically, there is an interesting comparison between this scene at the tent-door and the one at the grave of Lazarus as to this point. However different the circumstances, the scenes are after all similar in their teaching, naturally enough of course. Abraham is a pilgrim and a stranger, and, according to nature, has no hope; so those at Bethany are brought face to face with death and the grave. But there where hope is gone, and hearts are smitten and broken, the Lord draws near, and brings man into fellowship with His power and His love. The enemy seems to be about to carry all before him, but it is only that his defeat may be the more signal and overwhelming.

This is illustrated in the pursuit of Pharaoh and his host after Israel—Israel in helpless weakness shut up apparently to a dreadful doom, when suddenly all is changed—the awful waves of God's judgment close in, and the enemy is seen no more. And this portion of Exodus, as has been shown to us of late, is a *sixth* part among the seven parts into which the divine record of Israel's deliverance naturally falls. All this falls remarkably into line with what we are now considering, and tends to assure us that whatever is real in these numerical teachings will be abundantly confirmed as we get better acquainted with our subject through a deeper acquaintance with the Scriptures, and so with the relationship of its parts to one another in this way.

Another notable illustration of this point is found in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew,—where the Lord, for the *sixth* time in this gospel, in His path of service, is

spoken of as upon a mountain, as already shown in a previous article. That is after He begins His ministry,—after the Temptation.

What, then, is the subject of the Lord's discourse in the twenty-fourth of Matthew, as He sat upon the mount on this sixth occasion? Just that which is typified by the destruction of Pharaoh at the Red Sea,—that is, the power of Antichrist and of Satan threatens the destruction of the people of God. The "abomination of desolation" stands in the holy place; and "except those days should be shortened, no flesh should be saved." All is dark and terrible,—woe has followed woe, and distress has continued to increase, and the storm has caused His own to cry out, when, suddenly as the lightning, the judgment has fallen, and their deliverance has come. The Lord appears in the clouds of heaven in power and glory, and the enemy is destroyed with judgment. All this is clearly in harmony, and parallel; whether the type at the Red Sea, in Ex. xiv. or in Matt. xxiv., the narration of what will answer to the type,—*all* is a consistent and remarkable testimony as to the meaning of this number.

But how suggestive are these solemn and blessed scenes at the Red Sea, and in Israel's final great deliverance, of God's dealing with us now, individually and collectively! In these scenes His present dealings are reflected. Ere the repentant soul finds rest, he may seem about to be overwhelmed by Satan; and throughout our pathway here, in conflict with Satan, how often does the Church seem threatened with entire overthrow at one point and another, in one place and another, and in spite of faithlessness and failure, we see the Lord's deliverance at last! "Always darkest just before dawn" will be fearfully but triumphantly illustrated at the millennial dawn; but in some measure it is so now with us again and again, by the long-suffering and great mercy of our God. For

our sins, we are exposed to chastening; and for our discipline, for our good, the enemy has got a foothold—he is allowed for a time to win: but let the faithful wait,—it is the old experience over again, which will be repeated until the Lord comes—until the final victory and triumph—“shout,” “Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.” But there is more than that: there is an exhortation that precedes. It is this: “Fear ye not.”—“Fear ye not. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.” (Ex. xiv. 13.) If our hearts are not steadied by the first exhortation, through faith in God, it is impossible to take heed to the last. We do not stand still; nor have, in such a case, eyes to see what God is doing. Oh that we might not so quickly distrust Him on the next occasion,—that we might have more rest of heart in Him at all times, and not increase confusion by our own folly and unrest and ignorance! If we are not habitually waiting on the Lord, we will not do it in the time of testing and fiery trial. May His name be not so much dishonored by us as in the past. But His mercy endureth forever.

There is a good comment of Luther's on Mary's song, when God gave him grace to abide in peace in face of the threatening power of Rome:—

“‘He hath showed strength with His arm. He hath put down the mighty from their seats. . . .’ ‘His arm,’ continues she, meaning by this the power by which He acts of Himself, without the aid of any of His creatures. Mysterious power! . . . which is exerted in secrecy and in silence until His designs are accomplished. Destruction is at hand when no one has seen it coming; relief is there, and no one had expected it. He leaves His children there in oppression and weakness, so that every man says, ‘They are lost!’ . . . But it is then He is strongest; for where the strength of men ends, there begins that of God. Only let faith wait upon Him.

. . . . And on the other hand, God permits His adversaries to increase in grandeur and power. He withdraws His support, and suffers them to be puffed up with their own. He empties them of His eternal wisdom, and lets them be filled with their own, which is but for a day. And while they are rising in the brightness of their power, the arm of the Lord is taken away, and their work vanishes as a bubble bursting in the air."*

E. S. L.

THE TIME OF LOVE.

(Ezek. xvi. 8; Song li. 10-13.)

IN seeking to touch the heart of the nation, God goes back to the time of their first love—the love of their espousals. Hard as their heart may be now, there was a time when it was tender, when it felt the thrill of joy at knowing it was loved and of loving in return. In the Song of Solomon we have the voice of the Beloved calling away from all else to the enjoyment of Himself. The time of love for Israel had past, but for the Lord it still remained. Coming to ourselves, is it *now* "the time of love"? or is it only as we think of the past that we see that time? For Ephesus, it was past, and no works, diligence, and correctness could take its place with the Lord. Let us hear him telling us that it is His time of love *now*. He loves us just as much now as when He bore judgment for us on the cross. He would do as much again if necessary. Blessed forever be His precious name! His love knows no change. He speaks to us in love's own language, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Think of His calling you His fair one? Are we fair? are our hands clean? We are that to *Him*, and if not practically that, what a shame to us! He must have us with Himself. Love wishes to be alone with its

* D'Aubigne's "History of the Reformation," in one volume. Page 220.

object, so He says, "Come away." Whatever your heart is occupied with to the exclusion of Him—come away from it.

What a fair scene lies before the eyes of love! "The winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come; the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land." To sight, this earth is a barren waste, as far as true joy is concerned; but if our hearts are in communion with the Lord, it is a "time of love" for us. We see the winter and rain of judgment over and gone—borne once for all on Calvary—the flowers of heaven are seen and its music heard in the soft quiet notes of the "heavenly Dove."

Dear brethren, is it thus with us—are we in our time of love! Oh, how much we are missing if this is not true! How much too we are robbing the Lord of, who longs for us even here to share His joy. In a little while it will be the time of love for all His people, let us anticipate that and pass on through this world with hearts filled and overflowing with His love, waiting only for one thing,—“to see His face and hear His voice.”

REST.

WHAT rest unspeakable!—

To lay the weary head and the more weary heart
On Jesu's breast, where John so oft reposed;
To feel the throbbing of that mystic heart—
The only heart that comprehends my own.
For often those who're nearest do not understand,
And fail to enter into thoughts expressed,
And there's a want which cannot be described.

But here is perfect confidence:—

Not even need of words—He knows it all
Before we've time to tell. And oh, to feel
Our sorrow is His own!

Yet He hath sorrowed many times, and wept,
Without one human heart to answer.

Our weakness makes us objects of His care,
And draws out all the tenderness
That's in the Father's heart for every child,—
The helpless babe, the tottering little one
Just learned to step; for childhood's lesser sorrows
Ever find a ready answer to each feeble call.

And deeper griefs of older hearts,
Who've learned to measure sin by sorrow's depths—
[The awful depths of that most awful cross
On which our Saviour died]
Find healing in the same sweet fount of love.

Oh, blessed storm that drives our shattered bark
Into this haven of eternal peace,
To press more closely to that hallowed breast
The hearts that sigh for rest!

H. McD.

A POINT OF HONOR.

*"Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we
may be accepted of Him."*

A WRONG impression is given in the verse as it stands in the Authorized Version quoted above. The wrong meaning is given in two words—"labor" and accepted." As it stands, it would teach that our acceptance was an uncertain thing, dependent upon our labor. Nothing can be further from the truth of the gospel and from the teaching of this verse. Our acceptance is complete and final—it is "in the Beloved;" and God teaches us to see ourselves in Him, complete, perfect. We are made "the righteousness of God in Him." No room, then, for the uncertainty implied in the translation above. The true meaning of the word is, as given in the Revised Version, "well-pleasing." To be accepted of

God is one thing ; to be well-pleasing *to* Him, quite another. The one is the common standing of all Christians; the other depends upon the individual walk. Alas ! God has many children who are not well-pleasing to Him : hence the frequent exhortation to "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing," etc. A wrong idea, too, is conveyed in the word "labor." Its meaning rather is, as given in the margin of the Revised Version, "are ambitious;" or, perhaps, nearer yet, "make it a point of honor." So that the meaning is given if we render the verse as follows : "Wherefore also we make it a point of honor, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto Him."

The subject of the chapter is, departing to be with Christ, by death, and His coming to clothe us with our house from heaven, and to take us there. If the Lord tarry, we will go to Him, leaving our bodies here till the resurrection ; if He come for us, we shall be changed in a moment, and caught up to meet Him. In the one case, we will be "absent from the body;" in the other, we would be, "not unclothed, but clothed upon" with our house which is from heaven. To depart and be with Christ is far better, but best of all will it be when *all* for whom He died are gathered unto Him in glory. But in the meanwhile, whichever may be before him, the apostle makes it a point of honor to be well-pleasing to Him. Then, "whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord." So we are, as it were, put on our honor to please God. Many persons act from motives of honor. The man of the world keeps his word—abides by his contracts as a matter of honor. So our God would have us understand that it is beneath the dignity of the Christian to act in any way that is not well-pleasing to Him. It should be a point of honor with us. Let us learn to be punctilious in matters which concern

our God. Indeed, it is not our own honor merely which is at stake, but His. How careful we should be! If something of value is intrusted to us by another, we make it a special point to take care of it; so it should be since we are intrusted with what concerns God. And what is there in our life that does not concern Him? The children of Israel were told to put a fringe of blue on the *borders* of their garments: that which trailed nearest to earth was to speak of heaven; and as he thought of this, we can imagine how careful the Israelite would be to prevent any soil or spot from falling upon it. So it should be with us: whatever else may fail, let us see to it that we are well-pleasing unto Him. Some may strive for a reward, some for a crown, let us make it a point of honor to please God. That is the testimony which Enoch left behind;—"he pleased God." Very little is said of him, except that he walked with God and pleased Him. If we want to please Him, that is the way—to walk with Him. If we were to strive for a crown for our own glory, it would fade in our hands; if we seek for one to lay it at Jesus' feet, it will never fade. Ah! that is the motive—a crown to lay at His feet! Let us, then, make it a point of honor, not to glorify ourselves,—not to vindicate ourselves, but to be well-pleasing unto Him. Zealous for *God*, not zealous for ourselves,—that is the Christian's object.

"Lord, it belongs not to my care
Whether I die or live;
To love and serve Thee is my share,
And this Thy grace must give."

REFORMATION TIMES.

(Continued from p. 119.)

CONANT'S "HISTORY OF ENGLISH BIBLE TRANSLATION."*

WHAT, of course, indicates the hand of God in history are deliverances that are wrought again and again when all is lost, as far as man is concerned.

It could not be otherwise, but it is striking and interesting to note it. It bows the Christian's mind in worship; for while face to face with the distress and sin that fill this scene with darkness, God is seen to be at work; for "the wise understand," though the wicked do not. (Dan. xii. 10.)

The opening chapters of this history present this very evident truth or feature with clearly marked outlines.

As regards any prospect of a Reformation, what were the circumstances in Wickliffe's time,—that is, toward the close of the fourteenth century?

In the main, we may say, the clergy corrupt, the people degraded, or ignorant and helpless, the king and the barons in selfish strife—both despising and distrusting the people, no doubt,—the Bible locked up and locked out, hardly to be found often, and then only in Latin—unknown to the people, and those in power ready to crush out the first attempt to read and obey the Scriptures.

Truly "man's extremity is God's opportunity:" vain is the help of man. This leaves God free to work—as in Egypt, so in England, and by means that keep before us always this, that the power is of God and not of man.

Wickliffe at Oxford receives the Word into his heart, and begins to give it forth to others; and how powerful is the truth! Every utterance of it causes the foundations of error to shake, and the enemies of Christ are all alive.

* In two parts, paper cover, 25 cts. each; bound in one volume, cloth, \$1.00.

But fasting and prayer precede the blessing. "These beautiful words, uttered in one of his sermons at Lutterworth, might fitly serve as the motto of his whole subsequent career: 'O Christ, Thy law is hidden in the sepulchre: when wilt Thou send Thy angel to remove the stone, and show Thy truth unto Thy flock.' This prayer—this heart's desire went up into heaven, to His holy dwelling-place, and in due time the Lord wrought for His own name's sake and brought salvation."

In 1365, Wickliffe was summoned to aid them by his counsel as to resisting the papal claim of tribute from England,—at least there seems to be evidence that his counsel was sought in this way. Not that he turned aside from the ministry, but his counsel and his influence are among the indications of what is plainly true, that the underlying power at work for good was not political aspiration, but the effectual working of the truth in hearts prepared of God. It was not that civil liberty introduced the Reformation, but the work of God in hearts and consciences led to a faithful witness against evil in high places that men dared not and had no wisdom to withstand,—a witness to death often in martyrdom, giving a movement and a power through the country that natural men took advantage of in order to throw off political yokes and galling grievances.

As to the pope's claim of secular dominion, if he is the vicar of Christ, Christ refused all secular dominion; He subsisted on charity, and had not where to lay His head; and besides this, the Reformers showed the error of the clergy in seeking political office, in beautiful words, edifying and searching to us all:—

"Prelates and great religious possessioners are so occupied in heart about worldly lordships and pleas of business, that no habit of devotion, of praying, of thoughtfulness on heavenly things, on the sins of their own

hearts, or those of other men, may be preserved; neither are they found studying and preaching the gospel, nor visiting and comforting of poor men."

This care for the poor, manifest here and elsewhere in this narrative, is to be noted. It affects the heart. It is the Spirit of Christ at work—of Him who had compassion on the people, who were as sheep without a shepherd.

Note again the balance of character taught in Scripture. There is tender love and mercy for the poor and needy, faithful rebuke to the proud and to the oppressor, and yet the spirit of meek subjection and submission to masters and governors—to the froward as well as to the good.

All this is not of man, but of God; but how much is mingled with the experience or lives of Christians that is of the old leaven, when we think of this beautiful standard!

"It is the will of the Holy Spirit," says Wickliffe, "that the books of the Old and New Law should be read and studied as the one sufficient source of instruction; and that men should not be taken up with other books, which, true as they may be, and even containing Scripture truth, are not to be confided in without caution and limitation. . . . If we follow this rule, the Scripture will be held in becoming reverence, the papal bulls will be superseded, as they ought to be."

"Such were the doctrines," continues the author, "which Wickliffe, two centuries (a hundred and fifty years?) before Luther [and Tyndale], taught openly in the halls of Oxford." No doubt his words stirred up many who are supposed to have gone out through the country as itinerant preachers. "All Christians," he said, "should be the soldiers of Christ. But it is plain that many are chargeable with great neglect of this duty; being prevented by the fear of the loss of temporal goods and worldly friendships, and apprehensive about life and

fortune, from faithfully setting forth the cause of God, from standing manifestly in its defense, and, if need be, from suffering death in its behalf. . . . Hence we Christians need not visit pagans to convert them by enduring martyrdom in their behalf : we have only to declare with constancy the Word of God before Cæsarian prelates, and straightway the flower of martyrdom will be ready to our hand."

If at this time, as set forth in this account, the Reformer's life was peaceful, the winds of opposition were only held back for a time. "In favor with its court for the stand which he had taken against the pope, and with the university for his zeal against the [begging] friars ; honored for his genius, his learning, and his virtuous life ; he was at this time regarded as the chief light and ornament of Oxford."

Thus uniform is the dealing of God in His providence, for Jesus Himself experienced a time of peaceful development before Satan was allowed to raise the storm of man's hatred against Him. "The Child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom ; and the grace of God was upon Him. . . . And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." (Luke ii. 40, 52.)

E. S. L.

EARLY RISING.

WE readily see how this expression can be spiritually applied. The thought conveyed by it is that of earnest purpose, diligence, and prompt performance. Leaving for the individual conscience the question of literal early rising, we will take up the subject in its spiritual meaning.

God has ever manifested Himself as rising early. The

great matter of our salvation was not left till the fall had brought in sin and death—or to human will. "He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." Nothing that afterward might take place could set aside that "eternal purpose which He purposed." As the objects of His grace were thus chosen, so the means were provided—"Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world." Christ, the object of the Father's counsels, and His Church, were thus provided in the "early morning" of that bright eternity past, before sin had entered. Our blessed God has not been *surprised* by what took place in Eden. All had been foreseen and provided for. Not that this in the least interferes with or hinders human responsibility; that is something entirely separate from the subject of which we are speaking.

As to His ways with man ever since, the same diligence and earnest purpose is seen—no matter what patience was manifested,—for there is nothing like precipitancy in Him—there is no delay. In the call of Abraham, the deliverance of His people out of Egypt, and in each step of the onward way, prompt action at the proper time is ever characteristic. Specially is this seen in the sending of the prophets, "rising up early and sending them." No delay—no indifference, but early sending His messengers to rescue His people who had wandered from Him. How this increases their responsibility! They meeting His early rising to recall them, by "rising early and corrupting their doings." (Zeph. iii. 7.) Coming to the New Testament, we find this same diligence in sending His Son; and after He had ascended, having accomplished all God's purposes here, there was no delay in sending forth the Holy Ghost.

Passing now to that perfect life on earth of Him whose meat and drink it was to do His Father's will, we find the

same spirit of holy promptness and zeal,—from the time when He said, “Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God,” to that “early morning” of the resurrection when all that will had been perfectly accomplished. In the gospel (of Mark) which presents Him as the Perfect Servant, one of the characteristic words is “straightway.” There is no lingering—no holding back, but a diligent passing from one sphere of service to another. Nor is there any shrinking from work which is not pleasant. He turns from the man out of whom He had cast the legion—parting from one who could in measure appreciate Him—to go back to those who had nothing but suspicion and unbelief. He leaves the bright glory of the “holy mount” of transfiguration to meet the demoniac child at the foot, and to steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, to meet worse than Capernaum indifference, demoniac power, or Samaritan unbelief. But, blessed be His precious name! in all, He is ever the perfect, prompt, obedient One who could say, “He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth Mine ear to hear as the learner.” Having passed through the heavens, He is now seated on the Father’s throne; but He still keeps His character as an early riser, and presents Himself to our longing hope as “the Bright and Morning Star,”—that star which rises early, before day. He will come for us at the earliest possible moment,—no delay when the last elect one is saved,—no delay but the fulfillment of that word which speaks to affection’s heart, “Surely, I come quickly.”

And if this is the character of the Father, of the Son, and the Spirit, we may well ask, Does it not become us also to be early risers? Turning to Scripture, we find it full of examples which if typical are none the less practical.

The manna—bread from heaven—had to be gathered early in the morning, for the heat of the sun melted it.

Christ is the bread of life for His people,—not merely imparting and sustaining it, but giving us communion. We are to feed on Him if we are to have fellowship with Him and the Father. But this can only be done by early rising—by a prompt diligence and determination to enjoy Him at all hazards. This applies equally to prayer; just as the Lord Jesus rose a great while before day literally, we too must have the same purpose if we are to know what true prayer is. We ask amiss if we ask indolently. It is not of set purpose, we may be very sure, that God's people lose communion with Him; but it is by indifference and neglect—other things hindering us; “As thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone,” is also the reason why we lose that Manna which flees from the sun of this world's absorbing affairs. He who knocked at the door of His beloved, and who met with but a sluggish response, quickly withdrew from the door, and she found Him not (Song v. 2–7). Communion does not come unsought, does not stay with those who do not prize it sufficiently to hold it fast at all cost of ease or comfort. “Thy words were *found*, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.” To be found, they have to be *sought* for, which means the diligence of early rising. The sluggard is the opposite of this. He loves his bed; self-pleasing is the rule of his life, and his garden shows it. The wall is broken down (separation from the world lost), and the nettles and briars show the fruits of the old creation under the curse, not the “peaceable fruits of righteousness.” (Prov. xxiv. 30–34.) The sluggard too has motion, but he moves in his bed; it is like a door on its hinges—ever swinging backward and forward, but there is no *progress*. How different the example of that early riser, the apostle Paul—“Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I *press*

toward the mark"! Much of what passes for diligence among Christians is the half-awake turning in bed of the sluggard. Truth presented in an arousing way attracts their attention, wins their assent, makes them resolve to obey it; and thinking thus, they fall asleep until again awakened. Good for them is it if some pungent truth pierces the thick armor of indolence, and causes them, not to turn over to some fresh form of self-indulgence, but to leap from their bed of sloth, and *do* rather than *talk*. To *obey* is better than sacrifice." Good is it even if the chastening rod of a Father's love cause a smart which prevents further sleep. Do we not hear Him who says, not to the sinner, but to His own people, "Awake, thou that sleepest! and arise from among the dead, and Christ shall give thee light"?

We have been speaking of communion, and the necessity for all diligence if we are to maintain or enjoy it. This lies at the foundation; for if there is no communion, there is no strength to do or obey. Coming on now to the fruits of communion—an obedient life—we find the same need emphasized. Never did father receive a harder command than did Abraham when God said, "Take now thy son—thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering." How does Abraham respond to this? He *rose up early in the morning*. "I made haste and delayed not to keep Thy words." He allows no time for nature to interpose between him and God's will. How often our *slowness* to obey has opened the way for *dis*-obedience! A lingering in the way, like the slothful man again who says, "There is a lion in the way: I shall be slain in the streets." No matter how heavy his heart, Abraham rises, and does what God had commanded, only to find, as we shall ever find, that obedience

brings blessing out of the very thing we feared. He receives Isaac back as from the dead, with renewed covenant and promise on God's part, and learns more deeply than ever before the meaning of that word, "The Lord will provide." Is the reader of these lines delaying to obey God's will in some *known* matter? Go promptly, and obey; rise early, deny self, and act in dependence on God; and, oh, what relief will come to you! and above all, what honor to God! Do not stand shivering in uncertainty, but with promptness (not heedless haste—a very different thing,) act, and act NOW.

But this leads us to look at another fruit of early rising. It is only thus that great victories are won. When Joshua assaulted the impregnable walls of Jericho, he rose early, and they compassed the city. On the seventh day, they rose early—about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city seven times. Here they did very little, but they showed they were in earnest in that, by their early rising. The result is, the walls of Jericho fell flat, and victory is assured. So in our life, we have to cast down the strongholds of Satan which stand in the way of our enjoyment of our inheritance. We have little we can do to overcome the opposition, save a steadfast walk and a clear testimony; but if there is this in true *diligence*, victory is assured,—the walls, whatever they may be—difficulty at home, or wherever else,—will fall. The Lord teach us this lesson also. We might refer to many such instances, where due and earnest diligence accompanied victory. David in meeting Goliath (1 Sam. xvii. 20), Gideon attacking Midian (Judges vii. 1), Jehoshaphat in meeting his foes (2 Chron. xx. 20),—all rose early, and they were victorious.

See too in the exercise of discipline (as in Josh. vii. 16), no delay is permitted, and the result is, the offender is discovered and dealt with, and blessing results. How

often evil is winked at, or the matter neglected until it becomes a festering sore, defiling a whole assembly, or a large portion of it, and only gotten rid of with the loss of many who might otherwise have been spared !

So also, in the restoration of God's order, Hezekiah, when the temple was cleansed, made haste and offered the appointed sacrifices,—he rose early. The Lord Jesus has in these last days shown where His meeting-place is—"Where two or three are gathered together to My name, there am I in the midst." He has provided the sacrifices (forever efficacious), but where are the early risers—the devoted ones who will avail themselves aright of these privileges? Does the reader say, "Here am I"?

THE COVENANTS WITH ABRAHAM NUMERICALLY CONSIDERED.

(Continued from p. 136.)

VII.

"IN Isaac shall thy seed be called." (Gen. xxi. 12.) Such are the words of the covenant renewed the seventh time. According to the meaning of the number, perfection is reached—the promised son is upon the scene, and has been weaned, and a great feast is made. It is the joy of Christianity—the liberty with which Christ makes free.

But Abraham is not at once weaned : like the Galatians (chap. iv. 30), he cleaves to the bondwoman and her son. Ishmael mocking is Israel according to the flesh—the hostile Jew in Paul's time, making light of Christianity and of grace. Abraham's slowness, clearly the Galatian legalism so common among Christians, while Sarah's voice is the glad and entire liberty of grace which will have nothing to do with legal bondage, and will submit to no compromise and no mingling of grace and law either for

acceptance of the repentant sinner or for the after-rule of life of the saint (Rom. iii. 28; vi. 13, 14).

"And Sarah saw the son of Hagar *the Egyptian*, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking." "*Hagar the Egyptian*"—the "under law" condition, with all its pretension, is of the world (Col. ii. 20, 23; Gal. iv. 3). "Wherefore she said unto Abraham, 'Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.' And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. And God said unto Abraham, 'Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman. In all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.'"

Let us compare this word of God to Abraham to lift him up out of his bondage with the reasoning of the epistle to the Galatians to deliver Christians who had put themselves under law. Let us compare them for our profit, that we may be instructed, and also impressed with the exact harmony of every scripture.

"Tell me," Paul says to the Galatians (chap. iv. 21), "*ye that desire to be under the law*, do ye not hear the law? for it is written that Abraham had two sons—the one by a bondmaid, tho other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh, but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants,—the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children; but Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, 'Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not' Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born

after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless, what saith the Scripture? 'Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman.' So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

This is very bold language, Paul, and grievous to many a saint, as Sarah's was to Abraham. It is very bold, and offensive to much that is devoutly religious and zealous for the law. Hagar the Egyptian—Mount Sinai—Jerusalem and her children—bondage,—all in line. What a pedigree! And yet so it is. Bondage, the activity of the flesh, mocking, pride, fear of man, are the things that go with putting one's self under law (Gal. iv. 21-25, 29; v. 18, 19; vi. 12). But with grace go gladness, liberty, love, the self-denial of the cross, and peace. "Isaac" means "*laughter*." And so Sarah said, "God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me." Blessed for all who can laugh in accord with this God-given joy! It is the joy of the song of the Red Sea, the joy of the feast in the presence of the angels over the prodigal's return, shared in by us. "Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not." It is not in us, but in Him—"Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice." "All that hear will laugh with me." Have we heard? Let there be no dullness of ear. Let us say, "The Lord my righteousness!" and rejoice constantly.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law, and they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." (Gal. v. 22.)

The epistle to the Galatians shows that those who "de-

sired to be *under the law*" were heaping burdens on one another (chap. v. 15, 16), and were desirous of vain glory; but *by grace* we can bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ (chap. vi. 2). May grace be manifest in us.

"The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*." Grace is the perfect thing, and to this we are brought in this seventh renewal of the covenant to Abraham.

"Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Rom. vi. 14.) By grace only and wholly can we have our "fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." (Rom. vi. 22.) Established, comforted, and strengthened by grace—the grace that is in Christ Jesus, let us rejoice with trembling, and diligently "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. xii. 14.) We know whom we have believed. He has said, "My sheep shall never perish." His grace is sufficient for us.

VIII.

"And it came to pass *after these things* that God did tempt Abraham." (Gen. xxii. 1.) And Abraham is called upon to offer up his only son. "After these things:" this marks a new beginning; clearly it is resurrection,—like the eighth day, or the first day of the week (after the seven) on which the Lord rose from the dead. We are thus remarkably prepared for a resurrection-scene, and we get it. Isaac is offered up, and is received in a figure (Heb. xi. 19) from the dead. And now the covenant is renewed for the eighth and last time. "And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, 'By Myself have I sworn,' saith the Lord, 'for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless

thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice.' " (Gen. xxii. 15.)

"Out of heaven" the Lord speaks, and the seed are to be multiplied as the stars of heaven, as well as like the sand by the sea-shore. This tells of heavenly blessing as well as earthly, for the millennial time, when Christ will have been known as risen from the dead, and on that new ground the national hope restored.

But what is the individual application or teaching in the line we have been pursuing? Is it not this—the lesson the believer has to learn: all hope in self closed in upon by death—by the cross of Christ; and now Christ risen from the dead our object and our strength? This doctrine also we get in Galatians (Gal. ii. 19)—"For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

In the previous covenant, we are not under law, but under grace. That is what we are taught: we are children of the promise, and *Sarah's voice prevails*; and Sarah is the type of grace—the free woman, as we have seen. But here nothing is said of Sarah: *Abraham figures alone*, and he speaks to us of faith—he was the one who believed. (Rom. iv.) What is brought before us *prominently* is not the condition in which we stand,—that is, grace,—but faith, by which an object is presented to our minds. "I live by the faith of the Son of God"—the One with whom I have died by the cross: "I am crucified with Christ."

Thus Sarah figures prominently in the one case and

Abraham in the other; so exact is the teaching of the types, and so exact the occurrence of events that thus served as types, under the hand of God, in history. Thus the Old-Testament history is luminous with instruction and interest. Things were done and words were uttered here and there by this one and by that one as if by chance, because in the untrammelled freedom of the actors, and yet all being parts in a complete whole, which is at last unrolled to view. By this we are also taught, as Pilate was, that God's hand is upon us in each event of our lives. This solemnizes, comforts, and delights the true heart: our lives have new importance.

Abraham, then, offering up his son, and receiving him as it were from the dead, represents to us the giving up of self, and having Christ risen from the dead our object and our joy. "Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (Rom.vi.); and again, "We are the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." As the death of the cross closed in upon the national hope of Israel according to the flesh, so it closes in upon any hope of any thing in me. And this I have to learn in Christian experience, that I may be deeply and fully persuaded that it remains true to the end of the course down here, that in me,—that is, in my flesh, there is no good thing; and more than this, that even as born of God I have no strength in myself. I am only brought, with a perfect nature, into a condition where, just because I am born again, I now for the first time realize the truth of perfect weakness, and the joy of dependence upon God,—in short, the walk of faith. As the flower opens to the sun and air, the Christian's heart rejoices in the Lord, and lives in constant dependence upon the Word and grace of Christ. Not our feelings, desires, and purposes must govern us now moment by

moment; all these we are to deny—good and bad—as such, as merely our own thoughts or will. Now it is Christ living in us; we abide in Him—live by Him—as the diver in the diving-bell lives wholly by communication with the upper air. The fish may thrive in this lower element; but the diver, surrounded by an element of death, must get what sustains his life from a higher sphere. May we habitually refer all things to the Lord, in faith and love,—that is, abide in Him, and then we shall be filled with the Spirit. Let us not forget to abide in Christ, and to rejoice in Him, and all we think and say and do will be with power and effect for blessing. Let us glory in the Lord. Atonement has been made both for what we have done and for what we *are* naturally; thus perfect is our salvation. Let us use His grace to deny *ourselves*, and yield ourselves to Him. May there be no reserve by us, as Isaac was not withheld by Abraham; we shall then find our God to be to us, in all places and circumstances, "Jehovah-Jireh" (Gen. xxii. 14)—"the Lord will provide."

E. S. L.

"GATHERING TOGETHER UNTO HIM."

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS.

(2 Thess. ii. 1; Matt. xviii. 19, 20; 1 Thess. iv. 15-18.)

FOR our reading the other day we came upon the subject of gathering together unto the Lord. What was asked for then might be appropriately given now. Notice these words in 2 Thess. i. 1, "Our gathering together unto Him," and put them in the light of Matt. xviii. 20, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." It might help us, to look at gathering in this simple and important way. It is always best to look at that which is perfect,

that we may have a proper standard. If a person had never seen a butterfly would he not have a better idea by looking at the butterfly in its perfection than by examining it in any of the stages of its development from the ovum? Surely, it would be best to look at the perfect insect. Then in thinking of gathering, in what we have read, we have that which is perfect brought before us in "our gathering unto Him." By looking at the features of gathering in perfection, we may learn much to instruct us now in seeking to gather unto His name. To me it puts some points in such a distinct and important way that one would think if they were once seen there would be more reality when we gather together from time to time.

For instance, think of that time when we shall be with the Lord in the air. When the sleeping saints arise, and the living believers are changed, and all are caught up together, it is *to meet the Lord*. See with what distinctness we have *our centre* brought before us. "The Lord Himself shall descend." His blessed Person is before every eye, and adored by every heart, in that gathering. There is nothing vague, no such thought as His being present by His Spirit—He is there Himself. It is "gathering together unto Him." Is this not what we need to apprehend when we gather together now? Where gathering is real, the presence of the Spirit is one thing, and the presence of the Lord is another. How often are they vaguely confused together? The haze and mists might be scattered like clouds before the rising sun with many a saint, if he just keep the perfect gathering before his mind. Then the Lord Himself would be seen to be the centre. With intelligence and joy he would see more of what it is to "gather together unto Him." Reason may cavil, unbelief may doubt; but faith, love, and hope are in their proper element when we have the Lord Himself

before us, and gather together and announce His death till He come.

Then who should so gather to remember Him? If we only look at the perfect gathering, the question is settled without gainsaying. His saints alone will be gathered up around Him in the air. In Jno. xiii. we read of "His own which were in the world." Further on in the same gospel, after His resurrection, we see Him in their midst. We have then a real Saviour, real saints, real gathering unto Him. Should not this be always so where two or three profess to gather unto His name? A glance at what is perfect solves and settles endless questions as to who should compose the assembly of those gathering unto the Lord's name. All thought of mixed companies of saved and unsaved being together for worship is thus completely set aside when you think of those who will meet the Lord in the air. A believer speaks, and speaks only of believers like himself, when he says, "Our gathering together unto Him."

Then see the *power* implied in the perfect gathering. It is the same power which raised Him from the dead and set Him at God's right hand. That power will raise His sleeping saints and change living believers. Even then you might think of them as still on earth. But they are to be caught up, rapt away from earth, to meet the Lord in the air. What a display of divine power! Does this not give us the thought of the power that gathers now? Are any really gathered who are not the subjects of such divine power. It is no mere agreement among those who are believers, nor any such company simply bringing other saints among themselves. Real gathering is divine power at work, through grace, to so attract the heart of the saint that he is constrained to gather unto the Lord. The same Spirit by whom he was born again now works as distinctly in a new way, according to divine power, to

gather the saint unto the Lord as his proper centre. Should our hearts and consciences not be exercised that our gathering together may be the direct result of this grace and gathering power on the part of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Yet again look at the perfect picture as the saints are gathered up to meet the Lord. You must of necessity think of "*all saints*." As to those who have fallen asleep, from Adam onward, we have that word, "they that are Christ's at His coming." (1 Cor. xv. 23.) Then with regard to living believers, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.) All shall be "caught up together." If we think of the Church, the Lord shall "present it to Himself, a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." The *unity* will find perfect expression then. Ought faith ever to forget this in gathering now? Certainly not, if "our gathering together unto Him" is to be the standard. Some may object to what is put as "the ground of the one body." Faith will hold fast the thing itself. To faith there is "the revelation of the mystery," and there is the "fellowship of the mystery," and those who gather should be exercised that they may own the oneness of the body, and answer to it, in "the obedience of faith." (Rom. xvi. 25, 26.) How real would gathering be if we were thus "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." We should then indeed gather, as it is expressed, "on the ground of the one body." To those objecting to the expression, doubtless because the truth in it judges the principles on which they profess to gather, I reply, let us drop the expression, but let us hold fast the thing it is meant to express. We can then find it in Scripture language, if we think of "the mystery," the "one body," and keep our eyes, our hearts, on the perfect gathering when we shall meet the Lord in the air, and so

we may answer to these principles now, as we gather in "the obedience of faith."

But there was one part of the verse as to presenting the Church to the Lord which I did not quote. In that perfect gathering it shall be "holy, and without blemish." Separation from evil, and separation to the Lord, alike will find their perfect exemplification. The Lord is "He that is holy, he that is true," so there will not be any thing unsuitable to Him in that day. If "our gathering together unto Him" when He descends into the air is kept before us now, we cannot help being impressed with the fact that holiness should characterize the assembly of His saints. Then if the former thought of unity is borne in mind, it is not merely the individual believer being separate, nor a particular gathering of believers being careful as to the holiness which becomes God's house forever. The associations of all gathered every where have to be tested by that standard, "holy and without blemish." True, we know that in practice there is such unholiness, but are we to accept unholy principles, and give up the standard? If so, will not the Lord give us up, as He says, "I will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." To know of evil in doctrine, in morals, or in connection with assembly judgments, and refuse to purge it out, is to give up holiness, and lose the claim to be owned as an assembly of God. If evil is connected with honored names and sanctioned at high places, it does not make it less, but greater evil in the Lord. All the pretension and boasting about having the truth in such circumstances will not add the weight of a feather, when things are weighed in the balances of the sanctuary. We must judge things in the brightness of that light into which we shall be caught up when we meet the Lord; and we ought to gather unto His name now, realizing that we have to do with him whose eyes are "as

a flame of fire." Thus we shall find the true principle of separation unto the Lord.

Finally, when that glorified company is gathered up around the Lord in the air, will it not be such a worship meeting as never before was assembled? Do we not look on to it when in the Spirit we sometimes sing—

"What rich, eternal bursts of praise
Shall fill yon courts through endless days,
When time shall cease to be!"

See in Rev. i. when there is the mention of "Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the first-begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth." There you have the bursting forth of what will prove an eternal song,—
"Unto Him that loved us, and washed in His own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." So yet again in Rev. v. where we get that great multitude, "the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.'" Surely, when we gather around the Lord now there should be some anticipation, according to our present capacity, of that praise and worship to be rendered when we are forever with the Lord.

May the Lord make these principles of gathering to have life, spirit, and power in our souls, and the souls of His saints, that we even now, indeed and in truth, may gather together unto His name.

W. C. J.

CHRISTIAN HOLINESS.

DIFFERENT SCHOOLS OF HOLINESS.

TO clear the way, it might be helpful to bear in mind that there are at least four views of the subject of holiness. The variations are numerous and diverse, but nearly all might be ranged under one or other of the views now to be described.

1. There is what may be called the Perfectionist School. An advocate of this view fairly puts what is taught by them by saying that in those cleansed or sanctified there remains "no defiling taint of depravity, no bent toward acts of sin." This is by an American. General Booth, in Britain, gives a similar testimony when he says that "the last remnants of the carnal mind may be plucked up by the roots, and the tendencies to evil taken away." Another advocate, in New Zealand, writes that the Saviour "can just now extirpate the foe, expel the fiend, and extract the virus of sin from the human heart." This might be thought to be thorough enough work, but somehow it is also allowed that the sanctified man may be liable to errors of judgment, and by temptation from without he may again yield to sin, lose the blessing, and even so fall away as to be finally lost. It is said that Charles Wesley was sanctified four times, and yet held that it was possible for him to be lost after all. Others might not go so far; but they would admit that they might lose what they call the second blessing, and slip back among the great mass of believers who do not profess holiness or sanctification.

2. There is what we may call the Evangelical School. It has been stated as follows by a moderator from the chair in his opening address in the Free Church General Assembly in Edinburgh, Scotland: "Christ's blood purges our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. We are renewed in the whole man after the image of God,

in mind, in will, in heart, and sin hath not dominion over us, because we are under grace." "It cannot, however, be set forth as within the plan of redemption that perfect holiness should be ours on earth. If we wash our hand with snow-water, and make ourselves ever so clean, we are quickly plunged into the ditch again, and compelled to cry out, 'Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?'" "We are not, therefore, defeated: we have learned that sin is not omnipotent over us, but that grace is omnipotent over sin." "There is no sin, no temptation, no obstinacy, no vitality of sin, which grace is not almighty to overcome, and at last to uproot it." In this view, as in the previous one, be it observed, there is no admission of there being *two natures* in the believer. In both views *the whole man* is supposed to be dealt with: the one relies upon the efficacy of the blood to cleanse from all sin, the other looks to the almighty power of grace to overcome evil. The Perfectionist holds that the cleansing is complete when he has believed for it; the Evangelical more modestly allows that sin will not be uprooted till death; but, being Calvinistic in his faith, he believes that he will persevere till death, and immediately be with and like Christ in glory; but both schools *deny that a Christian has two natures*, and fail to bring out the truth as to the first and last Adam, or the old and new creation. (Rom. v. 12-21; Eph. ii. 1-10; iv. 22-25.)

W. C. J.

(To be continued.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

Box 830, LOS ANGELES, CAL., April 13th, 1891.

My dear Brother,—

Your letter has lain unanswered for some days, having been received about a week ago. I was very thankful to receive the enclosed sum of twenty dollars from the "Mission-

ary Collection," of the Sunday-School, not only, or *chiefly* for the help ministered in spreading the gospel among those in darkness and ignorance of God, but because of the interest it manifests in the Sunday-School in that work which brought the Son of God into the world to die, that sinners might be reconciled to God, and receive the free gift of eternal life and glory. That this interest may deepen, and grow in the hearts of all of us is our prayer surely. In this age of indifference and hardness of heart and conscience, it is a comfort to know that the Lord is stirring some hearts to an increasing interest in His work and service, and some of us who are growing old are happy in the thought that the Lord is preparing others to serve Him, it is to be hoped more simply and devotedly, if He tarry yet a little, when we have served our allotted time and are called hence.

The Lord's work involves a self-surrender and purpose of heart; and though it calls for giving up much that the rest esteem, yet I am sure no one who has truly and in sincerity of heart gone forth to serve Him in the gospel of His Son will have at the end a single regret for any thing they have given up for His sake: but rather regrets that it had not been more a great deal.

Love to Christ is the great motive that constrains—love to the One who gave Himself for us, surrendering every thing He could, and the need required, for such as we are. And well it is if this love has laid hold of us, and leads us to serve Him in that which is the fruit of eternal love and wisdom, the gospel of God, than which nothing can be higher and greater, though with men often debased and dishonored indeed.

To-day, as you well know, the gospel is going into many places which have been closed for centuries, many fields are unoccupied where there is at least liberty of access, and Satan is busy sowing his tares where the truth has gone, indeed, more earnest in the work of destruction than the children of God are in the work of salvation. Where the seed is being sown with some diligence, there is one felt need every where almost, and that is perhaps to teach us to wait upon God for it, I mean the power and working of the Holy Spirit, convicting and converting and leading to Christ. Yet doubtless there is much more than any are permitted to know of here going on, whilst what is known gives joy on earth, as it has in heaven, even if it be but *one* that repents.

But great mistakes are made in putting something else before the gospel, such as education and what is called civilization and many other things. Those who do this forget that it is alone the gospel that is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. They forget, too, that God is able by the preached Word to bring from darkness to light, and from death to life, the most ignorant and hardened sinner that ever lived, and just in proportion to the measure in which men give up faith in God, and His Word, will they lean on something else, a something, too, that the natural man can work with, and it is not hard to tell what the result will be. David, the man of faith, could not meet the Philistine giant in Saul's armor, and Paul says, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds," etc.

But I must close my already long letter with the prayer that the Lord's blessing may be with both teachers and taught in the Plainfield Sunday-School, and grant through His grace much blessed fruit from His Word, and whilst thankful for the help sent for the work of the Lord, I do not doubt it will be accompanied with the prayers of those who have learned to value for themselves access to the throne of grace. I inclose a copy of an interesting letter from old Spain, a part the Lord has lately given us access to.

Affectionately in Christ,

ROBT. T. GRANT.

G., SPAIN, *February 6th*, 1891.

I am glad to tell you a little of the Lord's work in Spain, although speaking only of a single district, the province of L. So I will tell you a little of the blessings which I received of the Lord in my labors for His name; seeking to do what I can, scattering with a full hand in that virgin soil the holy seed of the gospel, trusting always in Him who has said, "My word shall not return unto Me void."

The journey to the mountains, notwithstanding the bad weather, snowing and raining, was for one very happy, receiving many blessings from above in all the towns I visited. In all, the power and Spirit of God were with me, strengthening me by the grace which is in Christ Jesus, that I might make known to the people His mercy and love. He who in His mercy chose me for it from the basest of the earth, cleansing me with His precious blood, and making me of service to the Lord, and

through the Spirit of God employing me in these towns, and, as Paul in Acts xxviii. 31, "Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning our Lord Jesus Christ with all liberty, without hindrance."

In the city of T. I preached Christ two days following, some one hundred and twenty persons being present. In F. de O. had a meeting at night in a coffee-room where about one hundred and ninety were gathered. In this small town there is much desire for the gospel. The priest has been in charge for fifteen months, and the poor man was complaining that in all that time there had not been a burial service. People are beginning to understand that salvation cannot be bought for money, and that it is already paid for by Jesus. My visit here troubled the priest, and the day after the meeting he met the town miller in the street, and called to him, asking, "Were you not last night with the Protestants?"

"Yes, sir," answered the miller.

"And what did they say?"

"Much that was bad about you for taking away from people the fear of God, and much good of God and of Jesus Christ."

"Were there many there?"

"The place was full."

"Were they more quiet than at mass?"

"I did not hear any but the preacher, who said things that were very good, and full of gospel truth; *that* is religion, not what you teach, which is all money and fanaticism."

Then the priest abashed left without another word. Afterward I went to the town of C., where also I had a meeting at night, with one hundred and twenty persons present, orderly and respectful. The day following, having to go to the town of S. S., where they were expecting me, I was called expressly by the people of a mountain town called O., where they desired to hear the Word of God; to which I gladly yielded, seeing the good will of these simple and honorable people, considering them before those of S. S., for the latter had already heard the gospel on different occasions, are visited more frequently, on account of having better means of communication, whilst those of O. were new to this. Here I passed a Lord's day—a happy day, for in it, after having spoken of the Lord in private conversations among the people, I had a meeting in a barn to which all the people came, including the town council and secretary, who

stood at my side all the time. In so small a town and for the first time I sold four Bibles and many portions of the Word, accompanied by a large number tracts given freely. They desired I should visit them again. The only enemies here are the priest and his two housekeepers. The next day I spent at the town of V. de M., preaching Christ at night to some one hundred and fifty persons, and all obliged me to remain another day, wishing for another meeting, to which I yielded, believing it to be just and agreeable to the Word of God. At this second meeting, about two hundred were present, and all seemed pleased with the doctrines of the holy gospel, asking me to return and visit them again, at least every month, if it was not possible every week. These wished to honor me with a band of music from the place of meeting to the lodging, which I protested against, saying that my mission was a lowly one, far off from the glories of the world, following in the footsteps of the humble Master Jesus Christ. Another day I spent at the little town of M., having here a true Christian meeting, about thirty-five persons attending. In this town there is one true Christian family. At other places I visited it was impossible to have meetings, but by the grace of God the ground might be prepared for another visit.

I may say that in this part of Spain the Lord has opened to us a *new world*, in which no doubt He has much people, and already is working in many hearts. What with public meetings, approved by the local authorities, and familiar conversations in "cafés," and with groups in houses, I preached the gospel to one thousand and more souls, men and women, many being glad and favorable to the gospel, desiring we should visit them again; but for the present they must be dealt with as babes, until the Lord shall do the rest, and give them new hearts. May the Lord aid and bless us, that what we do may be for the honor and glory of Christ our great Shepherd, and may He raise up laborers fitted for this service among these isolated people.

Your affectionate servant and brother in Christ,

J. M. R. S.

CUBA.

Dear Brother,—

After saluting you I give most hearty thanks for the tracts, etc., received, by the aid of which I have been able to present the beneficent light of the gospel to thousands of persons in this my unhappy country, where the darkness of Romanism

has covered all, and where they fight without ceasing to quench the shining of the Word of God; but the seed has gone on growing, and, with the help of the Spirit, to-day there are one hundred members and many sympathizers in this congregation, and we are in hopes the Lord will call many more into the knowledge of the truth.

I have just completed a visit to the interior of the Island, in company with D. F. G., who has come to visit the work, and we have preached the gospel to a multitude of persons who never have heard the kingdom of God preached to them, and we have journeyed by rail about eighty Spanish leagues. The tracts we took have been received by the people with the greatest eagerness, and may our beloved Redeemer grant that the will of God may penetrate their hearts. Now we are expecting to visit other towns, and if it were possible that you could send us more tracts, we should value them much.

May the Lord Jesus Christ shed His rich blessing upon you and this blessed work, and grant us health and self-denial, that light may be given to those which are in darkness.

Your sincere brother in Christ,

E. P. C.

Others of interest have been received, but it would make this too long to insert them.

In S. A. a priest circulated a number of New Testaments, and found it made the people Protestants, so he burned the rest.

In Peru, the agent of the Bible Society was selling Bibles on the street when the bishop passed by, the latter sent the police at once to arrest him and he was cast into prison, contrary to the constitution of the country. He was afterward liberated, and then imprisoned again, where he now is. The Protestants of the Argentine Republic are going to undertake the expense of his defense in the courts, and this, by the blessing of God, may be used to open the door there.

Men love darkness more than light when their deeds are evil. And what else can Jesuitism do but shut out the Word of God, the principle of their system being, "Let us do evil that good may come"? Of whom Paul says, "Whose damnation is just."

R. T. G.

Box 830, Los Angeles.

REFORMATION TIMES.

(Continued from p. 144.)

CONANT'S "HISTORY OF ENGLISH BIBLE TRANSLATION."

IN 1377, Wickliffe twice escaped the snares of his enemies—once at St. Paul's, when summoned before the bishop of London, and again at Lambeth, where he had boldly appeared alone before a synod; and his peaceful deliverance amid confusion and strife on both occasions reminds us of the word, "But He, passing through the midst of them, went His way." (Luke iv. 30.) It was the same power that wrought in London and at Nazareth, against which all efforts of man are idle. (Ps. ii.)

On the first of these occasions he was accompanied before the bishop by two powerful friends—Lancaster and Percy, magnates of the realm. This so exasperated the bishop that he rebuked them in anger, and a tumult arose, during which Wickliffe quietly withdrew. On the second occasion (at Lambeth,) the people of London became concerned about his safety, and streamed toward the place of meeting, entered the building, and burst open the door of the council-room, and demanded Wickliffe, and, in the midst of all, a royal messenger entered, and "forbad any definite sentence" by the court. Wickliffe returned peaceably to Oxford, to lecture, write, and preach against the sins of popery with more zeal than ever. The hand of God thus shielded him from his enemies, and gave him boldness to still preach the truth.

We can think with what joy he must have gone on his way through the crowded street, hearing the word of the angel of the Lord, "Fear not" (Acts xxvii. 24), and assured afresh that man's rage could only do that which God's "counsel determined before to be done" (Acts iv. 28), and no doubt joining in the prayer, "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings; and grant unto Thy servants

that with all boldness they may speak Thy Word." So at all times we can rest in the assuring word (Is. lvii. 17), "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord."

Wickliffe had been one of a royal commission from England to the pope, in 1372, to remonstrate against existing evils. Like Luther on a similar occasion, he returned with a fresh impression of the corruptions of the papal system. Thus God was preparing him for the witness he was to bear. We may conclude he was not silent, since, not long after, papal bulls against him were addressed to Oxford, to the king, to Canterbury, and London. That England had become the nurse of heresy is ascribed to "John Wickliffe, Master in Divinity—more properly Master in Error; who had proceeded to a degree of madness so detestable as not to fear to assert, dogmatize, and publicly teach opinions the most false and erroneous, contrary to the faith, and tending to the entire subversion of the church."

"Thus terrible," remarks the author, "to the kingdom of darkness is a man who gives fearless utterance to the truth."

"Contrary to the faith"! Alas! how strong the tendency in us all to call that "contrary to the faith" which does not please us, because subversive of error we have become attached to! If we are not willing to say, "I am wrong," we may be sure Satan has gained the mastery over us.

The parliament of England having appealed to Wickliffe for his opinion as to the pope's claim of tribute, Wickliffe's reply has the simplicity and wisdom that is always found with subjection to God's Word:—

"If thou wilt be a lord," he says to the church dignitaries, "thou shalt lose thine apostleship; or if thou wilt be an apostle, thou shalt lose thy lordship; for truly thou must depart from one of them. . . . Now if it doth suffice thee to rule with the Lord, thou hast thy glory; but if we will keep what is forbidden, let us hear what He saith: 'He that is greatest among you shall be as the least, and he which is highest shall be as a servant;' and, for an example, He set a child in the midst of them. So, then, this is the true form and institution of the apostle's trade: *Lordship and rule is forbidden; ministration and service commanded.*"

Such ministry was the shining of Scripture-light for all who were not blind. As to ministry, the office of priest was to Wickliffe simply that of one who was bound to faithfully preach the Word, and that even in spite of the prohibition of bishops; and yet he did not quite attain to the scripture which lays upon each of us to minister according to the gift given us, and not by virtue of an "office," however truly he may have felt his own responsibility to Christ, and diligently acquitted himself to the end. Here is an eminently scriptural thought: "Every Christian should judge of the office of the clergy from what is taught in Scripture—especially in the epistles of Timothy and Titus, and should not admit the new inventions of Cæsar."

"The highest service to which a man may attain on earth," he says, "is to preach the Word of God, . . . and if our bishops preach not themselves, and hinder true priests from preaching, they are in the sin of the bishops who killed the Lord Jesus Christ."

He held that ministry should be supported simply by voluntary contributions of the people, according to the example of the Lord and the apostles; and that the Lord taught us to seek to be profitable to men everywhere, and

not to forbear to preach to a people because they are few, and our name may not in consequence be great. We should labor for God, and from Him hope for our reward.

"It was ever the manner of Jesus to speak the words of God wherever He knew they might be profitable to those who heard them. Hence Christ often preached now at meat, now at supper, and indeed at whatever time it was convenient for others to hear Him."

This reformer's instructions resulted in the going forth of a band of earnest missionaries through the country, who used occasions, (according to the author,) whether in the church-yard, the market-place, or the fair; and we thankfully conclude the work was effectual, from the opposition aroused. The archbishop of Canterbury, bishops, and doctors were gathered together in council (See Acts iv. 5), and appealed to royal authority to suppress the preachers, as men "who were perverting the nation with their heretical and seditious doctrines."

"But these devices," says the author, "were not able to break again the 'apostolic succession' thus revived by Wickliffe. When persecuted in one place, they fled to another, and continued their work; for the Lord was with them, and kings and prelates opposed in vain. To the poor the gospel was preached. This was to the glory of God. Wickliffe was a follower of Jesus, for he loved the poor."

"The Poor Caitiff" * is a collection of short pieces. (London Religious Tract Society.) With "simplicity, humility, and sweetness he speaks to the neglected and degraded poor these heavenly words of instruction and consolation." Here are a few passages from these little messengers of peace, which also show how the Spirit of Christ in every time leads the true servant in the path of meekness and love, that he may be able to minister the

* One of humble condition.

same thing to others—to the lambs and sheep of the flock :—

“To any degree of true love to Jesus no soul can attain unless he be truly meek. For a proud soul seeks to have his own will, and so he shall never come to any degree of God's love. Even the lower that a soul sitteth in the valley of meekness, so many the more streams of grace and love come thereto. And if the soul be high in the hills of pride, the wind of the fiend bloweth away all manner of goodness therefrom.

“Singular love is: when all solace and comfort is closed out of the heart but the love of Jesus alone, other delight and other joy pleases not; for the sweetness of Him is so comforting and lasting, His love is so burning and gladdening, that he who is in this degree, may well feel the fire of love burning in his soul. That fire is so pleasant that no man can tell but he that feeleth it (1 Pet. i. 8), and not fully he. Then the soul is Jesus loving, on Jesus thinking, and Jesus desiring; only burning in coveting of Him; singing in Him, resting on Him. Then the thought turns to song and melody.

“God playeth with His child when He suffereth him to be tempted; as a mother riseth from her much beloved child and hides herself, and leaves him alone, and suffers him to cry, ‘Mother! Mother!’ so that he looks about, cries and weeps for a time; and, at last, when the child is ready to be overset with troubles and weeping, she comes again, clasps him in her arms, kisses him, and wipes away the tears. So our Lord suffereth His loved child to be tempted and troubled for a time, and withdrawing some of His solace and full protection, to see what His child will do, and when he is about to be overcome with temptations, then He defendeth him and comforteth him by His grace.”

Note again Wickliffe's love for the poor and his per-

suasion that the Word alone could supply their need in his introduction to Luke.

"Therefore a poor caitiff let from preaching for a time for causes known to God writeth the gospel of Luke in English, with a short exposition of old and holy doctors, to the poor men of his nation, which know little Latin or none, and be poor of wit and worldly chattle, and not the less rich in good will to please God." And then referring to the hypocrisy of antichrist and his disciples (the papal system) he adds, "The best armor of Christian men against this crowned chieftain with his host is the text of holy writ."

In the year 1384, he completed the translation of the whole of the Old and New Testaments, making his translation from the Latin Vulgate,—that is, the Latin version made by Jerome from the Greek and Hebrew in the fourth century.

In the same year he was called to his rest. He had completed his task. He was seized with paralysis in the Church at Lutterworth, and after a few days of unconsciousness his soul "awoke in the joy of its Lord."

E. S. L.

(To be continued.)

GOD'S WAYS.

"Thy way is in the sea." "Thy way is in the sanctuary."

"In whose heart are the ways." (Ps. lxxvii.

19; lxxvii. 13; lxxxiv. 5.)

MOSES, when interceding for the people after their apostasy, asked God to show him his way. (Ex. xxxiii. 13.) He had seen the perverse ways of the people, and some of God's ways of patience with them, and his great desire was to know that way in its fullness. This was granted, as we read, "He made known His

ways unto Moses." (Ps. ciii. 7.) What can be more necessary for the child of God than to know His way? "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (Am. iii. 3.) We may be sure if we are to walk with God, it must be in *His* way. He will never walk with us in ours. He has come down in grace to meet us in our deepest need, at our greatest distance from God, come down in the person of His Son, met the need, annihilated the distance, not that He should walk in our path, but that we should walk in His. Thus only can we enjoy communion, testify for God, or in any way serve Him. Hence the absolute necessity of knowing His ways. In the three scriptures quoted we have three different views of those ways.

I. "Thy way is in the sea, and Thy path in the great waters, and Thy footsteps are not known." Here we have the truth stated that God's ways are past finding out. And who that has looked at the book of providence but has realized this? Here, a faithful servant of the Lord is cut off by death. There, the head of the house is removed, leaving a helpless family without any human support. Bright earthly prospects are blighted, health is lost,—yea, even to the little disappointments and surprises of each hour, we are compelled to say, "Thy way is in the sea." For surely God's ways are in all these things. There is no step of the road but is His; no hour in which He leaves His people alone. It is just the failure to see God's ways in the affairs of each day that leaves us dwarfs and babes. The effect of learning the lesson of God's ways being in the sea is the knowledge of our helplessness. Provide as we may, all is in vain to guard us from unforeseen contingencies. Growing out of this will come a self-distrust, and a corresponding confidence in God. As long as we think we have a plain path, the eye will not be on our guide. It is in the passing through deep waters, through the sea, that all self-trust must

go, and we must lean on Him alone. This is terrible to sight, even to the believer ; it is impossible for the unbeliever, as the Egyptians found a grave where Israel found a way. What a sense of the reality of God's presence it gives, thus to be thrown upon Him ! How Peter learned the Lord's presence as never known before when he began to sink in the waves of Galilee. As the eagle stirs up her nest, and the young cannot understand her apparent cruelty, so we cannot understand God's ways in the sea.

II. But this brings us to the second verse, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary." The psalmist had been in great trouble—all seemed black and hopeless, so that he cries out, "Will the Lord cast off forever? will He be favorable no more?" This is the result of being occupied with circumstances and personal trials. He sees it is his infirmity, and turns to meditate on One who never changes. He learns His way, and it is in the sanctuary he finds that way. It is only in the presence of God that we can fully learn His ways. For us how that presence shines with the glories of Jesus ! He Himself has gone into the sanctuary, has opened the way for us, through the rent vail, and now we have boldness to enter also. What precious thoughts cluster about this truth ! The sanctuary ! the holiest ! We have a right to be there, the precious blood is our title, the work of redemption is our ground. How solid ! how secure ! Thus the *end* is secure. The sanctuary is on the resurrection-side—no death, no life on earth, no devil, no man, can work *there* ; it is beyond all these powers of evil. And there is our place. Ah ! what matters it if the way be rough or long, the sanctuary is our future home, our present abiding place. We must leave our loads behind when we enter there. The worshiper in the tabernacle of old had his feet on the sand of the desert as he stood in the holy

place, but we can be sure that he gazed not on that, but on the splendors before and about him. So for us if by faith we are in the sanctuary, the way does not occupy us, but the one who leads us, fills our eye. Yet it is in the sanctuary we learn God's way. The light of that place must be shed on the book of providence if we are to read its pages aright. As the psalmist was well-nigh stumbled at the prosperity of the wicked, until he went into the sanctuary, so will we find much to make us wonder, perhaps to doubt, unless we go into the same quiet and holy place. Here, first of all, we learn what God's perfect love means—a love which has bridged the distance between what we were in our sins and what we will be in glory—bridged this distance at a cost which only God's love could or would have done. In the light of Jesus, living, dying, risen, interceding for us, coming to take us to be with Himself, we can understand how Paul could call any thing that might take place, "our light affliction which is but for a moment." In the light of the glory, how small the trials, how easy the way, *to faith!* But it is also in the sanctuary that we learn much of God's thoughts and of true wisdom. It is the spiritual man who discerns. He is in communion with the Father and His Son. If the companion of wise men will be wise, how much more will one who enjoys fellowship with Perfect Wisdom understand! Many a dear child of God, with much of what is called common sense, fails to grasp the meaning of God's ways, because he does not go into the sanctuary.

III. We come now to the results. The ways are no longer only the dark ways of a providence we cannot understand, but of a Father, whose perfect love and grace we know. The ways are in our heart, loved because they are His. The path is, as it were, transferred from the outward circumstances to the heart. Our true history is

heart history. We are apt to think we would do much better under different circumstances, but the state of the heart is the all-important matter. So too for usefulness ; God does not ask us to do great things, but to have His ways in our heart. We may be sure our Lord had God's ways in His heart as much in the thirty years of His retirement as in His public ministry. So we may be laid aside, sick, helpless, apparently useless ; but if in the heart we say, "Thy way, not mine, O Lord," we are doing true service, which will bear enduring fruit. In this way the hostile scene around us contributes to our fruitfulness—the valley of Baca (of weeping) becomes a well.

How differently the same scene affects different persons ! Like the same soil sustaining the noxious weed and the sweet flower ; so the world contributes either to our murmuring or to our confidence in God. If His ways are in the heart, each sorrow is the means by which we grow, as the rough wind drives the ship nearer home. "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." The word rendered "keep" is a strong one—meaning to "occupy as a garrison." What foe can come in when His peace thus fills the house and keeps the door ? Nothing is said in this precious verse of the circumstances being changed. The heart is filled with God's peace, and the circumstances will then only furnish occasion for the effects of its guard over the heart to be seen.

"Ill that He blesses is our good,
And unblest good is ill,
And all is right that seems most wrong,
If it be His sweet will."

So sings the heart in which God's ways are. How

blessed, how precious a portion, within the reach of all the Lord's people !

May we all know more of God's ways.

CHRISTIAN HOLINESS.

DIFFERENT SCHOOLS OF HOLINESS.

(Continued from page 163.)

3. **T**HE next view we may call the Faith School, as its members hold that they can step into a condition of holiness *by an act of faith*. It is said to be "a blessed, positive attainment or gift." They desire to enjoy the blessing of rest and liberty, and, at the same time, avoid either of the extremes of the Perfectionists and Evangelical Schools. Like the former, they profess to have received a positive blessing, though they differ from them in admitting in a way that the *flesh* still remains in the believer, and they also hold that he has received a new nature. Still, both are minimized and mystified till the advocate baffles the critic by disappearing in the region of the clouds. There need be no question as to their experience and enjoyment of blessing being beyond what the great majority of believers realize ; but the Faith School do not give a consistent and scriptural account of the experience. Their definition of sin is left vague ; sin in the flesh, and acts of sinning in the life, are not kept distinct ; liberty is confused with purity, and holiness with righteousness ; cleansing the source of evil is sought, rather than deliverance from the power of indwelling sin ; and the tendency of the teaching is toward self-occupation and *self-adulation*, rather than the utter repudiation of self and occupation with Christ. The Faith School would have Christ to stoop to meet our every need where we are, and produce a happy experience ; whereas

the Spirit would teach us that we are dead, and risen, and set free to have our hearts taken up with Christ Himself, where He is at God's right hand. It is true, as they affirm, that holiness is by faith; but it is not true that a soul can enter a region of rest, happiness, and power by an act of faith apart from the humbling experience of Rom. vii.; nor is it true that when rest and deliverance are realized that the believer has got a kind of store of power, or capital of holiness, upon which he can work without continual watchfulness, self-judgment, and positive dependence on the Lord moment by moment. They too frequently forget or overlook the exercise or pressure or the thorn in the flesh spoken of by Paul. (Acts xxvi. 16; 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27; 2 Cor. iv. 10; xiii. 7-10.)

4. This brings us to what we may call the Scriptural School. The aim in this view, as pointed out at the beginning, is to have the life of Jesus manifest in the body. Christ Himself is the standard, and as Paul puts it, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Overt acts, which we call *sins*, are clearly distinguished from the evil nature by which they are produced. This inherent bad disposition, or capacity, is called *sin*. The man commits the sins himself, and is responsible for them; but he inherited his evil nature from Adam, and is not responsible for that, though he is responsible for its acts. The presence of the evil nature does not give him a bad conscience; but the allowing it to act does, and renders him guilty. As guilty he may own what he has done, and find forgiveness through faith in Christ's blood. But as a believer, he is urged to confess his sins, and he is forgiven, and communion is restored. He is cleansed, indeed "once purged," and, if he only takes (Heb. ix. and x.) what the Spirit has written, he may enter the holiest, and know that as to sins he is as clean as an unfallen angel. But the blood

does not and cannot cleanse his evil nature. He has received a new nature: the life of Christ, the last Adam; but that has not changed or removed the evil nature which he received from the first Adam. Cleansing cannot alter that any more than the cleansing of a sow would make the animal a sheep.

The blood indeed cleanses away the sins of the sinner who believes; but in order for him to "walk in newness of life," and "have his fruit unto holiness," he needs to be not now forgiven or cleansed, as he is that already, but he requires *deliverance from the power of indwelling sin*. He was *cleansed by blood*; he is now to be *delivered by death*—not the death of his body, but the death of Christ. His evil nature, sin, "the body of the flesh" (Col. ii. 11) is not forgiven: it is condemned. (Rom. viii. 3; vi. 6-11.) He needs to know Christ as a deliverer. When he has learned painfully that there is no good in the old nature; and further still, that in the new nature there is no strength, he is led to despair of self, and to look at Christ's death in a new light. Now he sees that not only were his sins borne by Jesus and purged by His blood, but he himself was crucified with Christ, and he can reckon himself to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Liberty was what he required, and the Son makes him free indeed. (Jno. viii. 32-36.) Though the evil nature is there unchanged, he can say, "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." The blood has cleansed him; death has delivered him; he has resurrection life, and the indwelling of the Spirit, and is free to be occupied with Christ where He is, and have Christ's life manifested here, where in person Christ is not. "I, yet not I; but Christ liveth in me," and "For me to live [is] Christ;" this is *deliverance*, and the *result* is fruit *unto holiness*.

But learning deliverance is a reality. It may be more marked and wonderful in the experience of a Christian than was his first conversion. It is, no doubt, what some of the schools call the "second blessing," or "higher Christian life," or "sanctification;" but they do not and cannot account for what they have received in the light of Scripture; and they miss a great deal by not being guided by its teaching. The Evangelical School, and half-hearted Christians, rather enjoy the exposure of the perfectionist view; but they think, and really mean, that there is nothing for the Christian in the way of a positive deliverance. With them it is simply to sin as little as you can help; but it must be more or less sinning and repenting, and going back to sin, till delivered by death. But there is a *positive deliverance*, not from the *presence*, but from the *power* of indwelling sin, and Rom. vi. is the divine answer; and it indeed shows we are delivered by death—but Christ's death—and are to reckon ourselves dead, and find and enjoy deliverance now so as to have our fruit unto holiness.

But these things require to be taught, illustrated, enforced, and applied among *Christians*, as the gospel is pressed upon the unconverted. It has been my privilege to do this during many years, and in giving ten or twelve consecutive addresses, through the Lord's blessing, there are usually a number brought into liberty; but this is a very different thing from professing to live without sinning, or having had the evil nature changed or eradicated. If Christians could be got to look at Scripture, and would bend their minds, and yield their hearts and wills to learn the truth as the Spirit would reveal it, from the epistle to the Romans, Christian holiness, in its roots and fruits, might be understood and exemplified as never before. The principal work by those who attack holiness teaching is that of pulling down; but what is wanted is that the

people should be led into the apprehension and enjoyment of *the truth of deliverance* as it is found in Scripture. This would be building them up in their most holy faith.

W. C. J.

JEHU : A HISTORY OF SELF-WILL.

JEHU had a hard task rightly to perform. To execute vengeance, which belongeth unto God, is for a soul that realizes its own shortcomings indeed most difficult. The evil house of Ahab is at last to meet its doom, and Jehu is appointed to the task. In 2 Kings ix. he does his work, and does it thoroughly. It is well to see how he recognizes God's hand and God's word in it all. We are not called upon, like Jehu, to execute vengeance, but we have often in the application of discipline to know something of that faithfulness which does not spare. We are called to bear a testimony and to declare the truth of God, no matter what names may suffer. In all this, promptness and faithfulness are necessary. In chap. x. we see deceit in the matter of the slaying of the seventy sons of Ahab. He uses an artifice to get the elders to slay them and so to create the impression that they had shed more blood than he. In this, there seems to be a fear to stand alone, a desire to have others share with him in the responsibility and in possible defeat. There seems to be a fear lurking here, which ill becomes one who had the word of God for what he was doing. If he stood with God, he need not fear to stand alone. This deceit must have weakened him in the eyes of the people, as it surely would in the eyes of those who feared God. With us, who have a testimony to give, is there not often this lurking fear, which shows itself in the desire to associate others with us, not realizing that God and His word are our strength and that numbers often mean weakness?

If God in mercy add faithful ones to declare His truth, well; but let them come with eyes open, and not be drawn by any thing that has even the appearance of deceit. Jehu thus is going to strengthen his cause in his own way. This is self-will; that which does God's work, not in His way, but our own. And how natural that self-will, that which is human *strength*, is after all *weakness*! See Peter; in self-will he will confess Christ, go to prison and to death. That self-will only takes him to the high-priest's palace and to the fire—there to deny the One who in perfect submission to the Father was witnessing a good confession.

With self-will at work, pride and self-complacency naturally have their place,—“Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord.” “*My zeal*” is what is now before Jehu. God and His word are a secondary matter. Contrast such arrogance with Moses, on the one hand sending the tribe of Levi with drawn sword to slay the idolaters, and on the other interceding for the people. It is to be feared that “my zeal” is before us too often. Christ, not faithfulness is the object. Apart from Him there cannot be true faithfulness. Alas! much that passes for zeal for Him, in ecclesiastical discipline, or in personal dealings with fellow-Christians is, if rightly understood, but pride at our own unflinching faithfulness. It is not the spirit of Christ, it will do no lasting work for Him. When we think of Him who was consumed by zeal for the Father's house, the most faithful, the most devoted will have little to say about his own zeal.

Next, we find that deceit, practiced at first and not since judged, bearing worse fruit. He links God's name with that of Baal. True, one may say, but in order to slay the false worshipers. This may be good Jesuitism—it is not the practice of the faithful servant of God. See how Elijah acts in a similar case. It is a question of

Jehovah or Baal. He does not link himself for a moment with the false. He lets Baal be tested—then God shows His power, and the people see that none of the false prophets escape. Here, too, there is the artifice and cunning which speak of human expedients, of self-will, not of quiet confidence in God, and obedience to His Word. Baal may be destroyed out of Israel, but God is not exalted. With that inconsistency which always is manifested in self-will, even when apparently most faithful, Jehu casts out Baal, and holds fast to the golden calves of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. His zeal does not carry him back in simplicity to God, His altar, His house, His people. After a brilliant flash, the gloom deepens, for soon the Lord begins to cut Israel short, to let the enemy carry away captive those who lived east of Jordan. Thus brilliancy is no indication of lasting work. To be sure, for his measure of service, Jehu's sons for four generations sit on the throne; but what of this when the nation is still idolatrous, still divided and fast disintegrating?

Has not all this a word for us? There has been much cutting off of evil, much faithfulness for God. Do we not well to ask if, while the grosser forms of evil, of insubjection to God's word have been judged and departed from, there may not yet be the holding fast to what would answer to the golden calves?—the same, doubtless, as the one set up in the wilderness; something *visible* to take, the place of God—of Christ, whom, *not seeing*, we trust. Any substitute for Christ, His work, His person, His authority,—no matter by what name this substitute may be called, is in principle a holding fast to the golden calves. Jehu, with all his energy, never takes the place of a mourner who would draw God's people to Himself, so he comes short in his work—he is a failure. His spirit is with us to day. It may carry all before it for a time,

but lasting fruit for God there is not. Even now God's people are fast disintegrating—old ties fail to bind them together, and the temptation is to act, as did Jehu, in the pride of self-will. Alas! this but hastens the crumbling. "Come, and let us return unto the *Lord*." What He needs now is not men like Jehu, but those who, seeing the ruin, will mourn over it, and, setting up the Lord Himself as their standard, witness in meekness for Him. Self-will works ruin.

STEPPING-STONES IN THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

IN that wonderful prayer of the apostle at the close of Eph. iii., we have the knowledge of Christ's love linked with our being filled with (or rather unto,—the limit being, not the infinite resources, but our capacity,) all the fullness of God. In other words, that love is like God—infinite, inexhaustible. It is good to place the "breadth, length, depth, and height" here along side of the similar passage in Rom. viii. There, all creation is ransacked in vain to find any thing that is able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord: "neither height nor depth, nor any other creature." Here we have the love measured as far as possible, only to find it surpassing all measure—it "passeth knowledge." We look at the depths—of guilt, sin, Satan's power; it seems like a fathomless abyss; surely something in those dark depths might succeed in separating us from God's love. Here is our answer: Deeper than our guilt, than our sin, than Satan's power, is the love of Christ. It sought us when we were ingulfed in those awful depths. He entered the "horrible pit," and, passing through all the realities of wrath-bearing and Satan's rage, and the hatefulness of being "made sin"—His holiness linked

even in name with it,—passing through all this, He has shown a love deeper than it all. Down at the bottom, at the cross, we find His love. So we can look calmly, though not without sorrow and shame, at our past, and say, His love is deeper than it all; and, led by that love, He has taken our guilt away through His blood, annulled sin and Satan's power. Looking upward then into the heights—the region where principalities and powers are, we find His love higher, “far above all principality and power.” No room, then, for them to overcome us. Mourn higher—into the “holiest of all,” Love is before us, and the sprinkled mercy-seat tells us it has made a way for us to enter with boldness. Even look upon the throne, and we see Him seated there. Higher we cannot rise than the throne, the Father's house, the “city prepared as a bride.” But all these only witness that the love of Christ is there. Surely the soul is well-nigh lost as we think of that love “which passeth knowledge.”

“Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.”

His love for the Church is here set before us—from the time when He gave Himself for it, to that when He shall present it to Himself in glory. The effect is seen—“sanctify and cleanse it.” For a holy Lord, nothing short of a holy Church would do. He gave Himself for it. This tells of His death—His wrath-bearing on the cross. In glory, we see the Church without spot or wrinkle. No defilement—all has been cleansed away; no wrinkle—nothing that speaks of age or care or decay. If of our blessed Lord it is said, “Thou hast the dew of thy youth” (Ps. cx. 3), so also will it be true of His bride, the Church. Think of the earthly history of the Church,—

oppressed, divided, overcome by the world,—think of her thus, and then think what the love of Christ has in store for her—reigning, glorified, associated with Himself. As of God with Israel, so Christ with the Church; He will “joy over her with singing, He will rest in His love.” His love will never rest till He has His Church with Himself, to share in that love the fullness of which it will not know till then.

But a third verse gives us another application of the love of Christ. “Who loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*.” (Gal. ii. 20.) Here our attention is called, not to the infinite fullness of His love as in Eph. iii., nor to the Church as the object of that love, but to the fact that it is to *me* individually. All will agree, of course, that His love passeth knowledge; but if this is merely owned as a doctrine, it will of course have no power in the life. Even where that love is realized, there may be a vagueness and indefiniteness about it. We may think of Him as an infinitely loving Person, and yet not realize that the fullness of this love is toward each of us individually. So too with regard to His loving the Church—most blessed it is to realize this. But we might think of the Church as a great whole, and ourselves overlooked, as it were. But when we say, with Paul, “Who loved *me*,” there is no room for vagueness, no thought of being overlooked. The bright light of His face is for the time turned upon me alone. I am loved. Every day the Israelite could see the lamb offered up as a burnt-offering, and could say, “That is for the acceptance of the whole congregation;” but when he brought a lamb for his own offering, his thought was, “This is for my own acceptance.” How good it is in our God thus to give us to know, not merely the ocean of the love of Christ, but to let us hold it fast to our hearts—just for ourselves—“He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*.” In this connection, we are re-

mind of two things—our lost condition and our helplessness. “He gave Himself for me.” This was because I was a sinner,—because I was guilty, condemned by the law. And by His death for me, I have been, not merely delivered from wrath, but set free from that law which brought me into bondage. Instead of being under law, I live by faith of the Son of God, who loved me. Here Christ’s love to me takes the place of the law; and, constrained by that love, we can do what under law we never could. Blessed exchange!—not under law, but able to say, “Who loved me.” Now the love of Christ is something we can grasp; and with precious knowledge of it as a personal thing, we can look at the Church, realizing that we are members of that Church, each loved with the love to the whole. We look at that love which passeth knowledge, and as we search its height and depth, we can say, “*For me.*” There is no selfishness in this. Where Christ’s love fills the heart, selfishness can have no place. Have we not here, then, stepping-stones?—(1) Christ’s love to me personally; (2) His love to His Church, His body; (3) The infiniteness of that love which is the fullness of God. May we mount on these stepping-stones to know more and more of that love!

But there is one step still lower for the one who is not yet a beginner. He may say, “I cannot say He loved *me*, for I am a sinner, and have never loved Him.” Well, if you truly say you are a *sinner*, you can be sure of Christ’s love to you if you will receive it; for He came into the world to save sinners, He died for the ungodly, and He was rightly called the Friend of sinners. Your sin, then, truly owned as such, is your first step—not a high one—into the knowledge of the love of Christ.

If these lines are read by any one still unsaved, will you not now test that love which, though it fills heaven, yearns over *you*, and knocks at your heart?

“ROLL UP THE CATALOGUE.”

TWO gentlemen went to see an exhibition of paintings. They were connoisseurs, and one of them held in his hand a catalogue of the various pictures on view. As they moved along the gallery, one of them touched his companion, and said, “Look here! Did you ever see such a daub as that? What could have induced any one to send a thing like that to an exhibition? What a wretched production! And yet, no doubt, he considers himself an artist! What a pity that some folk should be so blind to their own deficiencies!”

The friend who held the catalogue in his hand drew back a little, and rolling it up in the form of a telescope, looked through it at one special point in the picture; and the more closely he examined it, the more he discerned the evidence of real genius. He said to his friend, handing him the rolled-up catalogue, “Just stand here, and look through this at that one spot.” He did so; and after a while exclaimed, “Well, that is beautiful! after all, he *is* an artist.”

Now this little incident conveys a most valuable lesson to us all, and one much needed in our intercourse with the Lord's people. It is a grand point, in looking at the character of any one with whom we may have to do, to look out for some redeeming feature, some good point, and dwell upon that. Too often, alas! we do just the opposite. We take a hasty view of a person, or our eye rests upon some flaw, some defect in the temper, disposition, or conduct, and we keep perpetually dwelling and harping on that, and lose sight of some most excellent trait in the character.

This is a most serious mistake, and one in which some of us are sadly prone to fall. There are few of us who have not some weak point, some drawback, some little

inconsistency, something or other which calls for patience and forbearance on the part of those with whom we come in contact in daily life. Let us all remember this, and be on the look-out, not for the weak point, but for some redeeming feature. Let us, when looking at others, "*just roll up the catalogue,*" and concentrate our vision upon some Christian virtue, some good quality, some amiable feature. Let us dwell upon that, and speak of that, and nothing else; and we shall have to exclaim, "Well, after all, he is a Christian!" This will help us marvelously to get on with people; and it will minister to our own happiness in a way we have little idea of.

For example, there is a person who is naturally of a close, miserly disposition. He likes to drive a hard bargain; he would dispute with a cabman about a few pence; he can hardly ever make a purchase without trying to get a reduction in the price. This is very miserable indeed, very sad, very humiliating, greatly to be deplored; but *just let us "roll up the catalogue,"* and look closely at this person's character, and we shall find him most liberal in the Lord's cause, and in helping the poor. Perhaps on the very day on which he bargained with the cabman about sixpence, he gave a sovereign to a poor family. Let us think and speak of his liberality, and draw the curtain of silence over his niggardliness.

This is Christlike. Let us cultivate this lovely habit. It is very terrible to allow ourselves the habit of dwelling upon the weak points in our brethren. It is really of Satan, and we must earnestly watch against it, and pray against it. Let us "*lay aside all evil-speaking.*" How deplorable to find ourselves indulging in the unworthy practice of exposing the foibles and infirmities of the Lord's people, or turning them into ridicule! May the Lord deliver us from all this! May we judge it in ourselves, and then we shall have moral power to discounte-

nance it in others. Whenever we hear any one speaking disparagingly of another, let us gently suggest to him to "roll up the catalogue," and fix his eye on what is of Christ in the person, and lose sight of all beside.

C. J. D.

WORD STUDIES IN THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

(Continued from p. 111.)

HAVING briefly examined the word "love" (*agape*), and the various connections in which it is found, we come now to one which gives character to God's love: *Hagios*, *hagiazō*, "holy, to sanctify." True love, divine love, is holy. God never sacrifices His holiness for His love. Indeed, love would cease to be truly perfect did it dim in the least the bright shining forth of that holiness. With us, alas! it is different: love means too often the sacrifice of right principles, of faithful testimony; it means allowing sin to be unreprieved in our brother, looseness in all the relationships of life—the home, the place of business, the assembly. But this is not true love; it is weakness. The careful examination of the word now before us will show that there is no such element of weakness in that love we have been dwelling upon. The cross, the greatest exhibition of love, is at the same time the full manifestation of God's holiness. He loved the world, and gave His Son: He was holy—that blessed One must die.

The name "saints" (*hagioi*) is given to His people to show what they are in Christ, and in God's mind,—what, therefore, He would have them carry out in the life: (chap. v. 3) "Let it not be named among you, as becometh *saints*." This is the Scripture-thought of sainthood, so contrary to all man's thought on the subject. Man says he must act in a certain way in order to be a saint; God says we should act thus *because* we are saints. What

a beautiful name to be known by—"saints"—"sanctified ones"—"holy people"! So God looks upon us and speaks of us. "They envied Aaron, the saint of the Lord." (Ps. cvi. 16.) Looking at Aaron's personal life, there would not seem to be much ground for him to lay claim to sainthood. He made the golden calf, and taught the people to worship it. This at the beginning of his career. He, with Miriam, envied Moses during that career; and to close it, he had the melancholy record of anger at the waters of Meribah, shutting him as well as Moses out of the land of Canaan. Yet, failing at the beginning, middle, and end of his life, Aaron is a saint—God set him apart for Himself. The importance of the word in the epistle is seen from its frequent use—chaps. i. 1, 15, 18; ii. 19; iii. 8, 18; iv. 12; vi. 18. His people are clothed in clean raiment in His sight, let it be practically so. If this is true individually, it follows necessarily that it applies collectively. So the temple is a *holy* one, formed of such living stones. This work of building, as well as of sealing (the individual work), is by the *Holy* Spirit (chaps. i. 13; iv. 30). So, looking on to the end, where God's glory will be fully manifested, holiness is there too (chaps. i. 4; v. 26, 27). Linked with these are the kindred words "without spot" (*aspilos*), or "wrinkle" (*nitis*), and "blameless" (*amomos*). How blessed to know that this was God's purpose for us when He chose us in Christ,—that this purpose will be perfectly accomplished. By grace we have been freed from the *guilt* of sin, another having borne it; through grace we can walk free from the *power* of sin by reckoning ourselves to be dead to it and alive to God in Christ Jesus; but do not our hearts yearn for that time when we shall be freed from the *presence* of sin, when *holiness* will describe our character both positively and negatively!

Chap. iv. 24—*Hosiotes*—"holiness of truth" shows the

character of this holiness, that it is no mere negative absence of evil, but according to and produced by the truth. This is most important. What is called devotion, even prayerfulness, is not necessarily holiness of truth. These may be merely the exercise of human will; but the truth is what sanctifies, and by the truth all professed sanctity must be tested.

Hence we find the word "truth" (*aletheia*) prominently used. In chap. i. 13, it is that which begins the work, which lies at the foundation—"the word of the truth of the gospel." "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth." (Jas. i. 18.) Then as to the pattern of the walk, the truth as it is in Jesus (His spotless, true life down here,) is the guide. The result of learning effectually the truth as it is in Jesus will lead to truth in our life (chap. iv. 25). The fruit of the Spirit (chap. v. 9) is in truth, and that which is to gird us for warfare is truth,—God's Word *encircling* my life, not applied here and there as it may suit, but the *loins*—the inner man—"the loins of the mind" girded with sober truth—the whole truth of God. "The truth in love" (chap. iv. 15) gives us what we have been dwelling upon, not these two separated so as to conflict, but each acting with and through the other. Similar words follow: *phos*, "light;" *photizo*, "to enlighten." In chap. v. 8 it is used both to show the standing and walk of the saint, contrasted with his former condition of darkness (*skotos*) and walk (chap. v. 11), when the works were "unfruitful works of darkness." This light is what we are in the Lord; as we noticed before of the word "saints," we are to walk in a manner corresponding to what we are—"walk as children of light." It is this which links us with the day which will soon dawn; even now we should be as lights in a dark place, reproofing and manifesting the darkness *by the light*. Should any have closed the eyes, how arousing the call, "Awake, thou that sleepest! and

arise from among the dead, and Christ shall give thee light"! Soon we will have nothing but light within and about us; let us have it now shining undimmed upon us and from us.

Thus from these two classes of words examined we get at that which gives character to the whole epistle—Love, Holiness, God is light, God is love. In this book we have Him thus presented. God is manifested in it. Light and love too are what should be found in us, hence the frequent use of these words in that connection.

It is interesting to notice that in the epistle to the Galatians we have not the word "holiness" at all. The contents give the reason. The saints were under law, and the law never produces holiness. The Spirit of God occupies those saints with their low state, and so there is little room for either love or holiness to be mentioned. How different in Ephesians! God's thoughts, not our perversion of them, are before us; hence, as a natural consequence, love and holiness flow forth.

FIVE BARLEY LOAVES.

BUT "five barley loaves, and two small fishes,"
 Among the five thousand, with all my wishes,
 Seemed very small indeed.
 "Two hundred pennyworth" was not enough that all
 "A little" might "take." But thy gifts, howe'er small,
 Shall meet this pressing need.

"Bring them hither to Me," and with My blessing,
 And with thine impotence frankly confessing,
 "Give ye them to eat."
 Thy "seed" shall "multiply," *thy* bread shall not lack;
 And though it be but crumbs, I will bring it back—
Thy need I'll surely meet.

Then with my little I laid me at His feet,
 And though it was my all, less were incomplete
 For the service of love.
 But hungry souls were fed with the bread of life,
 While the bread for *my* food was "gathered" without
 By strength from above. [strife]

If I ate my little—brought it not to Him,
 My "loaves" I would not have, nor yet to the brim
 Of crumbs "*twelve baskets*" full!
 There is, then, withholding, to poverty tending;
 But love distributes—"good works" commending,
 And thus *grace shall rule*.

* * *

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 5.—"Please explain Jno. xx. 22 in connection with Acts i. 8."

Ans.—In the passage in John we have a symbolic act. In creation, God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul. In this passage we have the last Adam, a life-giving Spirit. The Lord as risen, and head of a new creation, confers that in the power of which alone we can walk according to that rule (Gal. vi. 16). Is it not necessary, however, to suppose that the Spirit was actually bestowed by the act of breathing, or at that time. Pentecost was the appointed time, and then they received, not till then, the promise of the Father. The blessings indicated in the gift of the Spirit in Acts and John are not different. There is no hint that the one is preliminary to the other. In both, power for service is the prominent thought, as may be seen from the context.

Q. 6.—"Explain the difference between 'fruit of righteousness' (Jas. iii. 18) and 'fruit of the Spirit' (Gal. v. 22, 23)."

Ans.—The first gives us the outward manifestation—the *character*, the second gives us the source and power.

Q. 7.—"What is the sin unto death (1 Jno. v. 16.)?"

Ans.—It is the sin of a *brother*, and of such a character that he must be removed under the chastening of God (1 Cor. xi. 30). This of course does not mean that he is lost, but that his life here is no testimony for God, and he is taken from a scene where he fails to honor Him.

CHRISTIAN HOLINESS.

INTRODUCTORY—THREEFOLD NEED, THREEFOLD BLESSING.

A FAR-SEEING man with Dr. Talmage is one who sees into things. This is good as far as it goes, but he would be the furthest-seeing man who sees through things. This is what is wanted in philosophy, in science, or in religion. This Holiness Question, now exercising the most earnest Christians everywhere, requires seeing into and seeing through if one of the deepest needs of the Church of God is to receive a divine answer. Then let us try to see into it even if we cannot see through it. Some philosophers consider that religion takes its rise in the soil of remorse. Without accepting this altogether, it may be allowed that it expresses an important principle. It is what we call repentance, or self-judgment. Betterment of life implies that the life lived before was not only an undesirable and unworthy one, but that in some measure the whole course, and the man that lived it, are abhorred by the person himself, and he is longing after something more in harmony with the intention of his Creator. The Holiness Movement has taken its rise out of the acknowledged failure and unholiness of the great majority of professing Christians. Then even if the movement in some respects is a failure, it is an improvement on the state of things which called it into existence.

It is said that at an examination a divinity student was asked who were the heretics. To the surprise and alarm of some who would ever say, "As it was in the beginning," etc., the student replied, "The heretics are the life of the Church." Wiser, broader-minded men allowed that he had struck a vein of gold. Heretics and heresy mean life rather than stagnation and death. It is not necessary to go with the heresy; but the exercise and inquiry it causes may increase the stamina and intelligence of the Chris-

tians who wake up, and, in exposing the error, bring out and emphasize the real truth. Then the controversy about holiness, in many quarters, in the light of the former indifference or stagnation, is a good rather than an evil omen for the well-being of the Church. It is a seed-time. If the Lord leaves the Church here, the harvest will depend upon how we sow at this season. Then are Christians ready to wake up and say, "Let the truth run and have free course, and win whoever is unhorsed from his hobby." Scripture must be the umpire.

We may start with this common thought, that the low state of things, individually and collectively, demonstrate the deep need that there is for a genuine movement toward whole-hearted devotedness to the Lord. But, at the outset, observe that the great tendency, even with the most earnest Christians, is, to seek for an experience, whereas God presents a Person—the Lord Jesus Christ. Holiness-advocates speak of "it," or "what:" God speaks of "Him," or the Person whom He has raised to His own right hand. Personal testimonies as to the experience of a "second blessing," have been largely used in the holiness movement. When they are modest and scriptural, they may have their place, but at best they are the blurred page of human experience. It will be necessary, if we are to have a proper standard, to see what is said in the distinct statements of Scripture on this doctrine of Christian holiness or deliverance. Experience, at the best, is like a painting of part of an extensive landscape. Scripture is more like looking on the landscape itself. You have not only the original of what appears in the painting, but much more than what was painted, and every part seen in relation to the whole landscape. To take in God's view of holiness or deliverance in any measure, it is needful to look at all Scripture. Still there are some remarkable statements where, in brief compass, the salient points

of man's need and God's provision are presented together.

MAN'S THREEFOLD NEED.

Titus invites us to take such an extensive view when he says, "The grace of God, which carries with it salvation for all men, has appeared, teaching us that, having denied impiety and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and justly and piously in the present course of things, awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all lawlessness, and purify to Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Tit. iii. 11-14.) Here it may be observed that man has a *threefold need*, which is met by God's bringing in a *threefold blessing*. The sins committed require an atonement, and Jesus Christ "gave Himself for us." Or, as said elsewhere, "Who gave Himself for our sins." (Gal. i. 4.) Then, when forgiven, as living in the world, the believer has evil within and around him. He is called to live consistently with what he is as a new man. His conduct toward others must be according to righteousness. With God before him, all his ways should bear the impress of one who was governed by the sense of the divine presence. For all such present need, he finds an adequate answer in Him who is seeking to "purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Then, though good works be maintained and holiness characterize the believer, there are longings which can only be satisfied in a scene where sin can never come, and where imperfection is unknown. The heart attracted by the Lord longs to know and enjoy its object where there is naught to limit or interfere with its communion. So there is the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. There is man's deep need and God's rich provision; each to be viewed

as a whole, yet it is helpful to see that man's need is threefold, and that God meets it by a—

THREEFOLD BLESSING.

(1.) For sins committed there is forgiveness through faith in the blood of Christ.

(2.) From the power of the evil nature possessed there is deliverance through owning that our old man has been crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should no longer serve sin.

(3.) From all weakness and imperfection, even as to the body, and from the scene and sphere where sin has had sway, there is to be deliverance, by the Lord's appearing the second time, without sin, unto salvation; the creature itself also will be set free from the bondage of corruption, and brought into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. (Rom. viii. 21.)

What is thus briefly taught in the passage from Titus is more elaborately explained in the epistle to the Romans. The first question, that which refers to the *guilt* of our sins, is taken up in chaps. i.—v. 11. The second aspect of man's need regarding the *power* of sin, or the evil nature, is treated in chaps. v. 12—viii. 10. The third and perfect answer to man's state as connected with a creation subject to corruption, is his deliverance from the *presence* of sin. The spirit is freed at death; the body at the resurrection; or both together at the coming of the Lord. This is treated in chap. viii. 11—27.

We must return to these central chapters of Romans again and again. Suffice it to say that they form the great scriptural basis of the doctrine of Christian holiness, or deliverance. Any teaching on holiness or sanctification which is not founded upon, and in harmony with, these chapters is likely to prove unsatisfactory, if it does not land its followers in positive error. On the other hand, if these

chapters are understood, and an experience leading up to their shout of liberty and thanksgiving realized, the believer will find himself led by the Spirit along the way of truth and holiness, and have the life also of Jesus made manifest in his body.

Another instance of the threefold character of blessing may be noticed. "Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish." Also, "Nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church. (Eph. v. 25-30.)

Here again we see that for sins Christ gave Himself in the *past*. To deliver from the power of sin He is occupied with His own at the *present*. To remove them from the presence of sin and bring in perfection He is coming again in the *future*.

So likewise to the Thessalonians it is said, "Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus, our Deliverer from coming wrath." (1 Thess. i. 9, 10). They were met where they were in their sins by the gospel announcing forgiveness. The word was received in power, and in the Holy Ghost, so that they became followers of the apostles, and ensamples of the power of grace. Then their hearts were set on the Lord to wait for full deliverance when He returned from heaven.

Once more to the Hebrews the Spirit writes on the same lines, the three appearings of Christ. (Heb. ix. 24-28.) He appeared to put away sin: He appears in the presence of God for us: He will appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.

Thus the divine answer to man's threefold need will be

found linked up with three great facts concerning Christ. As we have seen, as to time, they have to do with the past, the present, and the future. As to the character and extent of the work, the gospel of God fully announced will show that Christ came and suffered for sins; that He rose from among the dead and took His seat at the right hand of God, and is there the Succorer of His people now; and that He will come again to receive His people to be with Himself in the glory given Him by the Father. Tested in this way much that is preached will be shown to come short of the gospel as preached and written by Paul.

But having now sketched the relation of the three aspects of the blessing of believers, we may turn more definitely to the middle one of the three, which is our special subject. Thus occupied particularly with holiness or deliverance, a few of the statements and illustrations of Scripture may clear the ground for a more detailed exposition and application of our theme.

By seeing the beauty of the life of Jesus as retraced again by the Spirit in the lives of devoted servants, other hearts and minds may be led to *admire* such a manifestation of the grace of God. When it is further perceived that men of like passions with ourselves so found and proved the all-sufficiency of the grace of God, some may venture to *admit* that in their own lives such grace might be illustrated. Dwelling on who the Lord is, and where He is now, and what He can and delights to do for His own, some may be sweetly constrained to so yield themselves unto God as to find that they have actually *adopted* His own way of having Christ magnified in their bodies. Yes, the old adage, "If in writing you would improve, you must first with writing fall in love," may be appropriately rendered, in connection with holiness, If in living you would improve, you must first with living fall in love,

and nothing less than the living, or the life of Jesus, will be your ideal or you model.

Then to quicken the love for holiness it is needful to study the perfect copy, as well as the imitations of those who have followed it most successfully.

We must leave further illustrations for another paper, but just calling attention to one comprehensive scripture, we close by saying that for holiness, here is the perfect standard, the living ideal, as well as the power by which it is to be attained: "We all, looking on the glory of the Lord with unvailed face, are transformed according to the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit."

W. C. J.

(To be continued.)

FELT AND UNFELT NEED,

AND FAITH'S SUPPLY, AND THE MOUNT THAT WAS
NIGH TO THE SEA. (Matt. xv.)

THIS chapter presents two subjects in remarkable contrast: religious hardness of hypocrisy, in the first part, teaching that a man was free from obligation to help his parents on declaration that what he might have given them was devoted as a gift, and at the same time scrupulous about eating with unwashed hands. Love and righteousness were nothing before the claims of religious formalities.

It is here the Lord says, "Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, 'This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoreth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.' And He called the multitude, and said, 'Hear and understand, not that which goeth into the

mouth defileth a man, but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.' "

And does this plain and solemn rebuke open their blinded eyes? No; they are only offended by it. Self-complacency made them satisfied with a well of iniquity, covered with smooth words, but the Lord uncovers it. "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." A sevenfold result of wickedness. "These are the things that defile a man, but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man." But so hardened were they and blind, that the Lord had to say, "Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind; and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." The Lord's words only offended them.

And here is the turning point in the chapter. "Then Jesus went thence and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And in contrast with the secure hardness of "the scribes and Pharisees which were of Jerusalem," He meets at once a world of openly confessed need, and at once supplies all that need. The daughter of the woman of Canaan is "made whole that very hour." "And great multitudes came unto Him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus feet, and He healed them, and . . . they glorified the God of Israel." And also He had compassion on the multitude and fed them, and they were all filled.

The contrast is impressive and instructive. Hardness of heart, ignorant of its need, He turns from; but felt misery and need He tenderly compassionates and at once relieves. It is a dark shadow and a bright light. Human wickedness and human misery brought suddenly to view, to arouse, if possible, the desperately hardened, and through it all the glory of the Lord shines. The meek

and lowly one exposes and denounces the heartless hypocrite; and the all powerful One tenderly cares for the distressed. This is the One who has saved us. Let us not fear to be at rest in His love, and to examine ourselves too in the light of His holiness; and let us study His character, that is, behold His glory. If the shining of the light exposes and condemns, let us welcome the exposure, for He heals also, and His grace is sufficient to enable us to follow Him.

Note that they had made the commandments of God of no effect by their traditions; and their hearts were hardened against the tenderest feelings, and that by religious decrees. Let us heed the lesson: for to-day decrees of human invention, having a fair name to give them currency, displace the Word of God, to make room for the will of man.

How pure and good is the holy Word of God, by contrast,—“Thy word is very pure, therefore Thy servant loveth it.” (Ps. cxix. 140.) “Honor thy father and mother,” the Lord quotes to them, and at once their wickedness is exposed. How good the sound of this voice to upright parents and children! It was truly the turning of the hearts of the parents to the children, and the hearts of the children to the parents, according to the last words of the Old Testament.

The religious Pharisees were undermining the foundations of society, and the shining of the light exposes them at it.

But let us beware! How easy to slight common obligations of love and kindness while carefully religious! May our eyes be enlightened!

But let us turn again to the latter part of the chapter. “And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee, and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. And great multitudes came unto Him, hav-

ing with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet, and He healed them."

The poor multitudes are better occupied than the Pharisees. They brought the needy ones to Jesus. This was good works, and the Lord was ready for them. But the locality is instructive. It is *the third time* He is on the mount in Matthew, in His service, and there is nothing but unhindered blessing. He is the triumphant, all-powerful One. In the chapter previous He is also on a mountain. "But," says the next verse, "the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves, *for the wind was contrary.*" At once we are reminded of the book of Exodus, the opposition of the enemy, a contrary wind, while deliverance follows, but this occasion (the third) we are, as in Leviticus, in the glorious presence of God.

The number has evidently its usual meaning. On resurrection ground divine power dispenses world-wide blessing to fourfold distress: the dumb speak, the maimed become whole, the lame walk, and the blind see. And those who saw it "glorified the God of Israel."

It is a millennial scene, and a very glorious one and a complete one. For first, the power of Christ heals them, and enables them to stand before Him. And then in the miracle of the loaves and fishes, He feeds them, and by the twelve, as Solomon had twelve to minister provision for his house,—in his kingdom that was a type of the millennium.

There are, too, seven loaves and seven baskets full of overabundance. All tells completeness and superabounding grace.

"And they did all eat, and were filled."

But where is the Pharisee? Satisfied with husks, that even the poor prodigal turns away from because he has

felt his need! Satisfied without Christ! Perishing, and ignorant of it, in the far country! He knows nothing of this scene of glory. How dark and sad his condition, far off from and forever ignorant of this scene of joy. And yet what can be done? No one can give supply to him who knows no need. God commands men every where to repent, and there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents, and on earth weeping—the Lord's own tears—over those who would not repent. They "would not," and their house was left unto them desolate. The burning thirst will come, but too late. The fixed gulf will be there, no more pleadings of mercy.

But no needy one is turned away. "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. xi.) And "him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." There was no exception. Of all that multitude of men and women and children "they did all eat and were filled." Let no one fear to come boldly to Him, saint or sinner. If convicted of sin He gives peace; if already His, and in distress, in Him there is perfect grace and love to lift above every fear, and fill with peace and joy.

No Christian is ever without a Friend, or without full supply for every kind of need. Read in the fourth chapter of 1 Kings the type of all this, when "Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household." And consider that "a greater than Solomon is here." And Solomon had wide dominion, and "he had peace on all sides round about him, and Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree;" as it will be in the time when "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks." (Micah iv. 4.) "Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom."

(2 Chron. ix. 7.) They were happy, not merely that their want was supplied, but because they stood continually in the king's presence, and heard his word, as did Mary. The Lord is both our "shield and our exceeding great reward." (Gen. xv.) Let us seek Him, and we shall know both His power and His bounty. We are always in need, and in Him and at His table is always perfect supply, and fullness of joy.

The Lord never brought any one into His presence to leave them unfed or uncared for. It is a place of joy. "None might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth." (Esth. iv. 2.) And Mephibosheth (2 Sam. ix.) sat at the king's table, while all the fruits of the land of Saul's house were his; that is, all that is of this world that is for our good, is ours. He hath given us all things richly to enjoy.

There is another thing to notice as to the locality of this scene. The mountain was "nigh unto the sea of Galilee." "And Jesus departed thence," it reads, "and came *nigh unto the sea of Galilee*, and went up into a mountain, and sat down there." That is, the scene of all this abounding blessing in the Royal Presence was nigh unto the well-known sea of storms that witnessed the distress of His disciples and their cries of unbelief,—the sea that lay between them and the peaceful presence of the Lord on the shore beyond.

The time of sorrow we are in is not far from the millennial day. The night is far spent, and the day is at "Yet a little while [a very little while] and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." And as the groaning increases, the day is hastening. It is about to dawn. The mount is nigh to the sea. Let this be our motto to cheer the soul. There is a glory in this creation that leads the heart to God; but in a moment we shall be in the presence of a glory such as no eye has seen, and

this world will be a forgotten past. We are saved "in hope" (Rom. viii.)—in an atmosphere of hope. To rest here in this world is corruption; to breathe the atmosphere of hope is revival and strength and joy. "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (Rom. v. 2.)

So also in the alternation of trials and consolations here the mountain is nigh to the sea, when we least think so. And by a new valley of tribulation we are led by the hand to a new hill-top of hope to get a nearer, clearer view than ever before of the heavenly city.

Who would wish to have it otherwise than He appoints? Let us leave all with Him. Only let us not seek the hill-top of pride, but the valley of humility, where Jesus walked, and the hill-top of hope; and the lower the valley of tribulation with humility (1 Pet. v. 5, 6, and Rom. v. 2-5), the higher the hill-top of hope. His grace alone can keep us.

"And He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground." We must be at rest, and subject, in order to be fed. "And He gave to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitude." We must receive first from the Lord, and then communicate to others. This the disciples did. They were sanctified, and meet for the Master's use. This we must be or He will not use us. He will not forsake us, but He will not use us unless ready to be used. And then the disciples did not keep what they received, or waste it. They gave just what they had received to the multitude—"their portion of meat in due season." (Luke xii. 42.)

What is kept and not used is like the manna kept. It became corrupt. Truth not held in holy hands, and communicated—circulated—is like a stagnant pool compared with running water. How foul the one! how clear and light the other! Life-giving and refreshing, a type or figure of the Spirit's power in the Christian. (Jno. vii. 38.)

May our lives be holy lives, and our service abundant for the Lord, and to His people, and to all men.

Let us remember, then, there is a time to sit down and be fed, and a time for activity in service; and if one is lacking, both are lacking. May we hasten to purify ourselves from any sin that would hinder our being fed, and from any sluggishness that would hinder both feeding and serving.

May we welcome both the north wind and the south wind, if only the spices of His garden flow out.

E. S. L.

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART IV.

THE EARTH-TRIAL. (CHAP. XIV.)

"First-Fruits." (vv. 1-5.)

THE manifestation of evil is complete; we are now to see God's dealings as to it. These acts of Satan and his ministers are a plain challenge of all His rights in Israel and the earth; and further patience would be no longer patience, but dishonor. Hence we find now, as in answer to the challenge, *the Lamb upon Mount Zion*,—that is, upon David's seat; and as the beast's followers have his mark upon them, so the followers of Christ, associated with Him here, have His and His Father's name upon their foreheads. What this means can scarcely be mistaken.

Zion is not only identified in Scripture with David and his sovereignty, but very plainly with the sovereign grace of God, when everything intrusted to man had failed in Israel, priesthood had broken down, the ark gone into

captivity in the enemy's land, and although restored by the judgment of God upon the Philistines, was no more sought unto in the days of Saul. He, though Jehovah's anointed king, had become apostate. All might seem to have gone, but it was not so; and in this extremity, as the seventy-eighth psalm says, "Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, . . . and He smote His adversaries backward. Moreover, He refused the tent of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim, but chose the tribe of Judah—the Mount Zion which He loved. . . . He chose also David His servant." Nor was this a temporary choice: as a later psalm adds, "For Jehovah hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is My rest forever: here will I dwell, for I have desired it." (Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14.)

Thus, though the long interval of so many centuries may seem to argue repentance upon God's part, it is not really so: "God is not man, that He should lie; nor the son of man, that He should repent." The Lamb on Zion shows us the true David on the covenanted throne, and Zion by this lifted above the hills indeed. The vision is of course anticipative, for by and by we find that the beast still exists. The end is put first, as it is with Him who sees it from the beginning, and then we trace the steps that lead up to it.

But who are the hundred and forty-four thousand associated with the Lamb? Naturally one would identify them with the similar number sealed out of the twelve tribes in the seventh chapter, and the more so that the Lamb's and His Father's name upon their foreheads seems to be the effect of this very sealing, which was upon the forehead also. No other mark is given us as to them in the former vision, of whom we read as exempted from the power of the locusts afterward. Here, if it is not directly affirmed that these are sealed, yet it seems

evident, a seal having been often a stamp with a name; and the purpose of the sealing in the former case being to mark them out as God's, this is manifestly accomplished by the name upon them. This open identification with Christ in the day of His rejection might seem to be what would expose them to all the power of the enemy, yet it is that which in fact marks them for security. In reality, what a protection is the open confession of Christ as the One we serve! There is, in fact, no safer place for us than that of necessary conflict under the Lord's banner; and the end is glory. Here they stand—these confessors, openly confessed by Him on His side; and their having been through the suffering and the conflict is just that which brings them here upon the mount of royalty: it is "if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."

Another inestimable privilege they have got, though clearly an earthly, not a heavenly company: they are able to learn a song that is sung in heaven. "And I heard a voice from heaven, as a voice of many waters, and as a voice of great thunder; and the voice which I heard was of harpers harping with their harps; and they sing a new song before the throne, and before the four living beings and the elders: and no one was able to learn the song, except the hundred and forty-four thousand that were purchased from the earth."

It is clear that the company here occupy a place analogous to that of the Gentile multitude of the seventh chapter, who stand before the throne and the living ones also. The vision in either case being anticipative, we can understand that earth and heaven are at this time brought near together, and that "standing" before the throne and "singing" before the throne involve no necessary heavenly place for those who sing or stand there. Here they *stand* upon Mount Zion while they *sing* before the throne,—if, that is, the singers are primarily the hundred

and forty-four thousand, as many think. What seems in opposition to this is that the voice is heard from heaven, and that the company on Mount Zion are spoken of as *learners* of the song. On the other side, the difficulty is in answering the question, Who are these harpers, plainly human ones, who are distinguished from the elders, yet in heaven at this time? Remembering what the time is may help us here. May they not be the martyrs of the period with which the prophecy in general has to do,—those seen when the fourth seal is opened, and those for whom they are bidden to wait—the sufferers under the beast afterward? two classes which are seen as completing the ranks of the first resurrection in the twentieth chapter. These would give us a third class, evidently—neither the heavenly elders nor the sealed ones of Israel; and *yet in closest sympathy with the latter*. It could not be thought strange that these should be able to learn *their* song. And at the time when the Lamb is King on Zion, this third class would certainly be found filling such a place as that of the harpers here.

This seems to meet every difficulty, indeed: for their song would clearly be a new song, such as neither the Old Testament nor the revelation of the Church-mystery could account for; while the living victors over the beast would seem rightly here to enter into the song of others, rather than to originate it themselves.

But they have their own peculiar place, as on Mount Zion, first-fruits of earth's harvest to God and to the Lamb, purchased from among men, (grace, through the blood of Christ, the secret of their blessing, as of all other,) but answering to that claim in a true undefiled condition, in virgin-faithfulness to Him who is afresh espousing Israel to Himself. In their mouth thus no lie is found, for they are blameless: and these last words we shall surely read aright when we remember that to those

who have not received the love of the truth, "God will send strong delusion, that they may believe *the* lie" (2 Thess. ii. 11), and the apostle's question, "Who is *the* liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" and that "he is the antichrist who denieth the Father and the Son." (1 Jno. ii. 21, 22.) The names of the Lamb and of His Father are on the foreheads of these sealed ones.

The Everlasting Gospel. (vv. 6, 7.)

It is a foregleam of the day that comes that the first vision of this chapter shows us: but, although the day is coming fast, we have first to see the harbingers of judgment, and then the judgment, before it can arrive. Righteousness, unheeded when it spoke in grace, must now speak in judgment, that "the work of righteousness" may be "peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever." (Isa. xxxii. 17.)

In this way it is that we come now to what seems to us perhaps a strange, sad gospel, and yet is the everlasting one, which an "angel flying in mid-heaven," preaches to the inhabitants of the earth. And this is what his voice declares: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountains of waters."

How any one could confound this gospel of judgment with the gospel of salvation by the cross would seem hard to understand, except as we realize how utterly the difference of dispensations has been ignored in common teaching, and how it is taken as a matter of course that the "gospel" must be always one and the same gospel; which even the epithet "everlasting" is easily taken to prove. Does it not indeed assert it?—that the same gospel was preached, of course, in a clearer or a less clear fashion, all through the dispensation of law and before it?

No doubt the everlasting gospel must be that which from the beginning was preached, and has been preaching ever since, although it should be plain that "the hour of His judgment is come" is just what with truth no one in Christian times *could* say. Plain it is too that the command to worship God the Creator is not what any one who *knew* the gospel could take as that. In fact, the gospel element, or glad tidings, in the angel message is just found in that which seems most incongruous with it to-day—that the "hour of His judgment is come." What else in it is "tidings" at all? That certainly is; and if serious, yet to those who know that just in this way deliverance is to come for the earth, it is simple enough that the coming of the delivering judgment is in fact the gospel.

Listen to that same gospel, as a preacher of old declared it. With what a rapture of exultation does he break out as he cries,—

"Oh sing unto the Lord a new song !
Sing unto the Lord, all the earth.
Sing unto the Lord, bless His name ;
Show forth His salvation from day to day !
Declare His glory among the nations,
His marvelous works among all the peoples !

* * * * *

Tremble before Him, all the earth !
Say among the nations that the Lord reigneth;
The world also is established, that it cannot be moved:
He shall judge the peoples with equity.
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice !
Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof !
Let the field exult, and all that is therein !
Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy before
the Lord ;
For He cometh, for He cometh, to judge the earth.
He shall judge the world with righteousness,
And the peoples with His truth !" (Ps. xcvi.)

Here is a gospel before Christianity; and it has been sounding out all through Christianity, whether men have heard it or have not. And it is but the echo of what we hear in Eden, before the gate of the first paradise shuts upon the fallen and guilty pair,—that the seed of the woman shall crush the serpent's head. That is a gospel which has been ringing through the ages since, and which may well be called the everlasting one. Its form is only altered by the fact that now at last its promise is to be fulfilled. "Judgment" is now to "return to righteousness." The "rod" is "iron," but henceforth in the Shepherd's hand. Man's day is past, the day of the Lord is come; and every blow inflicted shall be on the head of evil, the smiting down of sorrow and of all that brings it. What can he be but rebel-hearted, who shall refuse to join the anthem when the King-Creator comes into His own again? The angel-evangel is thus a claim for worship from all people, and to Him that cometh every knee shall bow.

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

"THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD."

PROFESSOR DRUMMOND has undertaken to show us what this is. "We have been accustomed," he says, "to be told that the greatest thing in the religious world is Faith. That great word has been the

NOTE.—In reproducing the above excellent article, which was first published by *The English Churchman*, London, we would express our own conviction that the pre-eminent place which God's Word gives to Love is because of its character. It is what God is. The reproduction of this is therefore the highest of all in the Christian, forming that which God appreciates most in the character of His children. The mistake is in contrasting it with the faith which lays hold of the Saviour and of salvation, and is therefore the root of all, while Scripture contrasts it with faith as a gift for service and doing mighty deeds.

Prof. Drummond's awful mistake is, to make love a foundation. It annuls the Saviour. It makes naught of the stupendous work of the cross—"this hour" to which our sins had brought Him. It deifies Christian character and nullifies Christ. It is the high-road to infidelity.

keynote for centuries of the popular religion; and we have easily learned to look upon it as the greatest thing in the world. Well, we are wrong. If we have been told that, we may miss the mark. I have taken you, in the chapter which I have just read (1 Cor. xiii.), to Christianity at its source; and there we have seen, 'The greatest of these is love.' It is not an oversight. Paul was speaking of faith just a moment before. He says, 'If I have all faith, so that I can remove mountains, and have no love, I am nothing.' So far from forgetting, he deliberately contrasts them. 'Now abideth faith, hope, love,' and without a moment's hesitation the decision falls, 'The greatest of these is love.'"

This is a fair summary, in his own language, of Prof. Drummond's views on the question he discusses. That those views are erroneous—lamentably erroneous—it will not be difficult to show. We cannot wrest any scripture from its context without altering its whole meaning; this is just what Prof. Drummond has done in this case. St. Paul, in this chapter, is speaking of the extent of the duration of love; many other things, he says, as prophecies, tongues, knowledge, shall cease and vanish away: love never *ἐκπίπτει*—falls off or ceases. Faith will fade into sight, hope into fruition; but love remains eternal. That this is the true sense of the whole chapter is further shown from the closing verse: "And now," says the apostle, "abideth (*μένει*—continueth) faith, hope, love: these three, but the greater of these is love." It is to be noted that the apostle does not say, the *greatest* (*μεγίστη*), but *μεζζων*—"the greater,"—that is, not the greatest in all respects, but greater in the restricted aspect of continuity only. It is to be noted also that in the Revised Version this distinction between the comparative and superlative is marked by the translation "greater" being given in the margin as an alternative reading.

Prof. Drummond appears to have an uneasy suspicion that the continuity of love is really the ground of the precedence given to it by the apostle over faith and hope. In his closing chapter, entitled "The Defence," he seems unconsciously to admit this. St. Paul's reason, he says, is "a very remarkable one. In a word, it is this: It lasts." But this apparent dawn of light is soon clouded over, for a few pages further on, *more suo*, as those who are familiar with his self-contradictions in his "Natural Law in the Spiritual World" will recognize, he says, "Some think the time may come when two of these three things will pass away,—faith into sight, hope into fruition. Paul does not say so. We know but little now about the conditions of the life to come. But what is certain is that love must last. . . . You will give yourselves to many things: give yourselves first to love."

This brings us face to face with the unscriptural error running through the whole of Prof. Drummond's address. Luther thought—inspired Paul was certain—that God's greatest gift to man was faith: to be justified by faith was the keynote of the Reformation, and has been for three centuries the central point of all evangelical teaching. When the jailer at Philippi cried to Paul and Silas, what must I do to be saved?" they replied, not Give yourself first to love, but "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." "Without faith," the apostle says, "it is impossible to please God." Neither love nor hope, nor any gift or grace, can be a substitute for faith. Faith is first of all,—the very foundation of all: love, and all other Christian graces are simply its necessary and inevitable outcome and fruit. It is very acceptable to God that we should please Him by loving Him; but without faith first, it is impossible to please Him.

Our Lord Himself set this great truth before us in the clearest light in His reply to the lawyer who, tempting

Him, asked Him what he should do to inherit eternal life. "What is written in *the law*?—how readest thou?" said our Lord. And he, the lawyer, answering, said, "Thou shalt *love* the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Now, mark the Lord's reply: "Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." And mark, also, how diametrically opposed are the teachings of our Lord and those of Prof. Drummond's address. Our Lord knew that neither the lawyer nor any other of our fallen race could keep the law; His own words tell us that "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight." He simply used the law as a schoolmaster to bring the inquirer to Himself.

This is the true gospel—the blessed evangel of Christ and the Scriptures; but Prof. Drummond preaches another gospel which is not another. Listen to his version of it: "You remember the profound remark which Paul made elsewhere,—‘Love is the fulfilling of the law.’ Did you ever think what he meant by that? In those days men were working their passage to heaven by keeping the Ten Commandments, and the hundred and ten other commandments which they had manufactured out of them. Christ said, I will show you a more simple way. If you *do* one thing, you will do these hundred and ten things without ever thinking about them. If you love, you will unconsciously fulfill the whole law." Now, this is the mere substitution of one kind of "doing" for another. Listen further to another statement of Prof. Drummond; speaking of the patience, kindness, humility, sincerity, and other graces enumerated by the apostle, he says, "Now, the business of our lives is to have these things fitted into our characters. That is the supreme work to which we need to address ourselves in this world

—to learn to love. Life is not a holiday, but an education; and the one eternal lesson for us all is, how better we can love. What makes a man a good cricketer? Practice. What makes a man a good artist, a good sculptor, a good musician? Practice. What makes a man a good linguist, a good stenographer? Practice. What makes a man a good man? Practice. Nothing else."

Not so teaches St. Paul. He tells the Romans that the righteousness of God—that is, God's gift of righteousness—is, "by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe."

And to the Galatians he says, "So, then, they," not those who have been long practicing the art of loving, but "they whith be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

Notwithstanding some isolated passages in Prof. Drummond's address which appear to be more in accord with evangelical sentiments, the general drift and tendency of the work is, to elevate love, the fruit, above faith, the cause,—to put the fruits of faith in the place of faith itself, which is the one only cause revealed to us from which love and every other grace can flow. It is none other than a complete reversal of the gospel plan of salvation.

To what straits a man may be driven to bolster up a false position, Prof. Drummond furnishes us with a singular example. "Nor is this letter to the Corinthians," he says, "peculiar in singling out love as the *summum bonum*. The masterpieces of Christianity are agreed upon it: Peter says, 'Above all things, have fervent love among yourselves.' 'Above all things.' " That is, doubtless, among the various warnings and exhortations he was giving, suited to the peculiar circumstances of that day, he gives special emphasis to that grace which the bitter opposition of heathens and unbelieving Jews would be likely to lead them to forget,

But if Prof. Drummond builds an argument on St. Peter's exhortation in this passage, what force does he attribute to that of St. James, "Above all things, my brethren, swear not at all"? Is abstinence from swearing the *summum bonum*? It must be that if Prof. Drummond's use of St. Peter's exhortation is warranted,—that is, it must be as sound an inference in one case as in the other. But it is equally unsound in both cases. Both St. Peter and St. James used that expressive form of appeal only in connection with the circumstances referred to in the contexts in which they respectively appear. There could not possibly be two gifts or graces equally entitled to the position of the highest or greatest good.

It is not probable, however, that a difficulty of this kind, springing from the incompatibility of his views with scriptural statements, would occasion much trouble to Prof. Drummond; he has a short way of solving such difficulties. Some time since, he delivered a course of lectures on Sunday afternoons at the Duke of Westminster's residence. The subject of one was "Christianity Looked at from the Stand-point of Evolution." Now, the account of the creation of the universe in six days out of nothing—chaos—is utterly irreconcilable with the theory of Evolution. Prof. Drummond disposed of this difficulty very briefly—by sweeping away the scriptural account as a mere instructive fable. I quote from the report of this lecture which appeared in *The Christian Commonwealth*, and which I have never heard that Prof. Drummond has repudiated.

"In the course of his lecture, the Professor said, 'Most of us have accepted the doctrine of evolution in some form or other. It cannot be proved yet, but that does not matter much (!) Great things and great thoughts fill the mind and make their impression. . . . The book of Genesis must be regarded as presenting truth to chil-

dren's minds,' and the Professor illustrated this idea by George Macdonald's poem, 'The Baby,'—not literally true, but true for the child. 'So Moses gave truth in the form of a poem. If you say it is a scientific book, I give it up; but if you regard it as a poem, then I can deal with it. One great difficulty was the Fall. Theology gives us its version; and it appears, after all, not a fall, but a rise. . . .

"'Another class of difficulty was that of accepting miracles. No need of accepting any miracle but the Resurrection, and this science makes possible, and even probable.'" (!)

"Irreverence" is but a feeble term to describe such presumptuous handling of God's Word.

Can its author be trusted to teach us what is "the greatest thing in the world," or, indeed, any thing which depends upon the plenary inspiration of Scripture for its foundation?

P. Carteret Hill.

EXTRACT OF LETTER.

NOTHING happens without the Lord, not even the fall to the earth of one sparrow. This gives to God His proper place in all things occurrent and happening; not only is He, in being, before all, but in all that occurs, His hand is the most important feature in the case. Satan could not act against Job or Paul without divine permission; and whatever Satan might mean in the one case or the other, God meant blessing, pure blessing, for His servants, and that eternal blessing. I hear you are depressed—it matters little what men call it—to me, as having one infinitesimal of faith, it is "of God," and for the blessing of yourself and husband. That it is, though coming through the body and mind, yet "of God," I doubt not; for that is one way in which He works, in breaking our plans of earthly joy, to make us seek our all in Him. (You know the Olney hymn, "I asked the Lord

that I might grow.") The extent to which we are dependent upon circumstances, around and within ourselves, we little know till we get stripped of them, and among them perhaps of the feeling of joy which we mistook for faith. Faith is taking God at His word, saying, "Let God be true, and every man a liar." The effect of this is triumph, *often with* joy, but when of the purer and deeper kind, without joy, and we have then sometimes to give the lie to our own inward feelings, as much as to the thoughts of others all around us. 1 Peter gives us a case of it, so does 2 Cor. xii. G. V. W.

DISCIPLINE.

"Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him." (Heb. xii. 5.)

SWEET lessons learned in sorrow,
 Our God, we dearly prize.
 We would not from Thy discipline,
 Our Father, hide our eyes.
 E'en though the school be strict and stern,
 We would the needed lesson learn.

We 're evil, weak, and foolish,
 And know not how to choose.
 Our God, Thou couldst not trust us—
 Thy trust we would abuse.
 Denial, though it break the heart,
 Is e'er the faithful Father's part.

We change, and are forgetful :
 Our God, Thou canst not change.
 Our wanderings, our waywardness,
 Thy love can ne'er estrange.
 For Thine unfailing faithfulness,
 Thee we learn, our God, to bless.

Grapes will yield their precious juices
 When crushed beneath the press :
 The sweetest songs we sing, Lord,
 Are born of deep distress.

One sorrow less I would not have
Than Thou hast sent me in Thy love.

Oh discipline most holy,
That works His precious will!
"Despise not thou His chastening,
Nor faint," but rest thee still.
"He spoils the child who spares the rod."
Our Father is th'eternal God.

H. McD.

March 14th, 1891.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 8.—"What is the difference between 'Sanctify them through Thy truth' (Jno. xvii. 17) and 'Sanctified in Christ Jesus' (1 Cor. i. 2)?"

Ans.—In the order of blessing, the passage in Corinthians comes first. It is a blessed fact that *in Christ* all our blessings are perfect. Attainment is not in question. All in Christ are sanctified, perfectly set apart to God, separated unto Him and for Him. This sanctification is perfect, it is the work of a moment, the portion of every believer. Hence our name, "saints." This is the position of all believers; but the passage in Jno. xvii. is different. Our Lord is leaving His own in the world; His great desire is that they may be kept from evil, left here to represent Him. To do this, they must be holy. Hence the prayer, "Sanctify them through Thy truth." The practical walk is in question, and here sanctification is a gradual and progressive work. As the Word of God enters the heart, it shows us our unlikeness to Christ, then (by occupying us with Him,) fashions us into His image through the Spirit.

Q. 9.—"Does God own the gospel, or His Word, when preached by an unbeliever—i. e., an unredeemed person?"

Ans.—Phil. i. 18 seems to give the answer clearly. It is His Word which God uses; and solemn as the handling of that Word by an unsaved person is, He may in His sovereign grace use it. So we can rejoice where Christ is preached, though the judgment on those who preach not sincerely will be sure.

CHRISTIAN HOLINESS.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF HOLINESS.

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. iii. 18.)

THE case of Stephen illustrates, explains, and applies this far-reaching statement that we may not only take in its meaning, but see that it is intended to be proved by men like ourselves, and in a sphere where all in the world, even worldly religion, is marshaled against Christ. Like a friend of the writer's, now with the Lord, each believer may pull himself up when inclined to feel depressed, and say, "There is nothing between me and the Lord on yon throne but an open heaven." Faith sees the Lord where he is, owned in His true character as the risen Saviour, and the believer is raised superior to circumstances by the transforming object on whom his eye is fixed.

A captain, called to lead a forlorn hope, conscious that the eye of his general is eagerly watching him, is so controlled and sustained as to cause him to make light of danger and death. But in Stephen's case, we have not only affectionate devotion, such as no mere soldier can feel, but with and in him, in a new way, there is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the very power and Spirit through whom the Lord Himself triumphed over death. Gideon of old could say to his tested band, "Look on me, and do likewise;" and "As I do, so shall ye do." With him the battle had still to be won; he could not yet be seen as one who had triumphed: he might inspire others by his courageous example, but he could not give them the strength derived from his own faith and confidence in God. It is far otherwise with the One whom Stephen saw. Jesus had triumphed over

principalities and powers, over death and him who had the power of death, and was already crowned with glory and honor. Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost, saw this glorified Saviour, acted by the same power, and in his measure, in the same way, prayed for his murderers, and commended his Spirit to the One in obedience to whose will he laid down his life.

Blessed and wonderful as Stephen's triumph may appear, the grace and power of God, as illustrated in the life of Paul, in some respects, may present a fuller manifestation of the possibilities which lie before a Christian through realizing the deliverance vouchsafed in communion with a triumphant Saviour. Stephen, like Nelson, was victorious in death. Paul, like Wellington, lived to enjoy and prove and further illustrate the fullness of the blessing. Paul, in speaking of his own example, is careful to say, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." The perfect Man, Christ Jesus, unlike Paul or any other, had nothing to attain. He did not esteem it something to be grasped at to be on an equality with God. (Phil. ii. 6.) He had his equality to begin with, and "emptied Himself," "humbled Himself, and becoming obedient unto death, and that the death of the cross." This alone is the complete, divine ideal, and hence it is said, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

It is worthy of notice here again that the standard and the power for attaining conformity to the mind of Christ Jesus are mentioned close together. In the same context we find "the fellowship of the Spirit." (Phil. iii.) In all our thoughts concerning devotedness to the Lord, therefore, we cannot give too much prominence to the important truths of the Lord being now a Man on the throne in heaven, and the Holy Spirit being now a Person on the earth. Like the two pillars in the temple of old,

they are the Jachin and the Boaz in connection with what the Lord is doing in this dispensation. As "Jachin" means "He shall establish," it answers well to what Jesus as Lord continues to do from the throne. "Boaz" signifies "in him is strength," so no more appropriate thought could be suggested than that in the Spirit now dwelling on the earth there is power to carry out the will of the One who is on the throne in heaven. Both pillars were connected with the one temple. To have had only the one would have left it incomplete. So both truths, the glorified Man and the personal presence of the Spirit are required to give completeness and stability to any thing done for the Lord now. If we thus think of Him it is the One who has passed through death. If we think of the abiding Spirit, it is as the one who has come to maintain the interests of the Lord in the place where He was rejected and crucified. It will appear then that death is *written on all here that is contrary to the will of the Lord*. Whatever is of the Lord, whatever is according to His will in consistent conduct, in successful service, or in acceptable worship, must be the tracing again of something of that life which was a meat-offering fit for God.

Hence, in troubles, perplexities, and persecutions, the apostle speaks of "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." (2 Cor. iv. 10.) On all that is of the flesh, as connected with our Adam-life, there must be the acceptance of death. This is not improvement or amelioration of the flesh. Its desert and doom are set forth in the dying of Jesus. The means and manner of our deliverance are thus distinctly manifested. Jesus has died, condemning sin in the flesh, rejecting all that pertains to the first man as *unfit for the presence and service of God*, and leaving room for the display of the life of Jesus in the body. The person is the same; his old na-

ture is neither terminated nor changed ; but he has a new nature, the life of Jesus. The presence of the old nature is felt, so there must be the constant withstanding or resistance of it, by carrying in heart and mind the fact that it was, positively, and still requires to be, practically set aside by the dying of Jesus. Like the salt kept on the stump of a shrub to prevent it from sprouting in a garden-path, faith continues to reckon that the flesh was cut down by the death of Jesus ; and thus, though liable to sprout, through the salt of grace, the flesh may be repudiated and kept in the place of death. Those who yield to the new life may find that every trial and hindrance met with by the way when rightly used through grace are the means of giving over to death all that is of the flesh, that the new life, the life of Jesus, may have an unhindered display in their mortal flesh. Thus there is not only the setting aside of the evil nature in the believer, but there is the possibility of the positive expression by him of the beautiful life of Jesus.

Elisha may be said to have desired to have his own life supplanted by the life of Elijah. Elisha would be the same person as to the traits of his individuality, but his life and works would henceforth be those of the prophet caught up in the chariot of fire, so that Elijah might be said to live again in the one who received a double portion of His spirit. Was the setting aside and repudiating of his own old life not set forth in the rending of his mantle ? Was the taking up and expressing of the life of Elijah not betokened by the taking of his mantle when it fell from the ascending prophet ? If not, why, in returning to Jordan, does Elisha smite the waters with the mantle saying, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah ?" The divided waters, as in the days of old, show that the "living God" is acting there, and the new prophet passing over makes it clear that it is much the same as if Elijah

was still the prophet of Israel. So, indeed, from the life and power displayed, it appears to the sons of the prophets at Jericho as they say, "The Spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. (2 Kings ii.)" Thus, in a striking and instructive way, we find in the Old Testament, the shadowing forth of how the believer might be delivered from his old life and rise to newness of life, so as to have the life of Jesus in some measure, lived again in the body of the saint here on earth. His longings after holiness are only met or realized in proportion as Christ is magnified in his body.

W. C. J.

(To be continued.)

SHINING IN AND SHINING OUT.

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels." (2 Cor. iv. 6, 7.) *"Among whom ye shine as lights in world, holding forth the word of life."* (Phil. ii. 15, 16.)

SINCE man turned from God, who is light, this has been a dark world, so dark that men have ceased to know there ever was a light. The only light now is that which the people of God themselves supply: "Ye are the light of the world." Recognizing this, the children of God have been, intelligently or otherwise, seeking to "let their light shine." There is one thing to remember, if we are to shine aright. All our light is reflected light. We are not suns with light in ourselves, but, like the moon, we are reflectors. The verses quoted at the beginning give us the *source, order, and means* of shining.

As to the source, it is God. "God hath shined in our hearts." He who "spake and it was done," has done the same in our dark hearts. It is well to pause and dwell upon this. Do we realize that such a work has been done

in us? Something every whit as wonderful; in one sense far more important, than that pouring forth of light over this world? How a sense of this subdues the soul, fills it with a holy joy; God has been near, He has sent the light into my heart. Light is given not to dazzle, far less to fill with pride. It has shined into the *heart*. It is not merely that the *mind* has become enlightened, but the whole man, from the centre of his being has been visited.

We have next the character of this light: "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God." God is the true centre. When man fell he made himself the centre. Every thing was measured by its contributing or not to his interests. All this only ends in sorrow. Man is not, can never be a centre. God and His glory are what alone can be the centre of all. So the shining of the light into the heart has this as its effect—it gives the knowledge of the glory of God. This shows us first, as it did Isaiah, that we have come short of it. The light first shows the disorder. Man never gets a true estimate of himself till he is thus seen by the light of the glory of God. Like Job, he now abhors himself. But, blessed be God! the light that has shined in our hearts has done more than show us our sin. It is the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. That glory which we failed to exhibit, which could be found nowhere in all this world until in "God manifest in the flesh"—that glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ. Here He finds one who has manifested Him. It is as risen and ascended that this glory shines in His face. This reminds us of the time when darkness gathered about that face, when the cry was, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" And seeing the Lord thus, must remind us that it was for us He was thus forsaken. So too the glory into which He has entered is the witness not merely of the personal acceptance in which He ever was, but the acceptance of the work of redemption which

He accomplished, and, as a result, of our acceptance in Him, by virtue of that work. But what thoughts are here! God's glory, Christ's person and work, and our acceptance linked together! This is the light that has shined in our hearts. It shows us God's glory, but it is for us, nor against us; it shows us Christ's person, and we can say, "This is *my* Beloved;" it shows us His work and we can say, "For me;" it shows us ourselves, yet not ourselves, only as in Christ. And all this in such a way as not to lessen the sense of God's holiness, His righteous demands, nor our helplessness. We have the treasure in earthen vessels. It makes God, not self, the centre; His glory, and not even our salvation, the highest object. This is the light. It has shone in. Now it is to shine out. The same light.

This brings us to the *order* of shining. First, God hath shined in. We all admit that. But there is to be a constant shining. The light may be obstructed by things of earth. If there is to be an out-shining, there must be the constant in-shining. So the first business of the saint is to keep in communion. It is not our first business to lead others to Christ even, that and all else follows if the light shines unhindered in. Martha-service is the result of putting excellent things in the place of the light, and so preventing the shining in. But what care this means! What jealous guarding of the heart, lest any thing shall come between us and that face. Our "one great business here" is this. All else is the fruit.

When the light thus fills the heart, like Moses, who wist not that his face shone, the saint is unconscious of any special excellence. Indeed, the sense is that the earthen vessel needs to be broken, to be kept out of sight. Like John the Baptist, such an one says, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

This brings us to the *means* of the out-shining. We have

seen the order to be, first, the light shining in, and as a result, the sense that we are but earthen vessels. Now we are to shine in the midst of a dark world by "holding forth the word of life." The word is what brought the light to us; it is that which will bring it to others. The word as known and operating in our own hearts and lives will make the light for those who sit in darkness. How simple, then, is the path of usefulness for the Christian—first drinking in the light for his own soul, he reflects that light by means of the word—both by lip and life.

May we all thus have our lives truly useful by ever walking in the light.

THE MINISTRY OF WAITING.

I KNOW He hears and answers prayer;
I know He bids us pray,
And cast the burden of our care
Upon Him day by day.
I know His power is still the same
As when He raised the dead,
And healed the sick, the blind, the lame,
And hungering thousands fed.

But I have prayed so fervently
That He would ease my pain,
And lay His gentle hand on me
And give me strength again;
Yet here His helpless suppliant lies
Fettered in every limb,
Longing in vain that she might rise
And minister to Him.

He hears,—thy gracious Saviour hears,
Beloved and chastened one:
Didst thou not whisper through thy tears,
"Thy holy will be done"?

Under the cross He gives the bow,
Whate'er that cross may be :
The ministry of waiting now
Is all He asks of thee.

For thee He trod life's thorny way,
For thee His blood was spilt :
Is it too much for love to say,
"Do with me as Thou wilt"?
Then yield thy will, and plenteous grace
Upon thee shall be poured ;
The brightness of thy patient face
Can glorify thy Lord.

A smile can tell to those around
What peace and joy are thine,
And make them seek what thou hast found—
A comfort all divine.
Thus teaching what affliction taught,
A blessing thou shalt be,
So shall God's purposes be wrought
Alike in them and thee.

Then Hope shall speak of heavenly things,
And Love shall bid thee rest,
And Faith shall calmly fold her wings,
And wait to be more blest,
While gleams of glory from within
Shine through heaven's opening door,
As those thou lovest enter in
A little while before.

A little while, and thou shalt know
What now thou canst not see,
And this dark mystery of woe
Shall end in light for thee.
A little while, and thou shalt lay
Thy earthly burdens down,
And He who takes thy cross away
Will give the fadeless crown.

(Selected.)

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART IV.

THE EARTH-TRIAL. (CHAP. XIV.)—*Continued.*

The Fall of Babylon. (v. 8.)

THAT the message of judgment is indeed a "gospel" we find plainly in the next announcement, which is marked as that of a "second" angel, a "third" following, similar in character, as we shall see directly. Here it is announced that Babylon the Great has fallen: before, indeed, her picture has been presented to us, which we find only in the seventeenth chapter. The name itself is, however, significant, as that of Israel's great enemy, under whose power she lay prostrate seventy years, and itself derived from God's judgment upon an old confederation, the seat of which became afterward the centre of Nimrod's empire. But that was not Babylon *the Great*, although human historians would have given her, no doubt, the palm; with God, she was only the type of a power more arrogant and evil and defiant of Him than the old Chaldæan despot, and into whose hands the Church of Christ has fallen,—the heavenly, not the earthly people. It is an old history rehearsed in a new sphere and with other names,—a new witness of the unity of man morally in every generation.

The sin on account of which it falls reminds us still of Babylon, while it has also its peculiar aggravation. Of her of old it was said, "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunk of her wine; therefore the nations are mad." (Jer. li. 7.) But it is not said, "the wine of the fury of her fornication." This latter expression shows

that Babylon is not here a mere political but a spiritual power. One who belongs professedly to Christ has prostituted herself to the world for the sake of power. She has inflamed the nations with unholy principles, which act upon men's passions, (easily stirred,) as we see, in fact, in Rome. By such means she has gained and retained power; by such, after centuries of change, she holds it still. But the time is at hand when they will at last fail her, and this is what the angel declares now to have come. Babylon is fallen, and that fall is final: it is the judgment of God upon her; it is retributive justice for centuries of corruption; it is a note of the everlasting gospel, which claims the earth for God, and announces its deliverance from its oppressors. But we have yet only the announcement: the details will be given in due place.

The Warning to the Beast-Worshippers. (vv. 9-13.)

A THIRD angel follows, noted as that, and belonging, therefore, to the company of those that bring the gospel of blessing for the earth. That it comes in the shape of a woe, we have seen to be in no wise against this. Babylon is not the only evil which must perish that Christ may reign; and Babylon's removal only makes way at first for the full development of another form of it more openly blasphemous than this. The woman makes way for the man,—what professes at least subjection to Christ, for that which is open revolt against Him. Here, therefore, the woe threatened is far more sweeping and terrible than in the former case; there are people of God who come out of Babylon, and who therefore were in her to come out (chap. xviii. 4). But the beast in its final form insures the perdition of all who follow it: "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink"—or "he also shall drink"—"of the wine of the wrath of God which is

poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever; and they have no rest, day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."

It is the beast who destroys Babylon, after having for a time supported her: his own pretension tolerates no divided allegiance, and in him the unbelief of a world culminates in self-worship. Here God's mercy can only take the form of loud and emphatic threatening of extreme penalty for those who worship the beast. In proportion to the fearful character of the evil does the Lord give open assurance of the doom upon it, so that none may unknowingly incur it. Here "the patience of the saints" is sustained in a "reign of terror" such as has never yet been.

Faith too is sustained in another way, namely, by the special consolation as to those who die as martyrs at this time: "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord *from henceforth.*'" That is clearly encouragement under peculiar circumstances. All who die in the Lord must be blessed at any time; but that only makes it plainer that the circumstances must be exceptional now which require such comfort to be so expressly provided for them. Something must have produced a question as to the blessedness of those that die at this time; and in this we have an incidental confirmation—stronger because incidental—that *the resurrection of the saints has already taken place*. Were *they* still waiting to be raised, the blessedness of those who as martyrs join their company could scarcely be in doubt. The resurrection having taken place, and the hope of believers being now to enter alive into the king-

dom of the Son of Man at His appearing,—as the Lord says of that time, "He that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved" (Matt. xxiv. 13),—the question is necessarily raised. What shall be the portion of these martyrs, then, must not remain a question; and in the tenderness of divine love the answer is here explicitly given. Specially blessed are those who die from henceforth: they rest from their labors; they go to their reward. The Spirit seals this with a sweet confirming "yea"—so it is. Earth has only cast them out that heaven may receive them; they have suffered, therefore they shall reign with Christ. Thus accordingly we find in the twentieth chapter, that when the thrones are set and filled, those that have suffered under the beast are shown as rising from the dead to reign with the rest of those who reign with Him. Not the martyrs in general, but these of this special time are marked distinctly as finding acknowledgment and blessing in that "first resurrection," from which it might have seemed that they were shut out altogether.

It may help some to see how similar was the difficulty that had to be met for the Thessalonian saints, and which the apostle meets also with a special "word of the Lord" in his first epistle. They too were looking for the Lord, so that the language of their hearts was (with that of the apostle), "*We* who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord." They had been "turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven;" and with a lively and expectant faith they waited.

But then what about those who were fallen asleep in Christ? It is evident that here is all their difficulty. He would not have them ignorant concerning those that were asleep, so as to be sorrowing for them, hopeless as to their share in the blessing of that day. Nay, those who remained would not go before these sleeping ones: *they*

would rise first, and those who were alive would then be "caught up *with them*, to meet the Lord in the air." This for Christians now is thus the authoritative word of comfort. But the sufferers under the beast would not find this suffice for *them*; for them the old difficulty appears once more, and must be met with a new revelation.

How perfect and congruous in all its parts is this precious Word of God! And how plainly we have in what might seem even an obscure or strange expression—"blessed *from henceforth*"—a confirmation of the general interpretation of all this part of Revelation! The historical interpretation, however true, as a partial anticipatory fulfillment, fails here in finding any just solution.

• *The Harvest and The Vintage. (vv. 14-20.)*

IN the next vision the judgment falls. The Son of Man upon the cloud, the harvest, the treading of the wine-press, are all familiar to us from other Scriptures, and in connection with the appearing of the Lord. We need have no doubt, therefore, as to what is before us here.

The "harvest" naturally turns us back to our Lord's parable, where wheat and tares represent the mingled aspect of the kingdom, the field of Christendom. "Tares" are not the fruit of the gospel, but the enemy's work, who sows not the truth of God, but an imitation of it. The tares are thus the 'children of the wicked one,' deniers of Christ, though professing Christians. The harvest brings the time of separation, and first the tares are gathered and bound in bundles for the burning, and along with this the wheat is gathered into the barn. In the interpretation afterward we have a fuller thing: the tares are *cast into the fire*, and the righteous *shine forth* as the sun in their Father's kingdom.

Here the general idea of harvest would be the same,

though it does not follow that it will be a harvest of the same nature. In the harvest-time there are crops reaped of various character: the thought is of discriminative judgment, such as with the sheep and goats of Matt. xxv. There is what is gathered in, as well as what is cast away, and hence the Son of Man is here as that. The vintage-judgment is pure wrath: the grapes are cast into the great wine-press of the wrath of God, and thus it is the angel out of the altar, who has power over the fire, at whose word it comes. The vine of the earth is a figure suitable to Israel as God's vine (Is. v.), but apostate, yet cannot be confined to Israel, as is plain from the connection in which we find it elsewhere. But it represents still apostasy, and thus what we have seen to have its centre at Jerusalem, though involving Gentiles also far and near. Thus the city also outside of which the wine-press is trodden is Jerusalem, as the sixteen hundred furlongs is well known to be the length of Palestine. Blood flows up to the bits of the horses for that distance—of course, a figure, but a terrible one.

Both figures—the harvest and the vintage—are used in Joel, with reference to this time: "Proclaim ye this among the nations; prepare war: stir up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near; let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Haste ye, and come, all ye nations round about, and gather yourselves together: hither cause *Thy* mighty ones to come down, O Lord! Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, tread ye, for the wine-press is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for the day of the Lord is near in the valley

of decision. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. And the Lord shall roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the heaven and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be a refuge unto His people, and a stronghold to the children of Israel."

Thus comes the final blessing, and the picture upon which the eye rests at last is a very different one. "So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion My holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord and water the valley of Shittim. . . . And I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the Lord dwelleth in Zion."

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

THE CRISIS IN SAMSON'S LIFE.

THE times of the Judges, in the history of Israel, offered special opportunities for exhibitions of faithfulness to God. From the very fact that "every man did that which was right in his own eyes," those who would please the Lord were brought out into all the greater prominence. The sphere of their usefulness, too, instead of being diminished, was rather enlarged, there being but too few to help the multitudes, who were "as sheep without a shepherd." So we find some of the most vigorous examples of faith in the book of Judges,—Gideon, Deborah, Othniel, Shamgar, Ehud, and, as we shall see, Samson, in a certain degree.

From the fact that his birth and manner of life were

announced beforehand, and the work he was to do, it is evident that Samson was to be especially prominent as a deliverer of the people. Indeed, the superhuman strength with which he was endowed, and the invariable success he met with when fighting the enemy, would confirm the thought that he was specially favored with gifts to this end. This would mean that he had special responsibilities. How he met them, we will see as we trace his life.

Samson was to be a Nazarite. As we know from the threefold vow in the book of Numbers, such a man was to abstain from wine and from death, and was to let his hair remain uncut. Wine, with all other products of the vine is a natural as well as scriptural symbol of festivity, exhilaration and joy. Spiritually, it means the joy of earth as contrasted with the joy of the Spirit,—the animation of artificial stimulus as contrasted with the steadfast strength supplied by the Spirit,—the celebration of rest here rather than of the time when new wine shall be drunk in the Father's kingdom. From all such stimuli the Nazarite was to abstain. How easy to apply the lesson to ourselves! how difficult to carry it out in our lives! The long hair tells the same thing in another way,—weakness, dependence, subjection: the woman's place is to be taken. Such a place is humiliating to the natural man. "It is a shame for a man to wear long hair." But such must be the place of one truly separated unto God.

The defilement of death is to be guarded against most jealously, not even the nearest and dearest being allowed to cause an exception to be made. Here too it is easy to read the lesson: death comes by sin, it reigns in the world, and all about us is that which is tainted by this, even in our homes perhaps is what we can *see* but dare not *touch*—intercourse with that which is death. We have been dwelling upon the negative side of the Nazarite's

life. Naturally, this is what the *law* makes prominent. But negatives will never form the character. Subtract all that is bad from a person, and you only have a coldness which is "faultily faultless, splendidly null." So *grace* gives us the positive side of the true Nazarite. In place of the wine of carnal joy, we have the "joy of the Lord," "joy unspeakable and full of glory."—"Then were the disciples filled with joy and the Holy Ghost." What earthly joy can compare with this? what earthly pleasure with "the river of Thy pleasures"? So too the badge of shame, the relinquishment of our strength of our wills is met by that which infinitely exceeds all human strength and dignity: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."—"My strength is made perfect in weakness." While in place of that which has the stamp of death upon it, we have life—eternal life in and with Him who is the Life. But for the enjoyment of these blessed substitutes, there must be a denial of self. This was the key-note of the Nazarite's life—self-denial; and this brings us back again to Samson.

We have seen what manner of man it was God's will for him to be—a Nazarite, we come now to see what manner of man he *was*. Prominently in it stands forth the fact that there was a lack of cohesion, of unity, in it. Brilliant deeds there were, but all was desultory. Let us enumerate those acts which are recorded: Slaying a lion; killing thirty Philistines in order to get clothes to pay a bet; catching three hundred foxes, and with them setting fire to the corn of the enemy; killing a thousand with the jaw-bone of an ass; carrying away the gates of Gaza; overthrowing the temple of the Philistines. We look in vain here for any earnest purpose running through his life. Contrast his slaying a lion merely to deliver himself, and David's act to deliver his sheep. Some of his feats of strength seem almost ludicrous, and some are so closely

linked with his own sins as to serve as signs pointing to them. We are compelled to say, What a useless life ! It serves for warning, but there is but little to imitate in it. Doubtless there were many points of excellence in him, or he could not have judged Israel twenty years ; but the prominent facts are those we have mentioned. The question naturally arises, Why was a life of such promise—so rich in endowment—so apparently useless ? We believe the answer lies in the subject of this paper. There was a crisis—a turning-point in his life, when he should have turned the opposite way from the one he pursued. That crisis in his life is marked by one word—self-pleasing. "Get her for me, for she pleaseth me well." The law of the Nazarite has "self-denial" written all over it : the life of Samson has "self-pleasing" written all over it. The crisis of his life was when he chose a wife from the people he was to destroy. It may be objected that the Lord thus sought an occasion against the Philistines, and so permitted it. True, He permitted it ; as He did in the case of Balaam, of the twelve spies, of the selling of Joseph into Egypt, above all in the betrayal of our Lord ; but this, instead of lessening responsibility, increases it—makes the sin greater, as in the case of Judas. God permitted Samson to please himself : because that was in his own hands, it was his responsibility. He got glory out of it, spite of Samson's self-will ; but this does not affect the quality of his choice. He pleased himself, and his whole after-life had the taint of this about it. He dallies with Delilah in self-pleasing until she gets the secret of his strength from him ; and even in his death he seems to be seeking for revenge merely, not to please God. One is surprised to see him keep his strength so long. It only shows us the long-suffering of God, who thus would recall His poor servant by showing that He was still with him. It was only when Samson showed he no longer

prized this strength—when he imparted this secret to a stranger, that he lost it. Ah! what awful lessons are here! Doubtless he had not the remotest intention of parting with his secret; but Delilah had his heart,—he tampers with the danger, and is awakened out of his sleep of self-pleasing to find that it has at last culminated. Darkness closes in upon him, never to be lifted in this world.

What is it to tell the secret of our strength? Is it not to be at ease with the world,—to be enjoying the world as Samson was, and then to talk about the things of God—about our own secret of strength? The enemy is on the look-out for this: there is a time when the last act of inconsistency is done, and all power is lost. "So-and-so is a great talker, but I find he likes the world about as well as any one." Our power is gone, and it is only in the mercy of God if it is ever in any degree recovered. But let us remember that Delilah's lap was only the last step in a course of self-pleasing which began when he took the woman of Timnath to wife because she pleased him. We have spoken of this as a crisis. Doubtless there are such in all our lives—distinct turning-points—times when we took a course which has characterized us ever since. That crisis may be in itself a small matter, just as, on the summit of the Alleghanies, a rock or small rise of ground determines the direction of a stream toward the Atlantic or the Gulf. For the young Christian especially is the admonition needed, Beware of taking the wrong turn in the crisis of your life. Beware of self-pleasing, instead of meeting the enemy. It was fitting that Samson's bones should lie among his people, as a constant reminder not to misuse God's gifts and opportunities. Perhaps older Christians may feel as though they have taken the wrong turn, and their life has been, as a result, blighted. For such, God has blessing in spite

of their failure even, if there is true turning to Him. Having learned where our self-pleasing has brought us, we can then find that He can bring good out of evil—that He can bring Samson's riddle to pass, "Out of the eater came forth meat." Doubtless Jacob's closing days furnished such an exhibition of God's goodness; and no matter where His people are, if they truly bow to Him, they will find their wilderness to blossom as the rose.

IMITATORS.

Acts xlx. 13-18.

THERE are two kinds of imitators: imitators of God as dear children, and imitators of the works of God's servants. The first all saints are to be. God has presented Himself as a model for our imitation, and in such a way that we cannot fail to understand. In His blessed and perfect Son as Man we have One who has left us an example that we should follow His steps. Christ is the object before us, to imitate Him is our life-work, and to do this we are to be occupied with Him; "we all with open face beholding the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory." When His people are before us, it is not them, but their *faith* we are to imitate—"whose *faith* follow." In the account before us, we have, of course, mere imitation, without any faith. These godless Jews will use the names of Jesus and Paul to conjure with merely to gain notoriety and power. The satire of the evil spirit is striking: "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?" Satan does not recognize sham power. While this is true in its fullest sense for the unsaved, there is a lesson for all the servants of the Lord. We hear an evangelist who is gifted with the power of presenting the truth in a bright attractive way, and we seek to imitate

him, only to find the power and brightness have all gone. Or a brother is walking on the waters calmly and surely, and we step forth only to sink. These, and numberless other cases, only show us that faith is an individual thing, that we must imitate none, follow the Lord only. What a relief, if one has perhaps been trying to imitate a brother, to come down from the stilts, to lay aside Saul's armor, and to trust the Lord for himself—to let Him work by His Spirit in His own blessed way, using us as His instruments according to His will. Effort ceases, and now, instead of a colorless imitation, there is power. God would use every one of us, but often He is hindered from the fact that we want to be used as others are: so often we remain idle and silent, or, worse yet, are but as sounding brass.

Does not this explain why many of His dear ones who might help the saints are silent in meetings. They speak freely in social intercourse, but in the meeting their lips are sealed, because they may not speak as well as others—their prayers may not be so well expressed! Away with such thoughts! Oh, let us be more simple, willing to be used in a small way if He use us. Thus God's Church would be refreshed by thousands of channels which are now choked and dry, pouring forth the water fresh from the fountain.

FLATTERING GOD.

"Nevertheless they did flatter Him with their mouth, and they lied unto Him with their tongues, for their heart was not right with Him, neither were they steadfast in His covenant." (Ps. lxxviii. 36, 37.)

TO flatter a person is to speak well of him, in a way we do not really believe, in order to get his favor, or secure something to our advantage. It is the language of the lips, not of the heart. It is falsehood,

and, as Scripture says, "He that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet." It is seeking to gain by cunning rather than by real worth, and it degrades the one who receives it and shows the character of the one who offers it.

But how can man flatter God? He is infinitely above all we can conceive Him. No attribute, no excellence which we can ascribe to Him is an exaggeration; all falls short. But the flattery lies in the *motive*. Here was Israel in the wilderness, doing as they pleased, and doubting and murmuring all along the way. Every now and then they would turn to the Lord, for it was not their desire to break entirely with Him. Poor souls, in their blindness they thought God was like man to be flattered, to be soothed, and turned from His anger by a few words of praise and promise.

This has not ceased. There are flatterers of God to-day—men who wish to go on as they please but who will, as they think, keep God on their side by a little religiousness. The Roman Catholic will sin all the year, and once at its close flatter God by going to the confessional. The man of the world will live as he pleases, and offer his flattery by an occasional contribution to some "good cause." The awakened soul even is tempted to do the same, and by making unrealized professions seek to dull the vigilance of a justice he fears.

But passing from these too common cases of flattery amongst the unsaved, is there not much for our own conscience in this word? We are not in the enjoyment of full communion, perhaps, or we have something we want to do, and we are not sure of His approval; so we come with words on our lips, words of love, praise, and worship; but, alas! there is no heart there. Unconsciously, perhaps, we are trying to flatter Him. But He that is holy, He that is true, will receive nothing of this kind. He will have heart worship or none at all.

Let us remember this, in our prayers, our songs of praise, our service. But on the other hand, let us not be morbid or self-occupied. The verse quoted shows *why* the people flattered God, "Their *heart* was not right with Him, neither were they steadfast in His covenant." It is holding something in the heart which is contrary to God's mind that would make us flatter Him. Steadfastness of heart in His covenant will prevent untruth. Then the feeblest groan is vocal with prayer, and the faintest whisper of trust is sweet praise, to His gracious ear.

LIVE UNTO HIM.

HE liveth evermore. The heart once assured of the perfection and fullest ground for blessing laid through the one offering made, the blood shed—without which, no remission—no room is left for vague misgivings, anxious thought for the welfare of others; but such can truthfully and candidly say, in the face of cruel mockings, "All's well." One is in torment, we read in Luke xvi., for whom there is no balm. He did not esteem himself a poor and afflicted man; Lazarus did, whose trust was in Jehovah's name. But this one is not indifferent to his father's house; yet what a tale do the lives of such as our picture gives tell in this scene of their responsibility, and where God shows grace, while in their wantonness they feast without fear! in splendor they live—in all luxuriance, yet to find such lives have been a hollow, shameless, unceasing revel, running to excess of riot, whose kindred are led on to desire this pride of life, where humility and want is unknown, and when known, no Lazarus or father Abraham, no Moses or prophet to minister to the need so awful, because not temporal but eternal. "If one went unto them from the

dead, they will repent." How solemn the reply!—"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from among the dead." How fully does the opening of the Acts attest to this! He who occupies a place on His Father's throne, who was displaced here, given a cross,—no tomb could hold Him, for that Holy One was not suffered to see corruption, and all judgment is committed to Him. Men have had faithfully, in the power of the Spirit, told home to heart and conscience what they are and what they have done. Those who were alarmed at the desperate length to which they had gone ask, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The reply so prompt, "Peter said unto them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.'"

This grace and mercy so far-reaching did not stop at a privileged people who dwelt in the vicinity of Jerusalem, as another was raised up of Him to testify. "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that He died for all, that they which live should *not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again*. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more." Do we know Him as Head of new creation, of His body the Church, who was made sin for us, who knew no sin, who knows how to succor and sympathize, who helpeth seasonably—the One who liveth evermore, who serves at present interceding, granting mercies, and will serve in a time to come in blessing victors, who in His name and through grace and strength vouchsafed overcome and do valiently, re-

freshing, as in Abram's case after the slaughter, owning so fully relationship as instituted of God, subject to His Word, obedient and faithful, loving righteousness, hating iniquity, delivering his brother and his goods, and the women and the people. Do we come in through faith of Jesus Christ, and range along with such worthies as Abraham? But, oh, to be found doers, to know Him who delights in truth in the inward parts—King of righteousness, King of peace, "and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever"! that instead of fleshly knowledge, there might be no longer knowing after the flesh, no longer serving with puffed-up mind, but through the love of Christ constraining, esteeming members of His body worthy of care, interest, loving, gentle, nurturing, acquainting them with good marks for feet to tread in through following hard after Him; showing wisdom from above has been vouchsafed that is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. Overcome evil with good. Troublers, dissimulators, gifts turned asside to evil work, but why? This spirit of murmuring one against another often encouraged, the behavior so rude is either let pass unrebuked and not feeling the reproach or seeking grace to remove it, evil goes on unchecked; but if we knew and gave the fullest credit to the truth that old things had passed away, and sought to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, how blessed! let it be for His name's sake, provoking unto love and good

works. Oh, may He lead to judgment of ways, and enable to walk and work that He has praise, and that men and angels may see what grace has wrought.

(*London.*)

W. B.

MY REFUGE.

"The eternal God is Thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." "The Lord is my defense, and my God is the Rock of my refuge."

(Deut. xxxii. 27; Ps. xciv. 22.)

WHEN the heart is tossed and driven,
 And the restless waves run high,
 Let Thy voice, amid the tempest
 Saying, "Fear not : it is I!"
 Calm the tumult of my breast,
 And Thy presence give me rest.

When the enemy assails me,
 And his poisoned arrows fly,
 May the shield of faith protect me
 While to Thee, my God, I cry.
 Jesus, refuge of my soul,
 Thou canst make and keep me whole.

When the desert-sands are burning,
 And there's neither bush nor tree,
 I would seek the cooling shadow
 Of the Rock that shelters me.
 "Rock of Ages," Thou shalt be
 Shelter evermore for me.

Should my soul grow dry and thirsty,
 There's no water here for me.
 I would not hew broken cisterns,
 But at once fly unto Thee,
 Whence the living waters burst
 Which alone can quench my thirst.

Should the death-stroke overtake me,
 Thou, my life, art ever near.
 Thou art my eternal refuge,
 What have I from death to fear?
 Thou hast conquered death for me,
 And I share Thy victory.

Plainfield, Feb. 21st, 1891.

H. McD.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 10.—“In what sense does the Lord say of John (Matt. xl. 11), ‘the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he’? Does it in any way connect with Matt. v. 11? Could one say that John was in the kingdom?”

Ans.—John occupies a peculiar position. He was connected with the old, not with the new dispensation. He brought out no new truth, only enforced what had already been revealed, and from it preached repentance. He was in all this as one of the prophets. The difference lies in the fact that while they pointed forward to the Messiah, John could say, He is among you. He thus occupies the highest place of privilege in the old dispensation, which, connected with his faithfulness and devotedness make him one of the greatest born. The kingdom of heaven is the kingdom of a glorified Christ. It was announced by John as at hand. The Lord proclaims its principles in the sermon on the mount, and showed its works in the following chapters. He presented Himself as King, but, being rejected, He takes His place in the heavens, *for faith*, over His kingdom, but in such a way as is called a *mystery*. (Matt. xiii.) This being the beginning of his kingdom, John was not in it. The dignity of that position—subjection to Jesus, either as absent Lord or glorious King—being far above the highest place *before*. This, of course, applies to *position*, not individual character. In *character*, John was far above many of us who have privileges and a position beyond him.

The persecutions spoken of in Matt. v. are not a result of the position in the kingdom merely, but of having a character answering to such a position, a character which John had, though not in the kingdom.

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART V.

THE VIALS OF WRATH. (CHAP. XV., XVI.)

The Character of the Judgment Coming. (Chap. xv.)

THE visions of the last chapter plainly reach to the end of judgment in the coming of the Lord Himself. The vials, therefore, cannot come after these or go beyond them: in fact, the coming of the Lord is not openly reached in them, though it may seem implied, for in the vials is filled up the wrath of God. But the coming of the Lord, although necessary to complete the judgment, is yet so much more than this, that it would seem even out of place in a vial of wrath. In the fourteenth chapter, where it is the Lamb's answer to the challenge of the enemy, He does indeed appear: He comes out Himself to answer. But in this also there is more than judgment. The manifestation of Antichrist is met by the manifestation of Christ, as the day antagonizes and chases away the night; but the day then is come. In the vials there is simply the destruction of the evil; and while the previous visions classify in a divine way the objects of wrath, the vials give us rather the history in detail,—the succession of events; though this, of course, like all else, has divine meaning in it. All history has: the difficulty is, with what is common history, to get the facts distinctly and in proportion, which the inspiration of Scripture-history secures for us. But along with this, we have here, what is obscured so much to men, heaven's action in earth's history; and heaven is acting in a more direct manner now that the end is at hand, and the wrath

stored up for many generations is to burst upon the earth at last.

"And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous,—seven angels having seven plagues—the last; for in them is finished the wrath of God."

The one bright word here is "FINISHED." For the earth at large, it is indeed so. Judgment comes, as we shall see, at the close of the millennium, upon a special, though, alas! a numerous class; but it is, nevertheless, not earth that rebels, nor can the hand that holds the sceptre be any more displaced. How the voice of the "everlasting gospel" sounds in that word, "finished"! But in proportion as the judgment is final now, so must it be complete, conclusive. All limitations are now removed: the rod of iron thoroughly does its work. As in the Lord's answer to His disciples' question as to this very period: "Whosoever the carcass"—the corruption that provokes God's anger—"is, there will the eagles be gathered together."

But first—and this is the style of prophecy, as we have seen,—before the judgment strikes, the gathering clouds are for a moment parted, that we may see, not the whole good achieved, but the care of God over His own, who in this scene might seem to have found only defeat and forsaking. Only *one* righteous Man was ever really forsaken. And we are permitted to see how, in fact, He has but hidden in His own pavillion, from the strife of men, those who amid the battle drop down and are lost to sight. "And I saw as it were a sea of glass, mingled with fire; and those that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over the number of his name, standing upon the sea of glass, having harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, 'Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways,

Thou King of ages. Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for Thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy righteous acts have been made manifest."

The sea of glass answers to the brazen sea—the laver of the temple; but it is glass, not water: purification is over, with the need of it; the fire mingled with it indicates what they have passed through, which God has used for blessing to their souls. That they are a special class cannot be questioned,—martyrs under the beast, who have found victory in defeat, and are perfected and at rest before the throne of God.

They sing a mingled song—of Moses and of the Lamb conquerors as those who were delivered out of Egypt, but by the might of Him who goes forth as a "man of war" for the deliverance of His people. The song of the Lamb looks to the victories recorded in this book, in which the "works" of the Lord God Almighty of the Old Testament are repeated by Him who as King of the age, manifests thus His "ways" as true and righteous throughout the dispensations.*

Divine promises are being fulfilled: God is once more taking up the cause of His ancient people, while the sufferers in Christian times are no less being vindicated and their enemies judged. Great Babylon, with the blood of the prophets in her skirts, comes into remembrance before God. He has not slept, when most He seemed to do so; and now acts in judgment that makes all men fear. Ripened iniquity, come to a head, wherever we may look, claims the harvest-sickle. The open challenge of the enemy brooks no delay in answering it. It is the

*There is an alternative reading accepted by most editors,—"*nations*," found in the Alexandrian and Vatican MSS., with the Ethiopic and Coptic versions. "*Ages*" is found in the Sinaitic and Ephraemi MSS., with the Vulgate. The Revised Version, with Westcott & Hort, prefer the latter, which has the oldest authority in its favor, and, I judge, the spiritual sense.

only hope for the earth itself, which will learn righteousness when His judgments are in it. While the New Testament here coalesces with the voice of prophecy in the Old, and the cycle of the ages is completed and returns into itself, only with a *Second* Man, a new creation and the paradise of God. Truly Christ is "King of the ages."

And now the temple of the tabernacle of testimony is opened, where the ark of His covenant has been already seen. Faithful to that covenant now, in which Israel and the earth are together ordained to blessing, the seven angels with the seven last plagues issue forth as the result of that faithfulness. Thus they are arrayed in pure white linen, and girded with golden girdles: it is the glory of God in behalf of which they serve, as the bowls or vials are also golden, and filled with *His* wrath. From the glory of God and from His power smoke fills the temple. None can therefore approach to intercede. There can be no more delay: long-suffering patience is exhausted: "no one was able to enter into the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled."

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

CHRISTIAN HOLINESS.

NOT PURITY, BUT LIBERTY.

WE have seen that there may be said to be at least four Schools of Holiness. The Perfectionist School maintains that the whole man is sanctified, that, as Dr. Charke says, "It is the cleansing of the blood, that has not been cleansed; *it is washing the soul of a true believer from the remains of sin.*" The Evangelical School teaches that grace is victorious over sin, and will at last uproot it, though perfect holiness will not

be attained in this life. The Faith School, unlike the two former, in a way, admits that there are two natures in the believer, and teaches that holiness is obtained by an *act of faith*. A new life is thought to be imparted, but the blood is said to cleanse the fountain of evil within so that not merely the stains, but the sin itself, is said to be removed, yet the person may slip back again into bondage. Indeed, this view is a kind of compromise, a mixture of the Perfectionist and Scriptural Schools. But the latter shows that the flesh is not improved nor cleansed : it is condemned and treated as that which has been judged at the cross. A new life, the life of Christ is communicated, and the believer gets deliverance, not from the *presence*, but from its *power* ; and not by cleansing, but by reckoning himself dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord. The result is not *purity*, but *liberty*.

In the scriptural view of holiness, all that is sought after by the other schools is obtained, while their errors are avoided. The perfection of Christ's work is so seen and accepted that the believer gets a *purged* conscience, and has a perfect standing before God, while the other schools are seeking this as a thing to be attained by holiness.

Indeed, Scripture gives us much more. It shows clearly the difference between the first and the last Adam ; the place of the old and the new creation is recognized ; and we get the essential features of Christianity proper as contrasted with Judaism. It may not be seen at first, nor do the holiness advocates realize it ; but the question involves nothing less than the essential nature of Christianity itself. Strange and hard to say—not that they are not Christians, far be the uncharitable thought, but this I do say, they show that they do not see what Christianity really means, as taught by Paul.

The Perfectionist and Evangelical Schools do not show that the "old man" is met in judgment, nor that the "new man" is created in Christ Jesus, and that according to knowledge, righteousness and holiness of truth. (Eph. iv. 24; ii. 10; Col. iii. 10.) Theirs is a Judaized Christianity, to which the epistle to the Galatians is indeed a divine answer. Both views are an attempt to put a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, or new wine into old bottles. They fail to recognize the utter corruptness of "*the old*," and the absolute newness of the "*new man*." With both schools it is virtually a man as he is, after the fall. But even if cleansed, he would still, in their reckoning, be a man *in Adam*, instead of a man *in Christ*. Indeed, Gen. Booth puts it plainly as being "re-made in Adam." This might be very good if true; but it would not be Christianity at all. These two views therefore, though based on the work of Christ, fail to give the distinct features of Christianity as taught by the apostle Paul. He teaches that the proper Christian condition is one of deliverance from the former state in Adam, and the man is freed from the bondage of indwelling sin, and waits to be freed from its presence at the coming of the Lord, or by his going to be with Him. (Rom. v. 12; v.-viii. 23.)

With the Faith School there is some recognition of the new nature and resurrection life, and getting free from the law; but, as with both the former, there is still found the defective idea of *cleansing the nature* or source of evil within. The first two views deal with the *whole man*, and consider that he is to be cleansed and renewed. This third view allows that he gets an entirely new nature, and even talks of resurrection life; yet, "we are to receive the blood as cleansing the fountain—the very source of evil thoughts," "to wash inwardly the sin itself away, not merely the stains, but the sin itself." All this is outside

Scripture. It never speaks of applying the blood to cleanse the evil nature, the sin itself, "the very source of the spring." That scripture, "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin," is quoted to prove that the source, the spring itself, is cleansed. But it applies to *overt acts*, not to the *evil nature*, as it says, "If we confess our *sins*."

The next verse also shows that it does not mean the cleansing of the source of evil in us, for, even after cleansing, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." *No sin!* then you have *no truth* on this point, that is certain. There is cleansing from the acts of sin, but the source of the acts, the evil or state of sin, is not cleansed: it is *condemned*, and the believer has to reckon himself dead to it.

A *sin* is an *act*, but *sin* is a *state*; and hence, strictly rendered, sin is lawlessness: it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. (1 Jno. iii. 4; Rom. viii. 7.) To apply the law only provokes sin into activity. (Rom. vii. 9-11.) It is a present power with the believer. What he needs, in this respect, is not forgiveness nor cleansing, but *deliverance*. It may be that he knows that he is forgiven, and this assurance only increases his distress. As one put it to me, "If I had not been forgiven, I would come to Christ now; but I know I was forgiven, but I cannot understand why I am feeling so wretched and miserable." The struggle with indwelling sin has begun, and cleansing is not what is now required.

It is the idea of a captive needing liberty. He might be cleansed, and even taken out of the foul dungeon in which he has been confined, and still be a captive in an enemy's land. He would still need and desire liberty with a change of place: he would have both if released and brought to where he belongs. This would be *deliverance*. The conduct of a loyal and devoted subject might

then be manifested in its proper sphere. This would be like *holiness* as a result.

Mark the purport of the illustration, because it explains one *grand mistake* common to the first three views of holiness. They confound liberty with purity, deliverance with holiness. Purity will not be obtained till we see the Lord (1 Jno. iii. 3), though the heart is being purified, and we purify ourselves. (Acts xv. 9.) But think of a captive in the black hole of Calcutta. He might be taken out of the loathsome dungeon, and have fresh air and wholesome food, and still be a captive under his guards. Cleansing and comfort is not enough: he is a captive, and, say, a Briton: what he longs for is liberty, and to live at peace in his native land.

So the Christian should live in heavenly places, in spirit. Indeed, the purpose of all the struggling is to bring him to realize that being in Christ he is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, and to learn to treat being "in the flesh" as a past condition. (Rom. vii. 5.) Then he says of himself what God says about him, in virtue of his having died with Christ, he steps into liberty, and has leisure to occupy his mind with Christ where He is at God's right hand.

The holiness advocates think too exclusively of cleansing and getting Christ to suit them on earth; they overlook the stern fact of captivity, and the need of a change of sphere, that they might in heart and affection suit Christ in heaven by setting their minds on things above. They are unwittingly at war with the nature of things. Cleansing and comfort to a British soldier in captivity, or beleaguered in a foreign land, from the nature of things, cannot give him all he requires. Gen. Gordon needed more than supplies: he required *deliverance from Khartoum*. So the believer requires *deliverance* from his old condition in Adam. Cleansing, as the holiness advocates

put it, does not meet the deep need of the believer who is exclaiming in bitterness of soul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Indeed, rightly understood, this very man is cleansed already, and has a new nature; but what he needs is deliverance, or freedom from a power which is holding him in captivity. He also requires to see that he is brought into his proper sphere in Christ. He realizes this translation and freedom when he sees that the power of sin was dealt with in Christ's death: he accepts that death as his own death: he sees that sins, and the nature in him, which would keep him in bondage, were both dealt with in judgment when Jesus died. Christ's blood cleansed him from the pollution of sins, while that death at the same time broke the power of sin. The cross stands in a new light. He sees that death has come between him and his own self and sins alike, and that he has a new life, in a new place, with the Holy Spirit as a new power, and the risen Saviour as a new object. He is not only cleansed; but he learns that he is delivered from his former state of bondage to sin and law, and set free under a new Master, and is living loyally in the sphere to which he belongs, in virtue of his new birth, his new nature, and in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Hence he can say, "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath set me free from the law of sin and death." "Now being made free (as *from captivity*) from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Observe, too, that it is *unto* holiness; *not a perfect state attained*, but rather a starting point from which to go on to perfection in glory.

The experience in the end of Rom. vii. will be found to be a kind of crucial test of all the views of holiness. The Perfectionists makes it the experience of an unconverted man. This is out of line with the fact that the man

hates evil, loves good, and delights in the law after the *inward* man. There is a new nature there; but it has no power or liberty.

The Evangelical makes Rom. vii. the life-long experience of the believer, with no real deliverance till death. The shout of thanksgiving and the emphatic words "*hath made me free*," set aside such a theory. Rom. vi., vii., and viii. are for the very purpose of showing that there *is deliverance*, and that the enjoyment of it is the only proper Christian experience.

The Faith School admit, and even urge, that the Christian life should be one of rest and liberty; but they teach that it is obtained by an act of faith, and overlook the importance and necessity for the breaking down, and judging, and repudiating of self, which is produced by the humbling experience of being brought to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then, even after getting the blessing of holiness, as they put it, a man may be back again in the struggle of Rom. vii. every now and again. The defects of the view, in this respect, are that the man neither gets properly *into* Rom. vii., so as to really learn himself; nor does he get properly *out* of it, so as to learn where he is brought, and what is his, as one who is "in Christ." If he does enter into liberty, as many do, he is apt to be taken up with himself and the blessing, while he enjoys it, rather than with Christ, and what is true of the believer as in Him in heavenly places.

The scriptural view is the divine answer to the soul, as it presents *deliverance* and a *deliverer*, and holiness as the result. It equally condemns the continuous sinning, and the profession of living without sin. It admits that the evil nature is there unchanged, but the believer is free from its power. It makes no false distinctions as to *partial* cleansing, and then getting a second blessing of a

clean heart, or sanctification. The one who believes, indeed, all who believe in Christ's blood, are equally and perfectly cleansed, once purged, perfected forever, and should have no more conscience of sins. (Heb. ix. and x.) After this the believer may contract defilement in his walk, then the remedy is the advocacy of Christ and the washing of water by the Word. (1 Jno. ii. 1, 2 ; Jno. xiii. 1-11.) There is a difference between the bath and the basin, or bathing, and feet washing: the one is for the cleansing of the whole body, the other for removing defilement contracted afterward. In Scripture, the former is the washing once for all; the latter, the washing with water whenever the believer contracts defilement.

The holiness teaching confuses them together. It also overlooks deliverance, and it takes away from the perfection of a purged conscience, at the outset, by urging upon a believer a *second* cleansing, which is supposed to purify the source of evil within.

Many of the hymns in use are full of this injurious notion, as, for instance, when believers are taught to sing—

“Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.”

Charles Wesley puts it explicitly as the language of a soul seeking sanctification—

“Speak the second time, ‘Be clean.’
Take away my inbred sin;
Every stumbling-block remove;
Cast it out by perfect love.”

Then, on the other hand, when the blessing is supposed to be obtained, and the tendency to evil uprooted, the exhortations and warnings of Scripture to the believers are nullified. But sin in the nature is there, hence, “Reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin;” “Let not sin therefore reign;” “Mortify, therefore, your members;” “Flee also youthful lusts;” “Put off all these, anger, wrath;” “Grieve not the Holy Spirit;” these, and all

kindred exhortations and warnings to saints and men of God, are all a mistake if the fountain of evil within is cleansed and entirely eradicated. If it had been so with Peter, after being filled with the Holy Spirit, he would not have dissembled. (Gal. ii. 11-14.) Paul, after being in the third heaven, would not have required a thorn in the flesh to keep him from giving way to pride. Exercise and self-judgment, as practiced and taught by Paul, were all a mistake if the tendency to evil, if the evil nature itself, is uprooted. As his teaching shows, in the most advanced believer, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh;" but "walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh."

The flesh is ever condemned, never said to be cleansed, nor rooted out of the believer. But he is not in the flesh, though it is in him: he is in the Spirit, in Christ, and Christ in him; hence he can say, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

This point may only be reached after a fruitless struggle to improve the flesh, or restrain self. The answer is found in Christ's death, and in reckoning himself dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Christ Jesus, and in "bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus that the life also of Jesus may be manifest in our body." One might humbly submit that this guards against the erroneous tendencies, and gives all that is true in the holiness teaching, while it gives much more, and all according to "the truth;" and it is the truth which makes free.

In brief, in conclusion, usually after one has believed on Christ, and received the forgiveness of sins, he has to learn deliverance by Christ, that he may live to Christ, and wait for Christ, that, like Paul, he may say, "To me, to live is Christ." But one might add that here, briefly, some of the far-reaching principles connected with deliv-

erance have been touched ; and it will be no surprise, no proof of the principles being unscriptural, if they are not just so clear to the mind at first sight. There is such a mass of unscriptural ideas in the minds of many on the question of holiness that it need not be wondered at if they are somewhat slow to learn. It should be borne in mind, however, that the deep need and the earnest longings of some believers have ended in their getting the experience of deliverance, though they may not be able to give the scriptural explanation of that experience. Much of this is owing to the lack of scriptural teaching on the subject ; and if these papers help to open up Scripture, they will not have been written in vain. Then let the apostle's holy ambition to have Christ magnified in his body be the earnest purpose of each inquirer, and the illuminating power of the Spirit will not fail to reveal to the longing soul Christ the Lord as the Deliverer.

W. C. J.

(To be continued.)

JOSEPH'S TWO SONS---MANASSEH, EPHRAIM.

"Old things are passed away ; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. v. 17.)

THE names of these sons show them to be types of very precious truth. "And unto Joseph were born two sons. . . . And Joseph called the name of the first-born 'Manasseh ;' 'for God,' saith he, 'hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house.' And the name of the second called he 'Ephraim ;' for God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.'" First of all, it is typical of Christ rejected by His own as was Joseph. He becomes fruitful through the cross. The world and this present age is "the land of His

affliction." But in application to us what is it but "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new"—the new-creation position of all who are in Christ?

And this agrees with Ephraim having the first place in the blessing of Jacob (for he set Ephraim before Manasseh—Gen. xlviii. 20), for "all things become new" is the present existing reality." Joseph's disappointment at this, and cleaving to Manasseh as the first-born, shows over-occupation with having left the old. But this can never feed the soul, for it is the new things that sustain and lead us on. "If ye, then, be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." (Col. iii. 1.)

Joseph would have been unprepared to deal with his brethren in the final interview had he not been weaned from Manasseh. He might have reminded them of his superiority over them. But having learned that Ephraim has the first place—"fruitful in the land of affliction"—"walking in newness of life"—"reaching forth to the things that are before" (Rom. vi.; Phil. iii.), his heart is open and enriched—the "word of Christ dwells in him richly," (Col. iii.) and he has needed love and wisdom to minister to their actual need.

If we cleave to Manasseh, we are unprepared to help one another. If Ephraim has his place, we are, like Jacob, in the present enjoyment of communion with God; not mere recollection of truths learned in a happier past.

Then the Word has power, and does not fall to the ground. In 1 Sam. iii., Eli had ceased to grow; but "Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground." His profiting appeared to all. "And all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh; for the

Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord."

It was no longer dimness of sight and lamps going out as in the beginning of the chapter; but growing, and receiving revelations from the Lord, and blessing. No doubt Joseph (to return to him,) had exulted that his brethren should have been brought to him at last, and had become occupied with his own sufferings and victory in the past—"the things behind," and God straightway uses one like Jacob, who had been slow to learn, to rebuke him.

"And Israel (a prince with God) stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly. (Gen. xlviii. 14.) . . . And Joseph said unto his father, 'Not so, my father; for this is the first-born,' " trying to remove his father's hand from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's. But his father refused, and said, "'God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh;' and he set Ephraim before Manasseh." And so Moses, in blessing, speaks of the ten thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manasseh.

Thus Jacob, being humbled by past chastening and present circumstances of humiliation and trial, bears the banner of testimony that Joseph had for the time let slip from his hands. "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." (Rev. iii. 10, 11.)

We are dead to sin and alive to God in Christ (Rom. vi.), which is what is taught us (in type) by the whole book of Exodus. Israel was separated from Egypt and Pharaoh's host (the world and sin) by the Red-Sea judgment (the cross),—that is, death to sin and the world. That is the first part of the book; in the second part, they are brought to God at the mount, to receive His commandments. This tells us of the positive present

reality for us—we are *alive to God* in Christ. It remains true that we are dead to sin, of course; but we have to do with God: we are alive in Him whose life in us has its activity in going out to God—as constantly as the tree grows or as a life is lived—it is the “*living sacrifice*” of Rom. xii. 1. Let us not be occupied with a position—with ourselves and with the past, to become withered and dry; but consider by faith what it is to have to do with God always and everywhere, walking “in newness of life” in Him who is risen from the dead. (Rom. vi.) In this there is freshness of soul, and lowliness of heart and conscience: it is life, not death, for all live unto Him.

To put Ephraim first, then, is communion with God, not formalism,—having the mind of God, and truth suited to the occasion: it is firmness of purpose, arising from conscious subjection to God, that would not allow even Joseph to remove the hand from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's, and that will not allow the servant of the Lord now to be turned aside from the way by human influence or affection. Jacob was having a joyful look into the future—the joy of the coming kingdom—the ultimate fruitfulness of the cross, after all the affliction; and earthly influence and fleshly motive had no power with him. He was not leaning upon man, not even upon one so dear to him as Joseph, and so he was faithful to Joseph, and did him the truest kindness by not yielding to him. Thus a mere form of truth will adapt itself to circumstances and natural preferences, but in communion with God—in living to Him—in rejoicing in hope, the truth *governs* the heart and gives stability of walk and peace and power, victory over all hostile influences from without.

The Lord deliver us or keep us from any condition of soul in which we might hinder one another in the way of obedience and growth in the knowledge of the truth and of the Lord. May our joy be full, in realized fellowship

(1 Jno. i. 3, 4) with the Father and with the Son, and we shall be helpers of one another's joy, and be ready to submit to the example and the word of another who is nearer to the Lord than one's self.

E. S. L.

"BE STRONG, AND OF A GOOD COURAGE."

(Joshua i.)

MOSES, the servant of the Lord, was dead. Type of our Lord Jesus Christ *as the Deliverer of His people*, he had finished his work. He had delivered them by the blood from the midnight judgment which had overtaken Egypt, and from the stubborn grasp of the mighty Pharaoh by passing them through the sea. He had faithfully led them through the wilderness for forty years, and with such patience and meekness that he had won for himself the enviable title of "*Moses, the servant of the Lord.*" All this brings out the character of our Lord as the One who has delivered us from the wrath to come by His precious blood, from the thralldom of sin and Satan by passing us through His death, and who now leads us along our journey with utmost faithfulness and grace.

But Joshua unfolds to us another character of our Lord. It is *as the risen and glorified One* He now appears in this new servant—as the One who leads His delivered people into the present, practical possession of the inheritance to which He has given a clear title. Who that thinks of the return of our Lord to His glory—no longer simply "Son of God," but now also "Son of Man," and *thus* introducing man into that glory,—who that thinks of it with faith and does not feel new throbbings in his bosom? The same *Man* who was on Calvary's cross, crying from the heart of the darkness, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani,*"

as far from God as a man can be, because of sin—our sin,—that same *Man* now at home in the presence of the glory of God. And we, poor things who merited the judgment of God, not only freed from it, but introduced thus, in the person of the glorified Jesus, into the glory of heaven—of the immediate presence of God! This it is that makes us sing in truth,—

"We are but strangers here,
Heaven is our home!
Earth is a desert drear,
Heaven is our home!

What an hour for the hosts of heaven when He concerning whom they had received the command, "Let all the angels of God worship Him," returned to His place of glory *clothed in humanity for evermore!* What unspeakable honor bestowed upon us! What exaltation after such degradation! Oh the triumphs of grace!

But the laying hold of this in our souls—the taking possession of it till it marks our daily life as citizens of heaven and no longer of earth—this is what our Lord, after delivering us, labors continually to lead into. So earthly-minded are we, however, such lovers of our own will and way, so afraid of the difficulties which arise from this, that to encounter and overcome all, the leader of the people is *three* times admonished to "be strong, and of a good courage."

The admonition to the leader marks the tendencies of the people, and it necessarily applies also to all such as follow on; for if the leader has to overcome these tendencies in them, they have to overcome them in themselves.

The first admonition (*v.* 6) is based upon the certainty of final success. None would persevere through the hour of trial without faith as to the end. Being heirs of God, and our inheritance sure, He now labors to bring us into

the practical enjoyment of it. If our earthly mind roots itself in wife, children, houses, lands, money, position, He will faithfully blow upon them all, root us up, and in mercy hasten us on toward our inheritance. It was all right for a Jew to be earthly-minded,—his inheritance was the earth,—but it will not do for a man to whom "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, is reserved in heaven." (1 Pet. i. 4.)

The second time, it is based upon the necessity of being wholly governed by the Word of God—of being permeated with His mind and will therein made known (*vv.* 7, 8). Mere acquaintance with the Scripture,—mere ability to delineate it, and classify its varied and marvelous contents will not do. Revelation was not given to entertain the Athenians, but so to communicate the mind and will of God to the man whose will is surrendered to God as to mould him afresh, and transform him both in mind and ways. We are always in special danger as to this, and more so now than ever perhaps, because of the pre-eminence given to intellect over conscience. This second admonition, therefore, is intensified: "Only be thou strong, and *very* courageous." Is there any thing in which we need the Lord's ministration more than for the hearty enjoyment of and conscientious subjection to the Word of God? Yet by this alone it is that He can promise, "Then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

The third rests upon the whole matter itself issuing from God, and His own presence among them (*v.* 9). "Have not I commanded thee?" To faith, this is the whole secret. If God be the source of it, there can be nothing small or insignificant in it, or that would be unworthy of the most courageous battling. Then *His presence* goes with His oracles, so that whatever difficulties there be in the way (and is there greater difficulty

than to walk here as Christ walked?), there His presence is to meet us: "The Lord thy God is *with thee* whithersoever thou goest." Who is the foe we cannot overcome if God be *with* us as well as *for* us? Let the walls of Jericho tower up to heaven, and all the hosts of the enemy gather themselves together, what are they all to the weak few, though they be, who have the living God among them?

Brethren, the necessity of our souls, through conscious sin and guilt, made it imperative for us to follow Moses our *Deliverer*, but strength and courage are needed now to follow Joshua our *Leader into the land*. There be not a few who have followed Moses—partaken of the salvation, and yet forget that God said to Joshua, "As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee" (v. 5),—that is, Joshua's part is as important before God as Moses'. They have tasted the sweets of grace, but have neither strength nor courage to break loose from the world and cross boldly over with Joshua, as men who have there an inheritance of their own,—who appreciate it, and intend to take possession of it, cost what it may. What a loss! which no amount of activity of service or works of benevolence can ever make up for.

Through David's courageous warfare, the enemies had been subdued, and "Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under *his* vine and under *his* fig-tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba," and an abundance of materials had been gotten together to build there a place of delights to the Lord. Alas! it did not last. The man who could make every letter of the alphabet celebrate the virtues of the Word of God (Ps. cxix.) was no more. It had, in time, even come to pass that the high-priest had to say, "I have *found* the book of the law in the house of the Lord" (2 Kings xxii.); and so all Israel had fallen into decrepitude, and become a prey to the horde of enemies who

were but too glad to spoil and ravage what, for a time, had been so humiliating to them.

But (oh, the mercy of God!) the priest *finds* the book; the king *eats* it, and from the strength thereof he renews the holy warfare and keeps such a passover that it is written of it, "Surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah; but in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, wherein this passover was holden to the Lord in Jerusalem." (vv. 22, 23.) Yet the determined and near judgment of God had not been set aside, but rather declared afresh with greater emphasis (vv. 15-20). It was therefore no spirit of enthusiasm in Josiah, based on some false hope or ambitious purpose. It was the quick and powerful Word of God in a man whose heart was true, and who "walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left."

Beloved, is it so with us? Lord, is it so with me?

P. J. L.

"YE ARE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE."

(1 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 23.)

THIS expression occurs in both the passages indicated. In the first, it relates to the deliverance of the body from the bondage of sin, to be yielded unto God; in the second, to freedom from man, that we might be servants unto God. Equally separated from the doctrine of perfectionism on the one hand, and from that which teaches the necessity of the believer's sinning is the truth as set forth here. Our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost; we are not our own, but bought with a price, and are therefore to glorify God in our body. Familiar truth, but of which we need constantly to be reminded—that

our body is the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit. Those words of promise when our Lord was about to leave His own which were in the world have been fulfilled—"He shall abide with you forever." What a Guest for such a habitation! That blessed One who first rested upon the holy Jesus has now taken His abode with us. God the Spirit, the Regenerator, the Inspirer of the Word, the living power for all that is good, dwells in us, at once the seal of divine ownership and the earnest of the inheritance which awaits us. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." The Seal is God's mark of ownership. He has not put upon us a mark such as man would, but has sent a living Person of divine dignity to abide with us. And this blessed Person does not rest satisfied to abide, but He works, He reveals Christ, and He gives foretastes of a joy that awaits us. If we realized His presence, would there not be a powerful effect on our lives? Would not sin be more hateful, the world less attractive, Christ more precious, the Word more luminous? In the immediate connection, the apostle uses this truth as a corrective of the grossest forms of sin—a connection we would shrink from making. Can we not apply it to other sins,—to that pride which clings so closely, that malice, that evil-speaking? Realizing who dwells in us would check the indulgence of these and other sins, which conscience, often disregarded, fails to make us feel.

We come next to see why the Holy Spirit dwells in us. "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." We may be sure that nothing *in us* warrants the Holy Spirit in abiding in us. He has taken up His abode because we have been purchased—"with the precious blood of Christ." What a proof of the value of that work in God's sight, and of the certainty of its having been applied to us! Nothing less would justify the Spirit in

dwelling in such places, yet nothing less would do to witness to the perfection of that sacrifice. God has been glorified, and He sends forth the Spirit to witness to it. We have believed, and this is the answer of God to our faith—weak as it is. If young Christians saw clearly why they had the Spirit,—that it was due to no exertions, prayers, or moral fitness on their part, but to the fact that they have been bought with a price, they would not have so many unscriptural thoughts about His ministry.

Now, if bought, we are not sin's servants; and being free from it, we can yield ourselves up to God. This is what we have in the exhortation, "Glorify God in your body." How blessed that we who had come short of the glory of God can now glorify Him in our bodies! How blessed, too, to see all linked with the precious blood of Christ! This shows us holiness as the fruit of redemption, and the Holy Spirit as the power for holiness. "Ye are not your own,"—how much this means! "A peculiar people,"—rather "A people for His own possession." If this is realized, how it carries all else with it—as to the life. We dare not link sin or selfishness with God's ownership of us. How plain a certain course would appear did this thought govern us: I am not my own, therefore I cannot go there, do this, associate with these. No need for casuistry to decide questions for us.

But this redemption reaches not merely to the question of sin. The second verse shows that we have been set free from human bondage. "Be ye not the servants of men." There is no man in all this world to whom we owe subjection,—no ruler, no leader, no friend. We have been absolutely set free from man's ownership. This does not mean to encourage that disobedience to the powers that be which is one of the signs of the last days. Scripture clearly tells us that we are to be subject to these authorities,—to "render to all their dues: tribute to

whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." A respect for and obedience to his rulers, with prayer for them, will characterize the sober-minded. Neither does our scripture hint at neglect of submission to our spiritual guides and to one another. He shows a lawless spirit who holds lightly the judgment of his brethren. Nay, our text tells us we are now in the true position to render all due obedience—because it is *unto the Lord*. In obeying the powers that be, I obey the Lord: in receiving the judgment of my brethren with respect and attention, I do the same. Subjection to our fellow-Christians in any other way is the worst kind of bondage. We are not to be driven here and there like a herd of sheep—going blindly with the mass. Alas! too much have we forgotten that we are not the servants of men. The result is, instead of happy, intelligent following the Lord, His people follow some man, only to find at last that they have gone far astray. This is the true spirit of unity: any thing else is a false union, soon to result in disunion. When all follow the Lord, they are of one mind, and must be together. Again let us note with what this freedom is linked—"Ye are bought with a price." That price appeals to our love, to our loyalty. The fear of man bringeth a snare, but to realize that we have been bought with a price—such a price—sets free from that snare. We can decide every question apart from all human influence,—rather, we must, to decide aright, do so. The Lord impress this precious truth on us so deeply that we shall walk here His freemen—free from sin, free from man,—yet ready to serve all, and realizing each one that we are "less than the least of all saints."

OUTLINES OF SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE.

"Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

(2 Tim. i. 10.)

INTRODUCTORY.

DOCTRINE "means "teaching." All Scripture is profitable, among other things, for doctrine,—that is, for teaching the truths needful for the man of God to know. It is by doctrine, or teaching, that all the great realities of God, and our relations to Him,—of Christ, the Spirit, salvation, grace, glory, are made known to us. Therefore it is significant that in the "Church epistles"—those devoted to the Church order and life—we have the word "doctrine" mentioned so frequently (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus). It is by doctrine (through the power of the Spirit) that the Church is built up and nourished. Where doctrine is set aside, all growth and testimony soon stops.

It is considered fashionable, in this day, to decry doctrine and uphold "practical Christianity," as it is called. These doctrines, we are told, are old-fashioned, and no longer suit those who live in this enlightened and progressive age. These thoughts, suggested by the spirit of evil, have crept like leaven into the professing church, until men fear to make known those grand, simple, and sanctifying doctrines of the Scripture, and have come down to the demands of the day for a broad creed—generalizations about the mercy of God—His universal Fatherhood and man's brotherhood—duties to one's neighbor or to the state. Or, where there is earnestness, it goes off into attacks upon some of the crying sins of the day, such as intemperance and the like. A glance at the Monday reports of sermons will show the current of

the day—"the course of this world," and as one reads these reports of "stones for fish—scorpions for eggs," he is reminded of those solemn words, "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." The effect of all this is infidelity. The precious doctrines of grace are set aside, along with the solemn doctrines of sin and future judgment. Nothing remains but man's religion, without Christ, and, we may add, "without hope in the world." Even where there is a holding to Bible-truth, and where through God's mercy souls are saved, this neglect of doctrinal preaching bears its true fruit. There is but little deep conviction of sin. Salvation is made a matter of "coming out on the Lord's side," by holding up the hand, or rising for prayers. As a consequence, vast numbers are swept into the church to swell its list; but, alas! the majority soon to fall back into the world, or, worse yet, to bring more of the world into the church. Not that we would deny for a moment that souls are saved during so-called "revival services," but they are few comparatively, and we believe this can be traced to the conspicuous lack of *doctrinal preaching*. And where souls are saved, how weak, how dim, is the faith and, as a result, unsteady the walk! Years may pass, and the simple elements of the gospel remain unknown to many who we dare not doubt have trusted in Christ as their Saviour. The weakening effect of this is seen in the impotence of the professing church to meet the tide of infidelity rising each year higher. On the other hand, contrast those who have been "established in the faith." No gilded lie of the enemy is believed, all is tested by the Word. Then, too, as to walk; there is *power* in it—the power of truth and faith. To this it may be objected that doctrine does not necessarily transform. We answer, if the text at the beginning is noticed, we will see the

true frame-work of all Scripture-doctrine—"in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." It is only when doctrine is made a matter of cold reason that it fails to have power. Christ the object of faith and of love—as well as their author—Christ brought before the soul a living Person, through the Spirit, by *the use of doctrine*, never fails to sanctify and strengthen. This answers the objection that doctrines are "dry." Doctrines, properly received, give us deeper knowledge of the fullness of God and of the unsearchable riches of Christ. No wonder, then, that in the wreck of all about him, the apostle exhorted Timothy to "hold fast the form of sound words." This has been rendered, "*Have an outline of sound words*" (J. N. D.'s Revised Version.)—a *system* of teaching under which we can group our knowledge of Scripture-truths. Nor is this having a creed. A creed is a human summary of doctrine for the acceptance of Christians upon which their reception into church-fellowship depends. An outline of doctrine is simply a presentation of Scripture-truth—to *be tested* by Scripture, for no purpose of testing fellowship, but for the edification of the saints. With such a purpose we would briefly examine some of the great doctrines of God's Word, looking for the Author of that Word to be our Enlightener and Guide.

(To be continued.)

It is not the Bride only, but the Spirit, knowing all the affections in the heart of Christ, says, "Come!" How sweet to have Christ wanting *you* to say "Come"! Have you known the sweetness when in solitude, when none have been near, of that thought in your heart, hardly breathed in words, "Come, Lord Jesus, come"?

G. V. W.

UNDER THE ROD.

*"Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint
when thou art rebuked of Him." (Heb. xii. 5.)*

UNDER Thy rod, O my God,
My soul would meekly bow;
Yet it is naught that I have sought
Which brings me down so low.
But souls expand beneath Thy hand,
And while they suffer, grow.

Under Thy rod, O my God,
I do not bow in vain;
For though I weep, I surely reap
Treasures of golden gain;
And every one Thou callest "son"
Must bear correction's pain.

Under Thy rod, O my God,
Though sore the trial be,
I would not lose, if I might choose,
The look of love I see.
Father, I bless Thy faithfulness,
Proof of Thy love to me.

Under Thy rod, O my God,
Though clouds may intervene;
And all to me may seem to be
A strange distorted scene.
Yet I can trust: I know thou'rt just,
Though I know not what it mean.

Under the rod of Thy wrath, my God,
Once bowed in death for me,
The sinless *One*, Thy precious Son,
Stooped down and set me free.
Oh, wondrous grace! most awful place!
Endured in love for me.

H. McD.

CONFESSIONS OF THE "HIGHER CRITICISM,"

AS CONTAINED IN

DR. SANDAY'S LECTURES ON "THE ORACLES OF GOD."*

1.—*The Present Contention.*

"I HAVE more understanding than all my teachers," says the Psalmist; "for Thy testimonies are my meditation." (Ps. cxix. 99.) A bold thing to say for this anonymous writer, surely! Who were his teachers? Were the days dark then in Israel? For our present purpose we need not to ask such questions. Assured that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," we may venture to take it for a word most seasonable at the present moment, and an apology for venturing to review a "Professor of Exegesis," from the stand-point of Scripture itself.

But are we correct in that last rendering? The Revised Version, as is well known, prefers another, although it puts the old one † in the margin, as therefore at least allowable: if we prefer to have it, we still may. It is a simple question as to where the verb (often omitted in the Greek as here) is to be put; and the sense is after all what must guide us. The fact of its being left thus far indefinite *really makes it definite* that the two renderings must be after all the same, otherwise there would have been some pains taken to show us which way we were to

* "The Oracles of God. Nine Lectures on the Nature and Extent of Biblical Inspiration, and on the Special Significance of the Old-Testament Scriptures at the Present Time. By Wm. Sanday, M.A., D.D., LL.D. Dean Ireland's Professor of Exegesis; Fellow of Exeter College; Oxford Preacher at Whitehall. Longmans, Green & Co., London and New York. 1891."

† Except that for "all" it has "every;" but even this change cannot be insisted on. *For* without the article, as here, is used for "all," as "all Jerusalem," "all flesh," "all the house of Israel," where you could not say "every." In the same way as here, the *N. V.* has given us, for "all the building," in Eph. ii. 21, "*each several building*"!

read it; would there not? To make them so, we have only to put a comma into the *R. V.*, and say, "Every scripture, inspired of God, is also profitable." Here the old statement and the new are really one.

But that is not the way some would have us understand it. They have decreed that it must mean that every scripture *that is* inspired of God is profitable, but that it does not apply to the whole Bible by any means; and that is why they prefer "every" to "all." In the whole Bible, certain parts are inspired, and which, you must find out: hard work enough, as it has taken so many generations of learned men to discover what, and indeed they have not done it yet; while the unlearned are scarcely to be expected to find out at all.

By this means the whole attitude of soul toward Scripture is altered: we judge it, not are judged by it. What we cannot understand, or have no heart for, we can easily suspect to be not inspired: the Word of God is measured by our scanty bushel, and becomes as narrow as the shallowest human mind can make it.

Dr. Sanday is fully committed to this view of Scripture, which, as he rightly says, is not held now merely by those in the ranks of enemies of the truth. The "expressions of opinion" which have excited for some time "not a little disquietude and anxiety," and that "especially amongst good people,"—

"have not had any thing of the nature of an attack. They have not come from the Extreme Left, or from the destructive party in ecclesiastical politics or theology, but they have come from men of known weight and sobriety of judgment, from men of strong Christian convictions, who it is felt would not lightly disturb the same convictions in others,—men, too, of learning, who do not speak without knowing what they say."

Among these, Dr. Sanday puts forth no claim to speak with "authority." Only specialists, who have devoted themselves to work on "some definite line" can rightly

do this within their own particular limits. The labor of ascertaining how far Scripture is to be believed is so great that he himself, as to much of it, must be content to "look on from outside."

"At the same time, one who holds a responsible position must do his best to ascertain which way things are tending: he must not let any considerable change in theology come upon him unprepared: he must consider beforehand how it is likely to affect himself and to affect others, especially those who come under his charge."

Knowledge of the truth he dares not profess: he has an "opinion," and faith in the competence of those who are giving the trend to his theology. He says,—

"I shall abstain from expressing any opinion as to the extent to which the conclusions involved have been proved. In regard to this, there may be not a few here who will be as well able to form a judgment as I am. I, LIKE THEM, MUST BE CONTENT TO TAKE A GREAT DEAL UPON TRUST. The only advantage I can claim is perhaps a rather fuller acquaintance with foreign work as well as with English, and with the general *balance of opinion* abroad as well as at home. I have also the advantage that some of those engaged in these studies are personal friends of my own; and to their singleness of mind and earnest religious purpose, as well as to their thorough competence to deal with questions of so much importance, I must needs bear testimony."

But is there here any ground for divine faith at all?

There were others of old time whose "fear of God was taught by the precept of men," but they do not come well recommended to us. And as for the result, considering all that is or may be in question, we cannot help believing that they were a great deal better off to whom the apostle could say,—many, yea, most of them, very simple, unlettered people, we may be sure,—“Ye have an unction from the holy One, and ye know all things, and need not that any man teach you.” How grand and ennobling a thing that, to be, under God's teaching, delivered from dependence upon these long examinations! not to have to wait with fevered eyes, looking to our masters to see

what they will permit us to believe at last! Which method honors God most, also? a God with whom "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but who has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise"?

It is not a question of details—of this point or that point—but of the whole method. Dr. Sanday's, far as he is from wishing to attack Scripture, is wholly discordant with it.

"Scripture cannot be broken:" that was our Lord's own account of it; "not one jot or tittle shall pass from the law till all be fulfilled." Both these things are said precisely of what has most to bear the brunt of "higher criticism," the Old Testament. Here we have the verbal accuracy of the inspired Word maintained, if words mean any thing. Here is the need of the heart that longs for divine certainty fully met. God has spoken, and spoken not so imperfectly as to leave us in doubt after all as to what is His word, what merely man's. We have what we can depend upon; and, if taught of God, have about it a certainty no human guarantee can give,—thank God, which no "opposition of science, falsely so called," can take away.

But there are the *facts*, urges Dr. S. Bring them forward by all means, and let us see what their value is. Do not blame us, however, for our entire confidence beforehand that there are *no* facts that can invalidate the Lord's words, or do what He challenges cannot be done. "SCRIPTURE CANNOT BE BROKEN:" and He says this about the use of the word "gods" for "those to whom the word of God came,"—quite possibly some may conceive it a strained expression: all the less can one doubt the absolute claim which is here made of complete verbal perfection. Are we to wait until men know every "fact" that can be known before we set to our seal that God is

true? Dr. Sanday himself does not doubt, as we may see shortly, as to the meaning of what Christ says. *He only thinks that HE knows better.* This is no surmise merely of mine: it is the literal truth.

Might we not as well stop here, then? Is it any use to prolong discussion? Alas! unbelief can take shape as the most enlightened faith, and deceive, not merely others, but the man himself who is under its spell. This professor of exegesis is honestly anxious for his readers, that they should be able to hold still their faith in Christ, when faith in His *word* has been rendered impossible. Here too the Christian teacher goes beyond his Master, who can only assure us, "If ye continue in *My word*, then are ye My disciples indeed;" "if a man love Me, he will keep *My words*; he that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings;" and who adds, "And the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me." (Jno. viii. 31; xiv. 23, 24.)

But what about Dr. Sanday's facts? One would expect that for his purpose he would take some one or more, put them in plain words, substantiate them with decisive proofs, and *do* manifestly what the Lord says cannot be done. Surely we might claim this from him. One plain fact would be better than a thousand doubtful ones; and he must surely, amid all that human research has raked together against the Word of God, have *one* fact at least capable of such treatment!

Nothing of the sort is attempted. We shall quote him fairly, and let him show us all he can. He says,—

"In many respects, the result of these discoveries has been to confirm the truth of the Old-Testament history,—in many, but *not quite in all.*

"An instructive example is supplied by the chronology. Both the Assyrian and the Babylonian chronologies rest on a very secure basis. They can be traced up to authorities which are either contemporary or nearly contemporary. And they are

further confirmed by the mention of astronomical phenomena, such as eclipses, which have been verified by modern calculations. Now although these chronologies present a great deal of approximate agreement with the books of Kings, there are some not unimportant differences."

Little wonder need there be about that. It is not hard to suppose slips in an ancient and fragmentary record, even though it may be traced up to "nearly" contemporary authority, and confirmed here and there by astronomical calculations! Why should Scripture go to the wall in these cases to glorify the heathen annals? Suppose we turn the argument round, and say, "Scripture, with its many infallible proofs, confirms generally the Assyrian and Babylonian chronologies, but there are some not unimportant differences"? What then?

In a note, it is added,—

"The Assyrian and the biblical data agree exactly in assigning the fall of Samaria to 722 B.C., but some correction is required of the statement in 2 Kings xviii. 10 that this event took place in the sixth year of King Hezekiah. Sennacherib's invasion, which is assigned to the fourteenth year of the same king, did not really take place till after the year 702. This point *I believe* is well made out."

That is all the proof as given here. No doubt Dr. S. did not want to weary us with all the *pros* and *cons* of a tedious argument, which, if our faith in Scripture depends on it, shows quite manifestly that the poor and unlearned are shut out. It may be possible for some to satisfy themselves with the author's faith in it. But Mr. Birks has examined it at large in his *Commentary on Isaiah*, and seems to have refuted it entirely, while showing its absolute inconsistency with the whole Scripture-account; as, for instance, in making the capture by Sennacherib of forty-six fenced cities in Judah, and smaller towns without number, with the carrying off of two hundred thousand persons, take place in the midst of those fifteen

years of "peace and truth" promised to Hezekiah after his recovery from his sickness ! *

Mr. Birks says,—

"The view adopted by Prof. Rawlinson and others, in deference to the supposed authority of the Assyrian canon, (*which Dr. Hincks himself does not hesitate to call the work of a blunderer, disproved in some main particulars by weightier evidence,*) distorts and reverses, in my opinion, that main feature in the history of Hezekiah's reign on which the whole structure of the book of Isaiah really depends. I think I have shown that it is opposed to plain laws of history, as well as to the text of Isaiah and the books of Kings and Chronicles. A different view, in full harmony with Scripture, agrees better, I believe, with the substantial testimony of *the monuments themselves*; and only requires us to admit such a partial disguise and falsification in Sennacherib's cylinders, as we may be quite certain . . . so terrible a reverse would occasion in ancient days."

This is surely enough wherewith to offset Dr. Sanday's faith in the conclusions of some modern scholars, which he has allowed to shake disastrously his faith in what he yet in some way owns to be inspired of God. May we not say, without undue disparagement to the witness of man, that "the witness of God is greater?" If with Dr. S. we must after all "take a great deal upon trust," *which shall we trust?*

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

CHRISTIAN HOLINESS.

SINS AND SIN.

WE may be said to know persons and things just in proportion as we discern how they differ. It is easier to see where Paul, for instance, may resemble John, than to perceive in what respects John differs from the Apostle of the Gentiles. So in regard

* This view disfigures the modern histories, as Rawlinson's *Five Great Monarchies*; Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*; Sayce's *Fresh Light*, &c. It is enough to compare Geikie's account with Scripture to see the contradictions.

to the meaning of the phrases, "House of God" and "the Kingdom of Heaven." Many could point out the resemblances, who would find it a much more difficult task to describe the differences. But real knowledge, even in natural things, depends largely upon the clearness with which we make and the keenness with which we appreciate distinctions. So it is with regard to truth and divine things. Progress will be made very much in proportion as we learn to distinguish things that differ.

Thus it is said that the natural man knows not spiritual things. The carnal, likewise, are not able to bear their being fully communicated. On the other hand, the spiritual discerneth all things. (1 Cor. ii. 14, 15; iii. 1-3.) About the things to be added to faith it is said, "He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off." (2 Pet. i. 9.)

But if any one wishes to learn, there is every encouragement, since the believer has received the capacity in obtaining a new nature. He also received the Spirit, which is of God, that he might know the things that are freely given to Him of God. (1 Cor. ii. 12; 1 Jno. ii. 27.) Then, as all spiritual things, as well as the power to enjoy them, are ours, we ought to have interest and purpose of heart to set ourselves to discern things that differ.

It may be safely affirmed that none of the distinctions of Scripture are unimportant. One of the most conspicuous of these is the distinction between sins and sin. In the New Testament, especially in the Pauline Epistles, the difference between sins and sin is carefully made and constantly kept in view. That this fact is little regarded, notwithstanding its prominence, and the practical results depending on its apprehension, is truly remarkable. But ignorance and negligence bring forth fruit after their kind. Many sincere Christians are consequently deprived of the enjoyment of peace, rest, liberty, and power. Some

who long for better things, through fear of extravagance, remain in life-long bondage. The ardent aspirations of others carry them over such scruples, and often lead them to adopt one-sided, wrong, and even dangerous views of sanctification.

For instance, one of the Perfectionist School thus puts their view that if a sinner "will confess his lost condition, God is faithful and just, not only to forgive, but also to cleanse from all sin, 'actual and original.'" With varying expressions, they leave no doubt as to their meaning being that "the carnal mind is beplucked up by the roots and the tendencies to evil taken away." They affirm that God is able to do that for the believer now, and consider any thing less a limiting of divine power. Death, they say, does not sanctify, so God must do it while the believer lives.

God's *plan* of deliverance is confounded with His *power*. One need scarcely say that such error will here receive no countenance. The distinguishing between sins and sin strikes at the very root of such false teaching. But doubtless the unsatisfactory experiences of many Christians, the fears and prejudices against the reception of truth, which would be like sunshine in their hearts, and the hazy, questionable teaching on Christian progress, can all more or less be traced to the neglect of the distinction between sins and sin. The importance of knowing and observing the difference, therefore, cannot be easily over-estimated. Indeed, the knowledge of, and attention to, this distinction, become a fair test of a satisfactory Christian experience, and a criterion as to whether or not what is taught on the subject of holiness is according to Scripture.

We may therefore inquire: Wherein lies the difference between sins and sin? At the outset we remark that there is a difference in the *facts*. Yes, and "facts are

stubborn cheils that winna ding." Though so closely related, sins and sin are more distinct than the singular and plural of the same word. They represent different things. The distinction is not made conspicuous in the Old Testament. This may be accounted for by the fact that man was never fully treated according to his lost condition until Christ was on the cross. It came out, indeed, before God, previous to the flood—"God said unto Noah: The end of all flesh is come before Me." (Gen. vi. 12, 13.) But God in patience left man to be tested four thousand years before He brought out the utter ruin of man by *condemning sin in the flesh*. This was what was done when His Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, was crucified. (Rom. viii. 3.) Transgressions are always condemned; from the time of the fall, man was regarded as a sinner, liable to punishment. The Jewish ceremonies and sacrifices referred chiefly to sins actually committed. But the full revelation of the great remedy for sin brought out more distinctly the depth, the danger, the deadliness of the malady. Hence, in the New Testament, we find man not only treated as a sinner, but he is shown to be lost.

In the one case, it is a question as to what he has done; in the other, it is what he is in his nature. Having acted contrary to God, he has sinned; but there was something anterior to this which was the cause of his doing what was wrong. The thing in him which produced the sins demands his attention. In the one case it is a question of his guilt; in the other, it is the ruin of his nature. This is a much darker view of his condition. He has not only done wrong, but he has got that in him as part of his very self which makes it impossible for him of himself ever to do right. In short, for the doing of good, he is without will, without strength; he is ruined—*lost*. Apart from any sins actually committed, he finds that the malady has reached his inmost soul, and that, do as he may, he bears

about with him a ruined nature, ready at any moment to manifest itself in positive transgressions.

It is just as if his horse may not be stumbling now, but he keeps a tight rein and has to be watchful, because he knows that the animal has got the bad capacity of stumbling. So as to man's own nature, if it is not acting, if he is not sinning now, he requires to watch, because the thing which produces the sins is in him. Merely to obtain forgiveness, blessed as that is, leaves the *source* of all the evil untouched. The inherent bad capacity, the evil nature, requires to be reached and judged. Yea, even suppose he never sinned again ; if a man is not renewed in nature, he has in him that evil potentiality, which will not only keep him out of God's presence, but it will in the end shut him up with Satan. There is, therefore, something more wrong than his being a sinner, having sins ; he is without hope, except by new creation, for he has an irrecoverably ruined nature. This nature, or the evil principle within him, is called *sin*, while its fruits, in overt acts, are spoken of as *sins*. That they are distinct may be further seen by the fact that the one may be found without the other, at the same moment, in connection with the same person. Take, for instance, a new-born babe, before it is thought to have willed and acted contrary to God. The child, strictly speaking, cannot be said to have sins ; but as connected with Adam, the head of the race, it has inherited a ruined nature,—that is to say, it has sin. "By one man sin entered into the world." "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Rom. v. 12 ; Ps. li. 5.) This is brought out by the words of the Lord Jesus in a manner which, from its connection, is at once striking and suggestive. In speaking of Zacchæus, the publican, one who had doubtless been guilty of many sins in going astray, the Lord says, "The Son of Man is come to *seek* and save that

which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.) By his personal activity in will and waywardness, the man has made it necessary that he should be *sought*. Whereas, in reference to the children, "These little ones," He says, "The Son of Man is come to save that which is lost." (Matt. xviii. 11.) There is no hint as to the children having gone astray, yet they are said to be *lost*. This throws light upon the distinction before us. The wandering is connected with conduct; being lost is on account of having been born with a corrupt nature. Hence, the babe may be said to have sin, but not sins.

Our distinction may be further illustrated by looking at the scene of the crucifixion. There were three victims, "On either side one, and Jesus in the midst." Then, think of them after sins have been imputed to Jesus as the substitute; also, after the thief has confessed Him, and has heard that assuring word, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise." While the spotless victim was being made an offering for sin, before He said "It is finished," and the vail of the temple was rent, think of the three persons there amid the darkness. Begin with the central figure, and it must be acknowledged that personally, though numbered with the transgressors, He is still "holy, harmless, and undefiled." He "offered Himself without spot to God." But He also "bare our sins in His own body on the tree." (1 Pet. iii. 24.)

There, then, He has *sins on Him*; but He has *no sin in Him*. Thus we find the sins apart from the sin. Then, think of the thief who had confessed that "this Man had done nothing amiss!" Though His hands were now nailed to the cross, the faith of the penitent also recognized Him as the One who would wield the sceptre of the kingdom. That malefactor's sins are taken away; he is made meet for paradise. But, being still in the body, though he has no sins on him, he has sin in him.

Again, though in the opposite way to what was noticed with the Saviour, we see that sins and sin are distinct—so distinct that they can be separated. If the case of the other malefactor is considered, he has sins on him and sin in him. Then, in this momentous event, the Substitute, the believer, and the unforgiven sinner, afford a striking illustration of the difference between sins and sin. Sins are *overt acts*, which ought not to have been done, or the omission of acts which ought to have been done; sin is a *state or condition*. Things had been done by the penitent thief which brought him to the gibbet. When forgiven by the Lord, till released by death, he was still in the condition of one having an evil nature. The impenitent thief could do no more acts of thieving, nor could he now live honestly; but he had still the nature which made him a thief. The law condemned the acts, and punished him for committing them; but the law could not change, restrain, or even touch, the will, or the bad capacity, in the thief's nature. That evil potentiality is beyond the domain of law. Hence, it is said that "sin is lawlessness," as this is allowed to be the proper rendering of 1 Jno. iii. 4. Instead of the evil principle within, therefore, being curbed by law, it is only provoked thereby. Hence, the apostle says, "I had not known lust, except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet.' But sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." (Rom. vii. 7, 8.) So, also, he says, "The mind of the flesh is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Rom. viii. 7.) In such thoughts, he has before his mind the *state* of the evil nature rather than its *acts*. In other words, he is writing of sin rather than sins. Thus, though quite distinct, a ruined nature and actual guilt stand in the relation of cause and effect. There is all the difference and relationship between a man's nature and his guilt that

subsists between a cloud and its rain-drops, a fountain and its streams, the root of a tree and its fruit. The difference in the facts of sin and sins is thus apparent : sin in the nature is the cloud, the fountain, the root ; sins in the practice are the raindrops, the streams, the fruit.

Since there is such a difference in the facts, may we not anticipate that there must be a difference in God's way of dealing with sins and sin ? This distinction needs only to be pointed out now to be discerned and appreciated. Once known, it may be welcomed as the missing key to unlock the mystery of many a perplexing experience on the part of believers bowed down with the sense of inward corruption.

Then we observe that both sins and sin are wholly condemned as opposed to the righteousness and the holiness of God. The cross is God's answer to both. But it is an answer in *two distinct ways*. If one may so speak, what comes out from the sinner, in positive acts as sins, is met by what comes out from the Surety, in atoning blood. On the other hand, what is proved to be in the sinner, as an evil principle of sin, is met by what is done in the Surety, when in Him sin is condemned in the flesh. (Rom. viii. 3.) Not for a moment is it to be thought that there was evil in the flesh of Jesus, but that on the cross, "in the likeness of sinful flesh" and as identified with it, the evil principle was condemned in His death. This is easily understood. The wicked workers in the old world before the flood were apart from and untouched by Noah when he began to build the ark. Yet the Spirit says that in preparing the ark "he condemned the world." (Heb. xi. 7.) They were thus judged by Noah's work. Likewise, though apart from Christ, the evil principle of sin, the world and its prince, were judged in Christ on the cross. (Jno. xii. 31; xvi. 11.) The sentence was passed upon them on Calvary. The execution of the sentence is

a different thing, as the court-room is not the scaffold, nor the judge the executioner. Then the evil principle, sin in the nature, though judged at the cross, may, and indeed does, still exist in the believer. But it is like a prisoner under sentence of death; he is restrained, and society freed from his evil power, while he awaits execution. But the illustration fails. To the law and the world he has died judicially already: yet in fact he still lives. Such is the case with the evil principle of sin in the Christian, though he may fail to realize deliverance.

There is deliverance for him since God has brought in the answer of death—death with Christ. It is said that Christ has died unto sin, and His condition as to sin is the condition of every Christian (Rom. vi. 10), since all Christians are in Christ. But the man who is in Christ has still the evil principle of sin in him. So Paul found, even after being in the third heaven, that he needed a thorn in the flesh to keep him from being exalted above measure. Before he had time to have any such feelings of pride he had not sinned in this respect. It could not be a question of forgiveness. There was as yet no pride to be forgiven. But he needed deliverance that the tendency to pride might be so held in check that he might not sin in that way. Then, instead of the blood of Christ, on account of which he had *forgiveness*, he had to think of the death of Christ, by which he found *deliverance*. To the inward evil tendency, not the outward acts to which it might lead, the only answer was death and judgment.

So the believer finds deliverance from the bondage and power of sin by reckoning himself dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Christ Jesus. (Rom. vi. 11.) From the presence of sin he will not get free till he actually dies or the Lord comes. But he may live such a life of holiness as to have Christ magnified in his body. Sin, the evil nature, has been condemned in the flesh; yet there

it is like a prisoner in a condemned cell, and faith may and ought to carry the key, so that the convict should be prevented from doing further injury.

We repeat that *sin is there*, and if allowed to act, it may have sway ; but the believer is entitled to reckon himself dead to it, and, in faith, he may turn the key, and say, Sin shall not have dominion over me, for I am not under the law, but under grace. (Rom. vi. 11-14.) Then it is no inward cleansing, or eradication of evil from the heart, as so many seek and set themselves to attain. As already noticed, God's way is not to purify or remove sin, the evil nature, from the believer. Deliverance from its power is what is meanwhile held out in Scripture, so that, as set free from its power, though having sin within him still, he may serve God, and have his fruit unto holiness. (Rom. vi. 22.) But words, or flesh and blood, cannot reveal the secret; yet to the one who seeks, the Lord will make it known, and the after life will manifest that the change is as great as giving up hand power for the power of steam. "Ask," "Seek," "Knock," in this respect are energizing words for believers longing after deliverance.

Sins, therefore, are borne by the Substitute. In His death, sin is condemned in the flesh, so that the fruits and the root of evil, are equally judged. The same mighty stroke of divine justice visits the sins committed and the evil nature possessed by the sinner. There is, nevertheless, a twofold result. The sins are forgiven: the evil nature is given over to death and judgment. Atoning blood washes away the guilt, all at once, and once for all, so that no second cleansing in this respect is required, nor are any believers more thoroughly cleansed than others. Each and all are equally once purged, and perfected forever. (Heb. x.) Their sins are to be remembered no more. But the presence of sin, the evil nature, must be ever kept in mind, along with the thought that it

has been met and stripped of its power when our old man was crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be annulled, that henceforth we should not serve sin. (Rom. vi. 6.) But the illustration and application of the difference between forgiveness and deliverance we must leave to be taken up, if the Lord will, in another paper.

W. C. J.

"A ROOT OF BITTERNESS."

"Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled." "Lest there should be among you man or woman or family or tribe whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; and it come to pass when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination (stubbornness) of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst." (Heb. xii. 15; Deut. xxix. 18.)

THE book of Deuteronomy, the fifth book, is the one which speaks of man with God—communion, and the results of obedience. It deals, therefore, with the question of responsibility, and, as a natural consequence, is largely hortatory. Based upon the teachings and experiences recorded in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, it draws from them lessons to warn and guide as to the path in time to come. So too with various portions in the epistle to the Hebrews. Itself a Levitical book devoted to priesthood, sacrifice, and kindred themes, with the eleventh chapter, which treats of the path (the wilderness journey), it has now and again, notably in this chapter (xii.), a strain of Deuteronomic warning and exhortation—based on the teachings and experiences

recorded in previous chapters. Corresponding, thus, in their themes, it is natural to find a quotation from the Old-Testament book. It will be interesting and helpful to examine both passages, and note as well their differences as their resemblances. Deuteronomy is a book of the Law, and "the law, having a *shadow* of good things to come, and not the very image of the things," is as well a contrast to as a figure of those things. The theme of Deuteronomy is obedience and communion, but the way to obey, the way to keep in communion, is by keeping the *law*; so while we have a similar theme in this portion of Hebrews, the way is not by keeping the law, but by continuing in *grace*. And this is most important and helpful to note. We all boast in grace, and claim freedom from law; yet nothing is easier than, in principle, to leave the former for that law which, now as ever, "gendereth to bondage." In the passage before us, therefore, we are exhorted to look diligently lest any man fail of the *grace* of God. Let us, then, first see what is that grace specially brought before us in this epistle.

• Christ the Son, as God (chap. i.), Man (chap. ii.), Son over God's house (chap. iii.), High-Priest (chaps. v., vii.), is the Person set before us. In all the precious and amazing perfections of this blessed One, other objects are set aside, whether angels, Moses, or Aaron; and, as the apostles on the holy mount, we see "no man, save Jesus only." Next, the work of this blessed Person is set forth—"When He had by Himself purged our sins."—"That He, by the grace of God, might taste death for every man." And, coming to the ninth and tenth chapters, we have the precious doctrine unfolded in all its beauty and sufficiency—"Without shedding of blood is no remission."

“Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain

Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain.

"But Christ the heavenly Lamb
Took all our guilt away,—
A sacrifice of nobler name,
And richer blood than they."

The *covenant* too under which this grace is administered is put in contrast with the "law of a carnal commandment." It is a "better covenant" whose laws are written on the *heart*,—an "everlasting covenant" sealed in the blood of the faithful Mediator, not dependent on man's infirmity, sin, and unbelief. Therefore it is a covenant "ordered in all things, and sure." Lastly, the *place* to which this grace introduces us. We have our High-Priest who has "passed through the heavens," "set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Christ has entered "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heaven, closed as it was to us, opened only upon that lowly spotless One, is now, by virtue of that sacrifice of His which rent the vail from the top to the bottom, opened to our believing gaze, and "we see Jesus, . . . crowned with glory and honor." This is the tabernacle of our worship "which the Lord pitched." But more than this: we not only see Jesus our High-Priest entered within the vail, but we are permitted by grace to follow Him there, and, as purged and clean worshipers, to offer "the sacrifice of praise to God continually." "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus."

All this has not been a digression from the subject before us. In guarding against the springing up of roots of bitterness, we are to see that none fail or are lacking in the grace of God. That grace presents to us Christ in His *person* and *work*, the *covenant* under which we enjoy this, and the *place* where we draw nigh unto God. If

under the law the people were to teach its precepts "diligently unto their children,"—"And thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Deut. vi. 7),—none the less under grace are we to go over its precious truths to one another at all times, under all circumstances.

Let us next see the force of the words, "looking diligently." They translate one Greek word—"episcopountes"—literally, "overseeing," or acting as bishops. We are our "brother's keepers," and "members one of another;" as such, we are to oversee, to care for one another. The passage in Deuteronomy goes more into detail—"Lest there should be among you man or woman or family or tribe." No one is so exalted as to be exempt from this care, none so insignificant as not to require it; whether a single individual be concerned or a family, or even a whole tribe, as in the case of Benjamin (Judges xix., xx.), they were to see to it that no root bearing gall and wormwood should be allowed to spring up. And how needful all this is! Evil is contagious: "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump"—"thereby many be defiled." As an illustration of the spreading nature of evil, see the history of Israel at Kadesh (Num. xiv. etc.). The ten unbelieving spies bring back an evil report of the land: this finds ready lodgment in hearts only too willing to doubt God, and the whole nation turns away from the "pleasant land." Nor does the evil end there. Next comes the rebellion against the authority of Moses and Aaron by Korah and his company, involving many others: then the whole congregation murmur and are judged, and finally Moses and Aaron are dragged down by this evil.

And what is the "root" which bore all this gall and wormwood? It was that *unbelief* which would not continue in God's goodness—a root starting in the

hearts of the spies, and throwing its baleful branches over all, and poisoning the nation with its bitter fruit. So too to-day, and in the history of the Church. The whole assembly at Corinth was infected by known evil in the midst unjudged. How often do we see a little thing spreading and involving large companies of God's people! How needful, then, the exhortation to look diligently, or to act as bishops—overseers! But what are we to watch for? Not this or that failing, this or that shortcoming, but "lest any man come short of the *grace of God*." This is the *root* which bears all the bitter fruit: grace lacking, holiness will be lacking. So in our Lord's word to Peter, making him a pastor, or care-taker, of His sheep. Thrice He tells him to care for them—"Feed My lambs: shepherd My sheep: feed My sheep." What is the main duty of the shepherd? To see that the sheep are *fed*; not, primarily, to recall the wanderers—that is but an incident, but to lead them in green pastures and by still waters. This we see in the word to Peter. Once he is told to shepherd the sheep—involving the restoration of wanderers and needed discipline, but twice to *feed* them—sheep as well as lambs. So too the true pastor, while careful to restore the wanderer, will chiefly be watchful to *prevent* such wanderings, by seeing that every heart is "established with grace."

This prevents legality, knits the saints together, makes Christ more precious and sin therefore more hateful. What must be the effect on a brother or sister, for instance, who is never visited except when some failure on their part requires it, and who is sure, whenever any approach is made in a pastoral or care-taking way, that "something must be wrong"? On the contrary, let it be plain that the great object is, "building one another up on our most holy faith," and often unjudged things will come to the surface and be firmly and thankfully put away.

Let it not be thought for a moment that the pastor should wink at sin: this he dare not, cannot do. But all power comes from grace,—all holiness too, and the soul rejoicing in grace will be holy in walk. The root, then, which bears the defiling, poisonous fruit of sin is, departure from God as known in the perfect grace of Christ. A cold heart soon leads to a wrong path. Such a state nourished will defile a whole company,—nay, such a spirit *has* defiled the whole Church at large. It is the spirit which says, "I shall have peace, though I walk in the *stubbornness* (*R. V.*) of my heart."—Nothing shall interfere with my enjoyment, although Christ and His grace are not precious. "To add drunkenness to thirst,"—to allow the *desires* to express themselves in the *actions*: this is the Laodicean spirit of to-day,—“I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;” the opposite of that chastened spirit which finds its *rest*, as well as *food*, (“He maketh me to *lie down* in green pastures,”) in the fullness of that grace upon one view of which we have been dwelling.

God calls us back—back from any thing and everything which may have taken up our hearts—to His simple, full, and perfect grace,—to a glorified Christ who is the embodiment of that grace. Let us exhort and help one another to know more of it. Let us all be overseers in this precious sense, to turn one another into these pastures—to set some of the King’s dainties before His guests (2 Sam. ix.). How soon frictions would disappear, irreconcilable troubles be healed, the wanderers be restored! Lord, teach us all to learn of Thee!

OUTLINES OF SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE.

I. THE WORD OF GOD.

"The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." (Ps. xii. 6; cxix. 89.)

THE most important part of a building is its foundation. If that be weak, unstable, the whole superstructure is insecure. Hence, in giving an outline of Scripture doctrine, it is fitting at the beginning to see what that scripture is whose doctrines we would exhibit. If it be a human production, fallible and incomplete, the doctrines, drawn from it will be the same, human doctrines, to be judged like any other teachings of men. If the scriptures contain mistakes, if they cannot be fully received in every particular, neither can the doctrines they teach.

Again, blemishes here and there, mistakes, incorrect statements, are not only themselves to be rejected, but the *whole Scripture* loses its divine authority and power. It is just here that we must have a clear understanding; for it is just here that Satan is making one of his sharpest and most insidious attacks. Formerly, it was the avowed infidel, the blasphemer, who rejected the Scripture. But a few years ago, and "The Mistakes of Moses," was the theme of a lecture by a notorious and wicked man. Now the same theme is handled by men held in reputation in the churches, men of moral character, clinging to their church, and professing to do and teach in the fear of God. Under the name of "Higher Criticism," this infidelity has come into the very fountain heads of teaching, defiling and poisoning all that comes from them.

Sad enough it is that such teachers should have a following; sadder still that those who see the error should

still lack firmness to denounce it, to judge it, and at all cost purge themselves from complicity with it. In times past, men have assailed the person of the Son of God, the Word who is God. Now they are assailing that Word which speaks of Him. If the soul jealous for the honor of the Lord will not brook a hint or whisper of question as to his perfect, spotless humanity, neither can it brook a like question as to the divine Word. Either it is perfect, or it is not His Word at all.

But how are we to know that the Scriptures are the Word of God?

Many earnest and faithful souls have laboriously collected from history and monuments and elsewhere, those evidences which are in many ways proofs of the fact that these writings are authentic—that they are what they claim to be. But if God has spoken, is He going to leave it to man, fallible man, to *prove* that He has spoken? Do we need argument to prove to us that the sun shines, or will we need to search all ancient monuments and relics to search for evidence that it shone in times past, and must therefore do so now?

No; the sun speaks for itself, *by* its shining; and that Word which is compared to the sun in the nineteenth psalm, speaks for itself to all who are not blind. Its glorious light must come from God. The divine power it exerts can only be His. As the man in the ninth chapter of John needed no labored proof to know that the One who had opened his eyes was from God—his opened eyes were proof enough for that—so we, too, need no proof that this Word is God's. It has enlightened us.

The Bible, then, is its own proof. We can calmly listen to all the attacks of unbelief upon it, and the mockings of those that know not God, just as we would be uninfluenced by the arguments and jeerings of blind men that the sun does not shine. But what a relief this is! It

requires no profound knowledge, no long study, to reach this assurance. Nay, the wise and prudent often err by their own wisdom, while babes have these things revealed to them. It is simply, "He that hath an ear, let him hear."

What, then, does God's Word warrant us in believing about?

First, its inspiration, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." By this is meant that He is the author of it. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." What they wrote was not by hearsay, nor at second hand. God used them as His instruments. He took the men as they were, fitted often by special dealings, and then used them, their minds, hearts, and bodily powers,—used them in such a way that, while free, they could make no mistake, for they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. And just here is the difference between the ordinary guidance and superintendence of the Spirit in the believer, and the inspiration of the Scriptures. In the latter case, all is perfect, for it is revelation from God; in the former, that revelation is before us, and we are seeking to make use of it, and here comes in the weakness and imperfection of man. All is to be tested by that Word, which, tested by itself, proves itself consistent throughout, the product of one Mind. Along with inspiration, let us note the question of the perfection of Scripture. "The Scripture cannot be broken." "One jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till *all* be fulfilled. "Jot" is the Hebrew letter *yodh*, or "y," the smallest letter in the alphabet—being little more than a dot. A "tittle" was a little horn, or mark, on some of the letters, used to distinguish them from others. So then we might paraphrase it thus—"no dot to an *i* or cross to a *t* shall fail." But this means the most absolute and entire perfection.

In the text at the head of this paper, God's Word is

compared to silver purified seven times—the perfect number—so that there is no dross, only the pure metal. We sometimes hear the expression “The Bible *contains* the Word of God,” just as we would say such an ore contains silver: but it contains dross also, and if the Bible only *contains* the Word of God, who shall tell the dross from the silver? No; the Bible *is* the Word of God. By this is not meant the English Version as we have it; but the Scriptures as originally given in the Hebrew and Greek. We cannot be too thankful for the wonderful preservation of the manuscripts, through centuries of persecution and of darkness, for the remarkable accuracy of the translation into our own tongue, so that, practically, the most unlearned of us all has in his hands God's pure and precious word. Small errors of copying or translating there may be, for no uninspired human work is perfect, but these are but as motes in the air, which do not prevent our being preserved and refreshed as we breathe it in.

Next, we come to the authenticity of the Scriptures. “The Law was given by Moses.” “He wrote of Me.” This tells us plainly that the books of Moses, so-called, were written by him—not by several unknown authors; that when Scripture says Isaiah or Hosea wrote such and such books, they did write them; that they are not the product of some later age, as the higher critics would teach. Paul wrote Paul's epistles, Peter and James theirs, and God the Spirit inspired each one to convey God's mind in an infallibly perfect way.

As to the credibility of these books—can we believe all they teach, every statement they make? Unquestionably we can, and must. Inspired of Him who is the Spirit of truth, all their contents are truth. Every miracle recorded, every doctrine stated,—all is true, eternally true. Even the apparent contradictions but offer to the prayer-

ful student of the Word fresh opportunities to discover new beauties in the Word.

We come, then, to the Scriptures as God's infallible Word. When we read it God is speaking to us. We are no more its judges than we would be judges of what God might say aloud to us. It judges and searches us. With what confidence, then, we can come to this precious Word. What holy fear becomes us too. It is God, in His still small voice, speaking to us. Let us beware how we refuse any of its teachings, or add any thing to it. Let us prove all things by it, and hold fast that which is good.

(To be continued.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 11.—“In what sense are we to understand 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18, 19?”

Ans.—The passage is an exhortation to the rich, if there were such, pointing out their dangers and responsibilities. One correction may be noted in ver. 19. Let it read, “That they may lay hold of what is really life.” Their riches were in this present age—would not last forever, and even here were uncertain. The two dangers to which they were specially exposed were, high-mindedness and trust in riches. How natural are these dangers! Money begets pride. We think ourselves better than others because richer than they, too often forgetting that God has chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith. Or how easy to trust in our means rather than in God—to know we will be fed and sheltered, all our needs met, not because we have a Father, but because we have money. These are the two dangers of the rich,—dangers, not confined to the unsaved, but real to all who have *any* means. Indeed, it is wonderful on how *slender* a prop man will lean. Opposed to the trust in uncertain riches is that in the Giver of all things. And what a view we have of His kindness! “He giveth us richly all things to enjoy.” He is a liberal giver—even when it is but a crust, had we eyes to see it, it would be a liberal gift. All is given, too, for our enjoyment; no ascetic gloom casts its shadow over His temporal mercies; we are to

eat our meat with gladness and singleness of heart. Then as to the responsibilities,—they are to use God's gifts for Him, to share with those who need; and in so doing, they will be exchanging gold for enduring riches. They will be laying up treasures in heaven. They will be making to themselves friends with the mammon of unrighteousness—the god, the idol, of the unrighteous; so that, when it fails, they shall find its fruits in the life beyond,—or, as in our passage, they will “lay hold on what is really life, not what the world calls such, but that which endures eternally. This will be a good foundation for the future—a well-spent life here, the fruit of faith, being the opposite of one used in selfish enjoyment and pandering to the flesh. It need hardly be added that this in no way conflicts with the great fundamental truths of the gospel—salvation by faith, on the ground of the work of Christ,—as it refers to the fruits of life, not the root.

Q. 12.—“Please give a few scriptures showing the difference between endless being and eternal life, to refute annihilationists.”

Ans.—“God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” The life here is God-given, and has never been taken back—never will, for a punishment that is everlasting must be for those only who live everlastingly. Endless being, then, is what all men have in contrast with the “beasts that perish.” Death, as spoken of in Scripture, never affects this endless being, but refers either to the body—the “mortal body” of Rom. vi. 12, or to the moral state, as in Eph. ii. 1. If those dead in trespasses and sins are yet alive, so those in the lake of fire—the second death—are also alive, for “their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched.” Existence is then not the question when life or death are spoken of in the Scriptures. This is the first thing to note with regard to the expression “eternal life.” It does not mean endless existence, though, of course, it includes that thought. Eternal life is the gift of God through our Lord Jesus Christ—or in Him. It is characterized by knowledge of the “true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.” (Jno. xvii.) It begins at regeneration, and may generally be described as the opposite of that moral death the condition of all the unsaved. As possessors of eternal life we are “partakers of the divine nature,” we are children of God. Of course, along with this go the related truths that we are justified and accepted in the beloved. Endless being, then, is the common lot of all, eternal life of those only who believe in Jesus.

CONFESSIONS OF THE "HIGHER CRITICISM,"

AS CONTAINED IN

DR. SANDAY'S LECTURES ON "THE ORACLES OF GOD."

I. *The Present Contention.—Continued.*

DR. SANDAY next calls to witness the Babylonian versions of Creation and the Flood:—

"With all their uniformity," he says, "the resemblance of these to the corresponding biblical stories was striking, and *needed to be accounted for*!"

In a note he adds,—

"It would seem that traditions in respect to the Creation and the Flood were originally the common property of the Semitic races, developed by each in accordance with the genius of its religion. We shall see later (Lect. v.) that they were not of a kind to be referred directly to revelation; at the same time, in the Hebrew version, the Spirit of revelation is clearly visible, not on the side *which belongs of right to science* (!), but in all that concerns the nature and relations of God and man. Even from the point of view of science, when allowance is made for the simple mode of presentation which alone was possible when the early chapters of Genesis were written, we may see an *approximation* to the truth which the believer in Providence (!) will easily refer to its origin; but we must be careful not to exaggerate the extent of this approximation. The history of science reveals plainly that God has permitted the evolution of true ideas on scientific subjects to be entangled in a mass of fantastic error. In the biblical account, this appears to be reduced to something like a minimum. More than this we cannot safely say."

This argument, if one can call it such, derives all its force from the unbelief which it expresses. That the Babylonians, dwelling at the original centre of dispersion, as we see from Scripture that they did, should have traditions both of Creation and the Flood nearer the truth than others of the nations round is in no wise wonderful. The few generations between these two events would render a tradition of the former coming down from Adam

easily preservable, and it is not strange that God should at the beginning have instructed His creatures in the important matter of their own origin. Moses may have even used this under the guidance of the Spirit of God, and in that economy of miracle to which Scripture itself testifies, without the least derogation to his being in the fullest way inspired. Luke speaks expressly of his own accurate knowledge as qualifying him to write his gospel, and was none the less, and needed none the less to be, inspired for his work. There is not the slightest difficulty in all this; and it is hard to know why Dr. Sanday should make any. It is well that he yet sees "in the Hebrew version the influence of the Spirit of revelation," although it be "not on the side that belongs of right to science"—does he mean over which the Spirit of revelation has *not* right? If so, will he tell us how, or why?

"Even from the point of view of science," however, "we may see an approximation" to the truth which "the believer in Providence will easily refer to its origin," and the "fantastic error" in which other accounts have been allowed to be entangled, in the biblical one "appears to be reduced to something like a minimum." Then God did not leave Moses to himself even in this respect! Why should this "minimum" be necessary in that case? If the rights of science are not infringed by this, why should they be by the preservation of absolute truth? Surely no reason can be given. Would not the interests of man—would not the glory of God—be better served by truth than by error? Why, I ask again, should this minimum of error be necessary? The history of science it is, no doubt, that "plainly reveals"—to our author—"that God permits" it to be so! Which only amounts to this, that there the mistakes are, as he supposes. But will Dr. Sanday show us this?

We must not expect it. General assertions are easier

to make and harder to repel. It would need a volume to go over this well-tracked ground, and show the truth of the Scripture account; and it is usually thought very hard to prove the negative to which Dr. Sanday would compel us. We deny that any mistake can be shown; and we deny it after careful and prolonged and open-eyed examination. According to our author, perhaps, as we have no claim to be specialists, and none else can speak with authority, our opinion will be of no value. But it will stand until something has been produced against it,—until that has been done, indeed, which lips that spake like no other have pronounced impossible.

"The critical investigation of the Bible itself" is the last thing to which the author refers at the close of his first lecture; and he thinks that the "results obtained—or at least *thought* to be obtained" are "of more far-reaching significance" than any thing of which he has yet spoken. But here we are merely given the results that have been reached on the continent of Europe, and among that class of specialists evidently who have committed themselves to those theories of inspiration which naturally bear such fruit.

"It is agreed on all hands that the Pentateuch is formed by the dove-tailing together of different documents; it is agreed by the great mass of inquirers that nearly all of these documents in their present shape are not earlier than the time of the Kings." "Similar problems arise in respect to the historical books. The other most prominent questions are, the assignment of large parts of Isaiah and of the last six chapters of Zechariah to writers other than the authors of the main body of the book—in the case of Isaiah later, and in the case of Zechariah earlier; and the dates of the composition of many parts of the Psalter and the books of Joel, Jonah, Job, Ecclesiastes, and Daniel."

How many questions more are involved in these questions of date and authorship the lecturer does not at present inform us. That will be made plain as we go on. Meanwhile, Dr. Sanday sees no cause for alarm in all this;

and the best sign of which he is aware is the prevalence of so calm a spirit in that younger generation that is coming to the front in these matters. Faith is stronger than it was. It will not be disturbed by the fact of "laws of the Levitical code" being "presented as ordinances of Moses, though when they were first promulgated every one knew that they were not so," or to learn that "what is *quite certain* is, that, according to the prophets, the Torah (Law) of Moses did *not* embrace a law of ritual: worship by sacrifice, and all that belongs to it, is *no part* of the divine Torah to Israel." "According to the *prophets*, Jehovah asks only a penitent heart and no sacrifice. According to the *ritual law*, He desires a penitent heart approaching Him in certain sacrificial sacraments." These are some of the statements of a well-known "higher critic" (Prof. Robertson Smith). If they be true, what about the atonement of Christ?

Faith may be strong enough to look calmly at such "far-reaching results" of modern criticism. On the other hand, Dr. Sanday may refuse such extremes. Yet they must be contemplated, for who will bid this sea to know its bound? But believers need not be afraid: the pyramid has been long firm upon its base: what matter if it be stood now upon its apex? A more recent writer of the same school has told us that "there is no passage in the Old Testament that refers directly and predictively to Jesus Christ." "The literal fulfillment of Old-Testament prophecy is an *assumption* that has been transmitted to us from the early ages of the Christian Church."

Why should we stop there? why any where? Who has any right to say how deep, how fundamental, may be the mistakes discovered? On the other hand—for all is uncertain here: the view shifts as the stream carries us on—they may *not* be discovered. Says Dr. Sanday once more,—

"I propose . . . to do what I can to estimate the effect upon a Christian's faith of the changes which seem to be in progress. There must be in this an element of anticipation. I do not say that all that I regard as possible is as yet completely proved. *It may perhaps never be proved.* If that is so, our course is plain. We only have to keep where we are. *But it is right for us to keep in view contingencies which will seem to some, at least, more or less probable.*"

And of course it will be always right; and as the future may be conceived to have multitudinous "contingencies more or *less* probable," our faith must hold loosely much—how much, who can tell?—that by and by we, or our descendants after us, may have to give up as error. Dr. Sanday, in a note, quoting the Dean of Peterborough, refers to "an authority no less unprejudiced than Haeckel, as affirming that 'from Moses, who died about 1480 B.C., down to Linnæus, who was born 1707 A.D., there has been no history of creation to be compared to the biblical.'" Yet the biblical is now exploded, and Prof. Haeckel himself has written another! Must we not have the long vision of prophets in order to know, then, how much of the New Testament, not yet two thousand years old, will remain for another millennium?

Unfortunately the higher criticism is getting less and less to accredit the prophets; and it would seem that the principal thing left for us to believe in is just that infinite possibility of the future, which somehow seems to be so disastrous to the present. Under these circumstances, Dr. Sanday will certainly find that there are many unprepared to invest their capital in that terribly uncertain bank of the future, and, seeing that even he, after all, like others, "must be content to take a great deal upon trust," will trust Moses still. For over three thousand years he was more trustworthy (Haeckel himself being witness,) than anybody else. Many think him worthy of credit yet, and that all real discoveries, even in this day of sci-

entific victories over nature, have only the more proved him to be so.

But above all this, though blending with it in a blessed harmony, there is One Voice which, as long as there are Christians, will have authority over them, and which says, "*Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, HOW SHALL YE BELIEVE MY WORDS?*"

F. W. G.

CHRISTIAN HOLINESS.

FORGIVENESS AND DELIVERANCE.

IF a Physician is to treat a patient successfully, the real malady must be discerned and the proper medicine prescribed. Mistakes as to the disease and the means of its cure, may not only cause prolonged suffering, but issue in the death of the patient. A Chicago medical professor declared that medicine had killed more than war, pestilence and famine. This may be a strong statement as to mal-practice; but it has its application in connection with dealing with souls. In this question of holiness, what suffering has been produced through mistaking alike the malady and the medicine!

It ought to be clear that the subject of holiness is for believers, rather than unbelievers,—for those who are seeking salvation. But many advocates do not see how perfectly one who believes, the moment he believes, is placed before God according to His estimate of the work of Christ. They take from the value of that work, and the perfection of the person's acceptance, by setting him to seek a *clean heart*, or a *second* cleansing. Defilement is thought to be the malady: cleansing the cure. There is a double mistake. It is not defilement, but rather his evil nature, which is the cause of the trouble. Instead of

cleansing, the person needs deliverance: he requires to see that he is brought into a new place in Christ, where he may enjoy liberty, and have his heart engaged with Christ Himself, and his mind set on the things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (Col. iii. 1.)

What is to come before us now is so clearly linked with the truth already stated, that it may be well to preserve the connection. We have seen, then, that there is a difference between the facts of sins and sin: the one is the fruit, the other the root. The difference in God's way of dealing with sins in practice and sin in the nature has also been observed: sins are forgiven through faith in Christ's blood; sin is condemned, given over to death and judgment. If things are not thus kept distinct, the real need, and the right answer to it, will not be discerned and given in each instance. The need and the answer in connection with sins are clearly distinct from the need and the answer in connection with sin. That is not cleansed, forgiven, or removed from the man's being, but he may know deliverance from the power of indwelling sin, and walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. viii. 4.)

It is different with regard to sins. These can be looked upon as apart, as separated from himself, and transferred to the Substitute. Whether viewed as one's own act in confessing his sins, or as God's act in laying the sins on the Surety, it is clear that the sins are looked upon as having changed places. Hence, it is said, "The Lord hath laid on on Him the iniquity of us all," and He "was delivered for our offences," and "His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." (Is. liii. 6; Rom. iv. 25; 1 Pet. ii. 24.) There the sins received the judgment of God. They are not only said to be judged, but they are said to be purged. Hence, of the Lord it is said, "Him-

self purged our sins." (Heb. i. 3.) Then, the conscience is purged when a person believes. This purging is as complete as the perfect work on account of which it is effected. The worshipers, once purged, have no more conscience of sins; they have remission; they are perfected forever; they have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. (Heb. x. 2, 14, 18, 19.) Thus, therefore, God's answer for the sins is that by what Christ has done they are cleansed, purged, forgiven, and forgotten; so that they are gone forever in the case of the believer. But this cannot be said of sin—the evil nature.

In regard to sins, it is a question of *righteousness*, and how God can be consistent with Himself in forgiving sinners, and justifying the ungodly. In connection with the evil nature, it is a question of *holiness*, and how the one who is forgiven and has received a new nature should answer its desires, in the enjoyment of liberty, and in bringing forth fruit in harmony with the nature of God.

The person who needs forgiveness is a sinner "already judged, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (Jno. iii. 18.) On the other hand, the one who seeks deliverance is a saint, beloved of God. (Rom. i. 7.) With the former, it is a question of *pardon* and cleansing from defilement; with the latter, a question of *power* and freedom from captivity. The first applies to actual guilt—what the person has done; the second, to his lost estate—what he is, as having a ruined nature. There is no pardon, forgiveness, or cleansing for the old nature. Nor can it be improved. It has been given over to death and judgment by God. The believer has to learn this, and accept it for himself, by reckoning himself dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God, in Christ Jesus. He need not be surprised nor discouraged if he cannot see the meaning of this all at once. He sees

how often anxious souls are perplexed, though the way of peace is plain. Believers often show the same perplexity, though the way of deliverance is clear. To be brought to a sense of need and utter helplessness, is the point where the need is known to be met in each instance. Both blessings are by grace, through faith ; a person may know the one without knowing the other.

Forgiveness and deliverance do not usually go together in actual experience : a forgiven man is not necessarily a delivered man. A believer might know that he could be forgiven, and have communion restored, if, after giving way to anger, he went and confessed his sin ; but he might not know how to reckon himself dead, that he would not so readily give way to anger again. So with any other tendency. He wants to know how he can be kept, that instead of having fruit of that of which he is ashamed, he should please God by bringing forth fruit unto holiness.

But these two things are often confused, and so neither forgiveness nor deliverance are distinctly understood. When a believer begins to realize that evil is still working in his nature, he is ready to fall into one of two mistakes. He may either suppose that he has not been properly converted and forgiven, or he may think that the blood ought to cleanse or silence, if it does not actually remove, the evil working within him. But work it will, in spite of the blood. He is, therefore, apt to think that he either has not received the gospel aright, or else that the gospel does not do all it proposes ; as yet, it has not met all his requirements. He has a need as a saint, just as before he had a need as a sinner.

He is like an Israelite, who had been under the shelter of the blood, and thereby has been saved from judgment. Then, when Pharaoh is seen pursuing after the people, he is distressed, because that which protected him from the

angel of death has not availed to deliver him from the tyrant king. He realizes a new need, for which, as yet, he has found no answer. But this very distress is to prepare him for the understanding of deliverance, for the enjoyment of the Deliverer. So with the believer, who finds another need than that of forgiveness. He is on the way, where he may learn of the overthrow of the enemy, and find that the One who has triumphed through death has become his Deliverer. Both needs—that of his sins and that of his evil nature—are met in the death of Christ in two distinct ways for equally distinct results. The time between such experiences may be short or long with different persons. Only in cases where there has been very deep plowing of soul, and exercise, both as to sins and the evil nature, and where forgiveness had not been known at all, are the two results, of peace about sins and deliverance from the power of sin, likely to be realized together. No rule can be laid down as to how souls come to the consciousness of deliverance, any more than as to their being born again. In both cases it is true, as to the mode and the power, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth."

But the effects may be very different—as different as the carrying away of dust and the bringing of a mantle of snow. Indeed, the figure would bear extension, and partially illustrate the removal of defilement and the introduction of a new nature. Sweeping away dust is not more distinct from covering the ground with snow, than is the forgiveness of sins a different thing to the manifestation of a new life in realized deliverance from the bondage of sin and law. Those who seek shall find this deliverance as certainly as inquiring souls seek and find forgiveness. If there is purpose of heart, dependence on the Holy Spirit, and diligent use of the Word of God,

with prayer, the joyous liberty of finding Christ as the Deliverer is nigh at hand.

In this respect, there is a gospel for saints just as there is a gospel for sinners; or, more correctly, the gospel of God may be said to include both.

Hear, receive, believe, the whole truth as unfolded in Romans, and count upon a living Saviour to enable you to live it out to His praise. *W. C. J.*

(To be continued.)

THE LAW OF THE SIN-OFFERING.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, ‘Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin-offering: In the place where the burnt-offering is killed shall the sin-offering be killed before the Lord: it is most holy. The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation. Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy; and when there is sprinkled of the blood thereof upon any garment, thou shalt wash that whereon it was sprinkled in the holy place. But the earthen vessel wherein it is sodden shall be broken; and if it be sodden in a brazen pot, it shall be both scoured, and rinsed in water. All the males among the priests shall eat thereof: it is most holy. And no sin-offering whereof any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile withal in the holy place shall be eaten; it shall be burnt in the fire.’” (Lev. vi. 24–30.)

I WOULD like to ask the attention of the readers of *HELP AND FOOD* to the law of the sin-offering as found in Lev. vi. The way in which this law is here introduced is worthy, surely, of the profoundest consideration and reverent meditation. God, as if foreseeing the danger of the perverse and wicked heart of man connecting the holy Sufferer with the sin for which He in infinite grace suffered, hedges about this sacrifice with guard after guard, to protect its intrinsic integrity and holiness, in a way that will not be found in any other. “It is most holy,” Jehovah declares, and again repeats. Slain in the

same spot, and so connected with the offering that was wholly for God—the burnt-offering: to be eaten by a *holy* person—the priest who offered it: to be eaten in a *holy* place—the court of the tabernacle: God would proclaim the spotless perfection and immaculate holiness of His beloved One, especially guarding Him in the place where divine infinite love had led Him to take the vile sinner's place,—to be looked upon judicially as sin, and receive the judgment of the guilty. It is worthy of our most reverent meditation; and may the Lord so increase such occupation of our hearts that we may with adoration respond, from our inmost spirits, "Amen: it is most holy!"

But it is not of this in its detailed application that I wish now to write. I want particularly to call your attention to three points only of the above seven; for you will find that between the two solemn statements, "It is most holy," God has stamped it with this number of perfection,—all, surely, in the same line, and witnessing the intense holiness of the offering.

Nothing can *touch* that holy offering without at once becoming changed: God's voice declares the thing touched, itself *holy*. By this, of course, we understand, not that the *nature* of the thing is changed necessarily, but its *position*: it at once is separated from every thing else that is not "touched"—has a character attached to it that it had not before; just as the children of believers, and even of mixed parentage as to the faith, are said to be holy in 1 Cor. vii. 14,—not character changed, but position different to others—in a recognized nearness to God. And for further, clearer light as to what this implies, these three points in the law of the sin-offering will help us.

First, look at the wondrous effect of its sprinkled blood as to the garments. Let but a drop of the precious blood

touch them, and whilst they might be as vile and stained and spotted as conceivable before without calling for any notice, His eye who is too pure to behold iniquity follows that blood, and at once the garment must be washed in water. Easy this of clear interpretation. The garments speak of those circumstances in which a man habitually lives: the one word "habits" seems happily to combine in itself the idea both of type and antitype. *Every thing* in a Christian's walk that has become part of himself, covering, I should judge, all his surroundings in his home and in his business,—all, as soon as they are under the shelter of the blood of Christ, must be immediately subject to the cleansing, purifying action of the water of the Word.

Now, my reader, I pray you, face just this simple alternative: you are either unsprinkled by that all-precious blood or you are under its shielding cover. If the former, your walk is truly not yet the subject of the scrutiny of God's holy eye; but the day will come, if still you so continue, when you will surely be judged according to your works, and then woe, everlasting woe, is yours. But I know that this is not likely to affect many who read this page: you are a Christian, and rejoice in the assurance of sins forgiven; but *how*, if not through the blood of Christ? Then, look to it—look to it; for now that that blood has *touched your garments*, God's eye is upon them, His claim is over them, and practical holiness, separation from defilement, in accord with His Word, must characterize them, or there will surely be chastening.

But further, see the result of this holy offering coming into connection with an earthen vessel—it is broken at once. Now, what is the lesson of a broken earthen vessel? Nothing could be apparently more useless than a broken vessel; and yet is there not a sense in which a vessel only becomes of any use when it is broken? Let

Gideon's pitchers help us in the interpretation of the anomaly. See them sound and whole,—very useful, perhaps, for the purposes of mere nature, but useless yet for the purpose for which God has in grace selected them. There is something within them that is quite hidden and lost as long as *they* are unbroken, and not till the pitcher becomes a broken vessel does the light within shine forth, victory and joyful deliverance following. Again, sweet lesson, easy of interpretation!—"We have this treasure," says the apostle, "in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." The Christian is the earthen vessel, and as long as he is unbroken, he is useless. Forgiveness of sins must be followed by real brokenness—self-distrust, not thinking of myself as a large vessel or as a small vessel, but as a *broken* vessel. Many Christians speak much of themselves as being "little vessels," but he who is in the line of God's thought says, "What use to waste thought at all on so utterly worthless a thing as a *broken earthen vessel*?" Then, free to be occupied with the risen, glorious Lord, his light shines, the lamp within burns, his testimony goes out, (blessedly unconsciously to himself, no doubt,) but, "beholding the glory of the Lord, he is changed into the same image, from glory to glory." Beloved reader, dear brother or sister, permit me affectionately to ask you to ponder in your souls the lesson of the *broken earthen vessel*.

Once more, and now a step further: the next thing looked at is a vessel of another material,—a vessel still, and hence speaking, doubtless, of the same person in another way. "If it be sodden in a brazen pot, it shall be both scoured, and rinsed in water." Now, to understand this aright, I take it, we must seek, by the blessed Spirit's guidance, to throw upon it the light of other scriptures. Evidently the brazen pot was now to be honored as never before; not to be broken, it was to be

made—*i. e.*, to be as God required it,—bright, by scouring and rinsing. Not only, as in the case of the garment, was the action of the water to be used, but powerful rubbing and brightening (The word “scour” is translated “furbish” in Jer. xlvi. 4, and “bright” in 2 Chron. iv. 16.) till all cloudiness, and that tarnishing of the lustre of the metal which is due to earth’s influences, was removed.

Now a very searching, solemn lesson opens up for us. Look at that scoured, rinsed pot,—that polished, shining vessel. It has been in connection with the sin-offering; now scoured and rinsed, is it not a vessel well fitted for the holy services of the sanctuary—“a vessel unto honor, meet for the Master’s use”? But here, in this expression, have we not secured the key of the interpretation? Does not 2 Tim. ii. help us in this? The scoured vessel, the rinsed vessel, the purged vessel, is the one, and the only one (let us ponder it well in our souls),—the only one that is “unto honor, meet for the Master’s use.” For turn again to that verse, to which reference has already been made, in 2 Chron. iv. 16. No vessel could be of the slightest use in that holy temple that had not been made bright (*margin*) by this scouring,—no, *not one*. Covet it, my brethren! see to it that we hearken obediently to the words of the Holy Spirit in 1 Cor. xii. 31—“Covet earnestly the best gifts.” Rest not with forgiveness assured through that shed blood of the most holy sin-offering. Only see the glorious possibilities that follow on that blessed foundation. We are now where we may be vessels to carry the water of life to other thirsting souls; where our Lord Jesus may take us up and use us for His honor and glory in the various paths of sweet and holy service it is His people’s happy privilege to tread. But mark what precedes such: there must be a scouring as well as rinsing, and not always pleasant is the process; the hard rubbing is often very painful, but oh, how good

when it has its designed effect! and through the scouring, earth loses its power, its dulling influences disappear, the holy light of heaven begins to be reflected in the vessel, and, as He designs in all such dealings with us, we become "partakers of His holiness." Painful process oft indeed, but no uninterested, careless, indifferent One does the scouring. "Every branch that beareth fruit He"—who? *He who loves us even as He loves His only begotten One* (Jno. xvii. 23)—"*He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.*" We are surely in good hands.

Mark too with great care, and approve the divine *order*, first, personal holiness. This is of the first importance. Many an one, alas! overlooks this, or seeks to step beyond it, but never with approval or acceptance. This must follow as immediately on forgiveness as did the feast of unleavened bread on the passover—no interval whatever. The stroke of the hour that told of the ending of the one feast told equally of the beginning of the other. This most important lesson is again and again emphasized in God's holy Word. Let my reader, for his own blessing, turn to and ponder the following scriptures: Lev. xxiii. 5, 6; Gal. i. 3, 4; Eph. ii. 8-10; Tit. ii. 11-14; iii. 8.

Secondly, that which often does not come so quickly, but is slowly learned—a casting aside of all confidence in self, as a broken earthen vessel, and thus occupation with Him who is alone worthy of it—the Lord Jesus, so that the light shines out. The lesson, indeed, of the seventh and eighth of Romans, where we have a picture of an earthen vessel being "broken." It has surely been in vital connection with the most holy Sin-Offering, for none but such could truly "delight in the law of God after the inward man;" but hard it is to give up all hope of the vessel—"Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee" is ever the desire and hope of us all till we learn how hopeless the flesh is, and that "in me,—that is, in my flesh,

dwellleth no good thing." How little the poor soul who is learning this through bitter experience knows that most tender, gracious Love is *pushing* it into a joy and liberty where it may *sing* instead of *groan*. But if Rom. vii. shows us one *learning* the lesson of a broken earthen vessel, Phil. iii. shows us a lovely picture of the vessel quite broken. See how all in the vessel that might have challenged confidence is steadfastly, firmly put aside. "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." There is surely a "broken earthen vessel."

Thirdly, that which is progressive, and lasts during all one's pilgrimage here,—all God's dealings with His child, brightening him for service.

F. C. J.

"FRET NOT THYSELF."

THE article entitled "Roll up the Catalogue" in the July number of HELP AND FOOD contains timely and much-needed exhortation for the Lord's people. It is just in line with some scriptures lately noticed in the thirty-seventh psalm; a few words about them may be helpful.

"Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity." At first sight this might seem to apply only to the prosperous, wealthy man of the world, whom the believer, as he follows the narrow way, is often tempted to envy; but why does it not apply with equal force to the evil-doer in ourselves and our fellow-believers—"Not I, but sin that dwelleth in me?"

Some of us perhaps have learned enough of "the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him," the "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved *in heaven* for us," so that we are not

often troubled with envy at the present prosperity of the ungodly. The experience of the seventy-third psalm has perhaps been ours, and, like David, "*in the sanctuary*," our eyes have been opened to see their end, and the insecurity and worthlessness of their possessions compared with ours. If we have learned this lesson, we can claim no glory on account of it—that is all due to Him who has taught us to estimate the values of things "according to the shekel of the sanctuary."

But how many of us have ceased to fret ourselves because of the evil-doer who is continually manifesting himself in the saints? Especially if his evil-doing in any way touches *us* (and doubtless there are many who have sufficient love for the saints and care for the Lord's glory to be quite as troubled when it stumbles them or dishonors Him; but oftener, we fear, it is only wounded pride which causes us to fret). If we look at the second verse of this psalm, we shall find the reason God gives us for not fretting ourselves. God, in His great grace, often reasons with us about His ways, and patiently tells us why He gives us such and such commands. Thus we are led to see that "His commandments are not grievous," and it is often in considering the *reason* that we find willingness and power to obey the command. A few examples may make this plainer. In 1 Jno. ii. 15 we find the command, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." The reason follows—"For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Heb. xi. 8—"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, . . . *for* he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Heb. xiii. 16—"But to do good and to communicate forget not, *for* with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

"Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, . . . for they shall *soon* be cut down as the grass, and wither as the green herb." It is always easier to endure trial when we know that it will not last long.

Of the evil-doer in the believer God has written "condemned" (Rom. viii. 3), "crucified" (Gal. ii. 20), "dead" (Rom. vi. 8; Col. iii. 3). Such is he now in God's sight; but he is not yet "cut off," nor will we be loosed from him until we hear the shout of our returning Lord, and are changed into His likeness. Now when we are fretting ourselves over some fellow-believer's sin, would it not help us to be patient and gracious with him if we remembered that it is *not he*, but *sin* that dwelleth in him, that is at fault,—this same evil-doer that "shall soon be cut down," and is already dead in God's sight? So also when Satan tempts us to fret and worry over our own continual failures, let us remember again that "evil-doers shall soon be cut down." Thus we shall be enabled to "rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him," knowing that at His coming we shall be freed from the presence of indwelling sin. Our responsibility to "sin not" is none the less: sin surely is most grievous in God's sight, and no doubt will cause the believer "godly sorrow" ("sorrow according to God"—2 Cor. vii. 9, *margin*), but fretting over it is not the remedy. Immediate confession and consequent restoration is God's way (1 Jno. i. 9); then we are privileged to forget it, as God does, and go on our way rejoicing. It is surely a device of Satan to keep us so much occupied with the old dead thing in ourselves and other saints. How much better to "know no man after the flesh," but rather to seek the acquaintance and edification of the new man in Christ! May God give us grace oftener to look upon our brethren as He did upon his people of old when

Balaam testified, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel."

Satan's great desire is, to keep God's saints fretted and troubled like himself; as it is written, "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it *cannot rest*." But our God would have us "careful for *nothing*." Then let us commit our ways unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring to pass. Our adversary the devil, the arch-evil-doer, "shall *soon* be cut down;" for it is written, "The God of *peace* shall bruise Satan under your feet *shortly*." "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of Him *in peace*, without spot, and blameless."

(Contributed.)

THE SONG OF MY HEART.

QUIETLY onward my life's stream flows,—
Quietly, slowly, so life goes
Quietly onward to its close.

One day in sunshine, another in rain,
But still my heart sings the sweet refrain,—
The God of light is the God of love,
And bright days and dark days
Come from above.

Then when the tempests around me rage,
When the striving elements hot war wage,
And my heart and brain in the strife engage,
Feeling the sense of pain and wrong,
My weary heart sings the same sweet song,—
The God of light is the God of love,
And bright days and dark days
Come from above.

When life is filled with a sweet content,
And I see that the pain was in mercy sent,
And all in infinite love was meant,
My loss down here is eternal gain,
The days go by to the old refrain,—
The God of light is the God of love,
And bright days and dark days
Come from above.

Towanda, Pa.

C. A. D.