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WAYMARKS

IN

THE WILDERNESS,

AND

SCRIPTURAL GUIDE.

EDITED BY JAMES INGLIS.

VOLUME I.



New-York:

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PROSPECTUS

OF

WAYMARKS IN THE WILDERNESS,

AND

SCRIPTURAL GUIDE.

A Monthly Magazine, designed to bear testimony to the Truth as it is in Jesus,
apart from Sectarian ends and connections.

EDITED BY JAMES INGLIS.

The exposition of the prophetic Scriptures is a prominent object of the enterprise, under the conviction of those engaged in it that the coming of the Lord draws near, and that the Church is in her proper attitude when waiting for that event. Since no one can be truly looking for the Lord in the glory of his second coming, who does not truly know him in the love of his first coming to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, the truth regarding the blessed *hope* of the Christian cannot be taught apart from the doctrines of Christian *faith* and the lessons of Christian *love*. The design, therefore, embraces the elucidation of the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, which will be treated in their Scriptural connections and their bearing on the Christian life and its relations.

The publication is humbly intended to be "CHRIST-EXALTING;" and is specially addressed to those who, in our various communities, are reaching out to an experimental acquaintance with the unsearchable riches of Christ; who, beyond all denominational zeal, love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, desiring to live in separation from the world, as pilgrims and strangers here: not unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again, and to be found like men waiting for their Lord. It is addressed to earnest and prayerful students of the Word of God, and while it will occupy middle ground between the learned and the merely popular periodicals, it will aim to bring the mature fruits of Christian scholarship and critical research within the reach of ordinary inquirers into the mind of the Spirit.

The numbers of the current year will contain a variety of papers designed to open up the field of prophetic inquiry, expositions of the principal parables, illustrations of the earthly mission and the mediatorial work of our Lord, and essays on personal and relative duties; with occasional narratives, reviews, notices of millenarian literature, and of current events as bearing on the main object of our publication.

The numbers of the Magazine for a year will form two volumes, with a suitable title-page and index for each volume.

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NOTICE.—This number is sent to some who are not subscribers, as a specimen of the work. Those receiving it who do not wish to subscribe, are requested not to take the trouble of returning it, as no subsequent number will be sent to their address unless it is ordered.

It was at first proposed to publish “Waymarks in the Wilderness” at \$2 a year, but it was found that this could not be done without pecuniary loss in consequence of the recent advance in the cost of paper and printing. It will of course be sent in accordance with the original proposal to those who have subscribed before the change of terms was announced.

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JAMES INGLIS,
50 North 13th Street, Philadelphia.

WAYMARKS

IN

THE WILDERNESS.

THE EXPECTATION OF THE CHURCH.

“Our gathering together unto Him.”

No reader of the Bible can have failed to notice the space which the prophetic Scriptures occupy. When, in addition to this, we observe how prophecy is interwoven with the whole fabric of almost every book in the volume, whether narrative, didactic, or poetical in its character, it seems strange that the study of prophecy should ever have been discountenanced by those who hold that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,—that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” We cannot account for so strange a conclusion on the part of some of the most careful of our religious teachers, as that the chief, if not the only safe use of prophecy, is to seek in its fulfilment for additional proof that the Bible is the word of God. One who has been extensively blessed as an expositor of the sacred oracles, says of this God-dishonoring conclusion, “It is as if some one were treating me as his intimate friend, heaping benefits

upon me, communicating his thoughts to me, telling me all that he knew would shortly happen, and I should use all his confidence for no other purpose than to convince myself, when everything had come to pass, that he was a truth-telling person. Alas! alas! where are we? Have we so far lost the feeling of our privileges and of the goodness of our God? Is there, then, nothing for the Church in all these holy revelations? For certainly it is not the Church's place to be discussing whether or no God, her divine friend, has told the truth. As Christians we have no need to be witnesses of an event in order to believe that what God says is true. You believe already that prophecy is the word of God."

There is a common impression also that the study of prophecy, if not perilous, is rendered unprofitable by the impenetrable obscurity of the prophetic writings. Consider to how great an extent this impression declares the Scriptures to be unprofitable, and so reflects upon the wisdom and goodness of God! It would at least be more modest to conclude that any seeming obscurity arises from error or blindness on our part, than from any want of perspicuity in the revelation. All earnest inquirers into the mind of the Spirit can recall numerous passages of Scripture which formerly appeared difficult and obscure, which now seem clear as a sunbeam; and they will own that, in almost every instance, the difficulty arose from their ineffectual efforts to reconcile a plain statement of truth with some preconceived notion of their own, which they were reluctant to abandon. Prophecy, from its nature, is peculiarly liable to be obscured by such prepossessions. For where men have assumed something wholly unwarranted regarding the purposes of God and their own prospects, it is easy to see to what straights they must be driven to reconcile the plainest predictions with their erroneous assumptions;

and the plainer the prediction the greater will be their perplexity. The Jews, for example, with their carnal views of the expected Messiah, must have been utterly bewildered by those prophecies of His humiliation and suffering which now appear to us as graphic pictures of the reality. We ought to have learned by their example to trace the alleged obscurity of prophecy to our own misconceptions and perversions of the truth.

Happily there is not now the same necessity to defend the utility of the study which was found by those who preceded us in this course of inquiry twenty years ago. Though objections are not completely silenced even among those whom we delight to honor as followers of Christ, we can now address ourselves to a large and increasing number of believers who have learned to own the condescension of a loving Father in taking us into His counsels, as though He said of us as He said of the Father of the faithful, "Shall I hide from them that thing which I do?" This confidential communication of our Father's designs is not for the gratification of our curiosity, but is designed to lead us into fellowship with Himself; to lead us away from the vanities of earth, and fill our hearts with the heavenly glories of our high calling; to substitute for the vague and uninfluential speculations of man regarding the invisible, the blessed realities of His own counsels regarding Christ and the Church; and to enable us to see, in the events that are transpiring around us, not the mere tumult of human passions, but the unfolding of a divine purpose, in the issue of which the character of God will be completely vindicated, alike in the judgments which shall overwhelm proud wickedness and sweep away corruption, and in the glory which shall crown the redeemed, and the peace and blessedness which shall distinguish the holy reign of Christ on the earth from the accursed usurpation of Satan. Thus

He teaches us to live as pilgrims and strangers here, in holy separation from the world and all its systems, on which His judgments are coming; to live, neither allured by its lying hopes nor oppressed by its hurtful cares, but in loving dependence on Him who makes all things work together for good to them that love Him; looking for that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

These students of the revealed counsels of God know, and those who have advanced farthest in the study know best, that we have much still both to unlearn and to learn. The history of the Church teaches them that the path in which they walk is not without its perils, and that great humility and modesty become them in prosecuting the inquiry and announcing its results. But in one thing they rejoice, with all the certainty of a divine assurance, that whatever remains to be searched into, both of the steps by which the consummation is to be reached, and of the details of the glory that is soon to be revealed, there has been restored to their hearts the very expectation which God designed to animate and sustain the hearts of his waiting people, and which did animate and sustain the hearts of apostles and prophets amidst all the violence of persecution which assailed the infant Church in the world. Before refreshing our souls with the contemplation of that blessed hope, it may be instructive to glance at the course by which inquirers into prophetic truth since the beginning of the present century, have been led on to the clear discernment of it.

By far the greater number of professing Christians cherish the hope that their efforts to propagate the Gospel will result in the conversion of the human family, so that the Church will at length be co-extensive with the world, and that this triumphant prosperity will continue for a thousand

years, at the close of which the Lord will come to judge mankind, who shall, both just and unjust, be raised from the dead and assembled for judgment before the great white throne. A smaller number believe that, before the millenium, the Lord will come again the second time without sin unto salvation. They are daily expecting his return to gather His people to Himself, with whom He shall descend to this earth to inflict judgment on the ungodly nations, and establish His glorious reign over the saved nations; and believe that, at the close of a thousand years, all the dead who have no part in the first resurrection shall be cast into the lake of fire. The former views, as they are the most prevalent, are generally supposed to be the most ancient; and our pre-millennial views, as they are styled, are supposed to be of very modern date.

We shall not, at this stage of our inquiry, urge the claim that the views we hold and the hope we cherish are those which prevailed in the apostolic age. But we may be allowed to notice the fact that the evidence of this is so abundant in the apostolic epistles, that some anti-millenarians have found no way of evading it but by supposing that God had "so framed the word of truth that certain portions of it might be susceptible of an interpretation which, though natural, was not necessary, though fallacious, was yet feasible, and adapted to minister, at particular seasons and in peculiar circumstances, the most solid support and consolation to its disciples." This is as bold as the attempt of the early opponents of millenarianism to cast the Apocalypse out of the canon of Scripture. Leaving, for the present, the testimony of Scripture, we may appeal with confidence to the testimony of history regarding the early prevalence of these views. Bishop Newton admits that "the doctrine of the millenium was generally believed in the three first and purest ages." Dr. Bonar,

after collecting a multitude of testimonies, says, "Thus, by the testimony of men, many of whom are unfriendly to our doctrine, we have established the point that, during the first two centuries and a half, pre-millenarianism or Chiliasm was the faith of the Church."

The Church became corrupt in doctrine and in practice as it became more intimately associated with the world, and then naturally lost its interest in the blessed hope which had sustained believers when they were called to brave the fierce hatred of the world. Rising in popular influence, the Church began to identify its hopes with earthly governments, and its leaders became the favorites of emperors and the companions of statesmen. The thought of Christ's speedy coming and his reign in righteousness became distasteful, and was accounted disloyal. The facts give occasion to one of the malignant sneers of Gibbon, who, after testifying that the expectation of the speedy coming of Christ to reign "appears to have been the reigning sentiment of Orthodox believers," adds, "It seems so well adapted to the desires and apprehensions of mankind that it must have contributed, in a very considerable degree, to the progress of the Christian faith. But when the edifice of the Church was almost completed, the temporary support was laid aside. The doctrine of Christ's reign upon earth was at first treated as a profound allegory, was considered by degrees as a doubtful and useless opinion, and was at length rejected as the absurd invention of heresy and fanaticism."

The fanciful and allegorizing method of interpreting Scripture to which Origen gave currency towards the close of the third century, enabled the popular leaders to explain away all prophecy which they found it inconvenient to admit. At length, towards the close of the fourth century (373), when the Popish system was nearly matured, Pope

Damasus formally denounced Chiliasm, and so effectually that a Romish historian exultingly says, "The heresy, however loquacious before, was silenced." For nearly a thousand years the views propagated by Augustine in the fifth century were the prevailing views of Christendom. The kingdom of Christ was explained to mean the Church in which Christ reigns by His vicar the Pope. Satan's binding was dated from our Lord's ministry when he said, "I beheld Satan falling as lightning from heaven." The reign of saints was represented as beginning on the day of Pentecost; the thousand years being a figurative numeral, expressing the whole period between the day of Pentecost and the end of the world, when, it was taught, the universal resurrection and final judgment shall take place, and the eternal Sabbath begin.

Millenarian views were scarcely heard through all the ages of Papal darkness, though occasional testimonies to the hope of Christ's speedy coming arose even from the bosom of the Papacy, and the Paulicians and Waldenses frequently fell back upon the ancient hope in times of trial. With the dawning light of the Reformation we again hear frequent, decided utterances of the doctrine which Popery had silenced. The most eminent of the reformers substantially echo the conviction of Calvin, "The Scriptures uniformly commands us to look forward with eager expectation to the coming of Christ, and defers the crown of glory that awaits us till that period." They regarded the Pope as Antichrist, who is to be destroyed by the brightness of His coming; and, with many a weary groan, they took up the cry, "Come, Lord Jesus." The seventeenth century presents us with a great multiplicity of witnesses to the hope of the speedy coming of Christ; and among them are many names held dear by all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Bunyan, Goodwin, Allein, Durant,

Burroughs, Vincent, Charnock, Henry, and a majority of the Westminster assembly of divines. By some we should not be excused if we omitted the name of Milton, who spoke of the world

“Under her own weight groaning, till the day
 Appear, of reparation to the just,
 And vengeance to the wicked at return
 Of Him, thy Saviour and thy Lord ;
 Last in the clouds of heaven to be revealed,
 In glory of the Father, to dissolve
 Satan, with his perverted world ; then raise
 From the conflagrant mass, purged and refined,
 New heavens, new earth, ages of endless date,
 Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love,
 To bring forth fruits, joy, and eternal bliss.”

As the fires of the Reformation began to burn dimly, and a season of external peace and prosperity encouraged a cold and lifeless formality in the churches, men became more insensible to the attractions of this blessed hope ; and it was in the midst of such a period of spiritual depression, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, that the prevailing theory of a temporal millennium was produced. Dr. Whitby, its author, a man of talent and learning, makes this candid admission regarding the views he opposed : “The doctrine of the reign of the saints a thousand years is now rejected by all Roman Catholics and by the greater part of Christians ; and yet it passed among the best Christians for two hundred and fifty years for a tradition apostolical.” After this admission he propounded the now commonly received opinion of a temporal millennium, to be introduced by the agency of the Church in the absence of her Lord ; and taught that the first resurrection is nothing more than a revival of sound doctrine and practical piety.

It is surely passing strange that a theory, which its author styles "a new hypothesis," should, in the lapse of little more than a hundred years, have gained such a hold upon the minds of men, that an appeal past it to the Scriptures exposes a man to the reproach of innovation or fanaticism.

It must not, however, be supposed that this novelty obtained at once undisputed sway over the public mind. Many of the greatest names of the theological world, both in Europe and America, throughout the whole of the eighteenth century, may be ranked among the staunch advocates of the ancient hope of Christ's personal reign; and to these may be added some of the most illustrious in science and literature. Dr. Increase Mather, Sir Isaac Newton, Dr. Gill, Bengel, Isaac Watts, Cotton Mather, Fletcher, of Madely, Toplady, the poet Cowper, John Glass, Francis Lambert, are among the familiar names which might be enumerated. Yet it is evident, from the tone of their writings, that they felt themselves to be but the few who were withstanding the current of popular opinion. Dr. Spalding, of Salem, Mass., in the year 1796, says, "It was the expectation of believers anciently that probationary time would end and the great day of God's wrath would come before the millennial kingdom, under the seventh trumpet; but, in the last century, an opinion gained currency that the millennium would be probationary time, and therefore the coming of Christ and the overthrow of this world would not take place till some time after the millennium. The opinion has constantly prevailed. All hands, learned and unlearned, have been employed to propagate it, and very little has been done or said to oppose it, and for about half a century it has been the most common belief; consequently people have laid aside all expectation that the day of the Lord is nigh; and old and young,

ministers and people, have agreed to say, "The Lord delayeth His coming."

The spiritual deadness which pervaded the Protestant churches during the period of which we speak, is matter of common testimony among the faithful. Whether it be regarded as a cause or a consequence, it is worthy of note that the decay of spiritual life in the churches was contemporaneous with the abandonment of the belief of the speedy coming of the Lord. We turn with gratitude to the records of the revivals which followed the labors of Wesley, Whitfield, Edwards, Erskine, Romaine, Newton and other faithful ministers. Among the results of that revival was a widespread desire to propagate the gospel in all lands, in which originated the Bible and Missionary Societies and the other benevolent enterprises which have occupied so prominent a place in public attention since the beginning of the nineteenth century. The first advocates of these undertakings had to brave many discouragements, and we can well understand how they must have been animated by tidings of the first fruits of missionary labor in heathen lands: exultant and sanguine, they eagerly anticipated a final and complete triumph. The conversion of the world seemed only a question of time, and it was then that Dr. Whitby's "novel hypothesis" came to be received as a new article of the orthodox faith.

This was a period also of momentous changes in the political world. The period in which the American revolution was accomplished, in which the French revolution convulsed the old world, and the wars of the Empire changed the map of Europe, could not be other than a period of great intellectual excitement. And while the world was wildly speculating as to the issue, the Church, sharing the excitement, sought in prophecy for a solution of the problem.

When the peace of Europe was restored, the impetus

which the popular mind had received, was seen in the rapid advancement of arts and sciences, the love of free institutions, the progress of popular education, and in a multitude of social and political reforms throughout the civilized world. The movement of society influenced the activity of the Church, and the confident anticipation by the Church, of a temporal millennium, was reflected in the world's dream of "a good time coming." The confidence was only equalled by the fervor with which men spoke of the world's progress. They thought that the barbarous arts of war were humbling memories of the past. They anticipated the speedy and universal recognition of the equal rights of mankind, the overthrow of tyranny, and the reign of intelligence and virtue. Christian and secular philanthropists joined hands in mutual congratulations, in view of the blessed era which they were jointly hastening on; and they made a common use of the perverted language of inspiration to describe the results of the beneficent enterprises in which they were engaged at home and abroad.

The prophecies began to be earnestly searched for support of these anticipations. Principles of interpretation were adopted which accommodated all prophecy to the prevailing view. All that is foretold of the future glory of Zion and of the restoration of God's ancient people was applied to the Church and revivals of religion. The reign of Christ and his saints was explained to mean the triumph of his Church in his absence; and the coming of him who is the resurrection and the life, was explained to mean the hour of each man's death. We need not continue the enumeration of these singular perversions, for they are only too familiar to all our readers. One thing, however, was secured—the prophecies, though perverted, were studied as they had not been studied for long ages; and the erroneous use of them at last led to its own correction.

In the providence of God attention was turned to the Jews as well as to the heathen, and earnest efforts were made to convince them that Jesus is the Messiah. The sacred oracles were appealed to for encouragement in this new field of missionary labor. The necessity of meeting the Jew on his own ground, led also to a more accurate study of the Old Testament. Passages which had been unthinkingly applied to the Church were clearly seen to refer to that people and this lent the first check to the allegorical method of interpreting prophecy. An inquiry into the prospects of the chosen nation, and into God's purpose in preserving them as a distinct people, resulted in the conviction that the nations of the earth would not be brought into subjection to Christ, until the Jews bowed to his sceptre ; that Ethiopia will not stretch out her hands unto God until Israel, long defiled as those that had lain among the pots, shall become as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers as with yellow gold. One of the many able writers who engaged in this investigation, and who may be taken as a fair representative of his class, thus states the conclusion to which they were driven : " The truth is that whatever partial success may attend missionary exertion, in regard to individual pagans or Mahomedans, the Gentiles will never be converted nationally and on a large scale, until the Jews shall have been converted ; and the ground of this very important position is that the converted Jews are destined, in the unsearchable wisdom of God, to be the finally successful missionaries of the Gentile world."

The next step in this line of inquiry was the startling discovery that there is no ground in Scripture to expect that the Jews will be converted, as a nation, by missionary labor. Many plain predictions intimate that Israel will resist the gospel, until they shall look on him whom they

pierced, and mourn. Then it became evident to these candid inquirers, that the personal advent of Christ must precede the millennium. Slowly and reluctantly they abandoned their cherished views of missionary triumph, which they were constrained to own, were without warrant in the word of God. The promises, they found, were addressed to a suffering Church, and instead of being taught to expect a gradual triumph, they were warned that, in the last days, perilous times shall come. But then, for their disappointments, they had an over-payment of delight in the restoration to the Church of the blessed hope of the Lord's speedy return to receive his people to himself. The vision of distant triumphs, which might warm a poet's fancy, or grace an eloquent period, they exchanged for a solid hope which sheds its sanctifying influence on Christian character, solaces all present sorrows, and nerves the energy and quickens the diligence of the servant of God, in the toil and conflict to which the Master calls him.

The impulse which this hope gave to the study of prophecy, produced a millenarian literature, in the authorship of which may be found the names of the foremost advocates of evangelical truth during the last forty years. We must defer, till a future opportunity, a review, both of its merits and defects. It need not surprise us if the mists of so many centuries were not at once dispelled. That which chiefly attracted them was, of course, the coming of the Lord the second time, without sin unto salvation; and that event stood before their minds in its simple announcement, as his coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Their hope was to see him thus. There was much in the prophetic Scriptures which might seem to come between them and that hope. There were predicted judgments and signs, the career of antichrist, the sufferings of Jerusalem in the last end of the indignation, and the

visions of the apocalypse requiring time for their accomplishment; and the question might arise, Must the Church still wait till all these things come to pass? The long established practice of expositors pointed the way to escape from these apparent obstacles to the speedy fulfilment of their hopes. Much of the literature of which we have spoken, is occupied with laborious attempts to show that these prophecies have been fulfilled in the past history of christendom. Great ingenuity has been displayed in interpreting prophetic symbols in such a way as to make them apply to historical events and personages. When the time of any action is given, it is accommodated to this historical application by the strange assumption, that a day in the prophetic Scriptures signifies a year.

There was a certain charm in the attempt to prognosticate the destiny of nations, and calculate the very year when popes and tyrants shall meet their doom; but it is surely for other ends that prophecy was given. The thought often occurred, If this is the true interpretation, how comes it to pass that the primitive Church was entirely ignorant of it, and that apostles, writing under the guidance of the Spirit, addressed believers, in their day, as though no such prophecies existed? If the prophecies show that the Lord will come in 1866, how could these apostles teach believers, in their day, to wait for his coming? Besides, explain the prophecies as you may, many important events must transpire before the Lord comes with the myriads of his saints. For example, Jerusalem must be rebuilt and undergo varied trials. "For there shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be;" all nations must be gathered against Jerusalem to battle, for it is in the hour of their fancied triumph that the Lord shall appear to their destruction, and "his feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives which

is before Jerusalem on the east." Now how can we be watching for Christ's coming day by day, while none of all these things have taken place?

A closer examination of the prophecies revealed new wonders in them. It has been compared to a general and distant view of a range of mountains, which seems a solid and compact rampart; but, as you approach, it gradually separates into many distinct hills, and you thread your way through many a valley, and climb many an intervening height, before you reach the actual summit. So with these inquirers—the general truth of Christ's coming stood before their view as one distinct act. They believed that he would at once be revealed in flaming fire, and, while the world stood trembling at his approach, those who loved his appearing would rise to welcome him, but the hour of their ascent to meet him in the air, would be the very hour when he should take vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel. A closer examination showed that between the time when the saints shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and the time when the world shall see him coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, there is space for the outpouring of the vials of wrath, and the accomplishment of all that remains of the temporal history of Jerusalem.

The more closely the Old Testament Scriptures are examined, the more clearly it appears that there is a period of Jerusalem's guilt and Jerusalem's sufferings still lying in the future. In connection with these, Antichrist is yet to run his disastrous and blasphemous career. The descriptions of this period by the Old Testament prophets, often quiver with agony and terror. Those visions of the apocalypse which have been so ingeniously applied to the history of Europe and the Church, will be found to be only a more vivid and minute recital of events predicted in the

Old Testament, of which Jerusalem is the scene or the centre. It is in "the city where our Lord was crucified" that God's witnesses prophecy and suffer. It is not Gentile believers, but twelve thousand in each of the twelve tribes of Israel who are then God's sealed and faithful ones. In short, nowhere in all these descriptions of the closing tribulations, do we find a single trace of the Church of Christ, which is his body, exposed to the storm of wrath. When the Lord predicted the tribulation of these days he exhorted his Church, "Watch and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." Before the visions of judgment in the apocalypse, he assures the Church, "I will keep you from the hour of temptation that is coming upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Accordingly, in the visions of judgment, the Church is seen, not on the earth, but under the symbol of twenty-four Elders seated around the throne, until under another symbol, she is seen as the armies of heaven following Him who goes forth on the white horse to complete his victory.

When we understand that all these predictions relate, not to the history of Europe during the past eighteen hundred years, but to the unaccomplished period of Israel's history, and that the Church shall be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man, then we can understand what is the immediate expectation of the Church. It is not to see the Lord coming on a cloud with power and great glory, for then we expect to appear with him in glory. We look for our gathering together unto him, when those who sleep in Jesus shall arise, and we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and there is not a single predicted event standing between us and the fulfilment of that hope.

The duration of this present dispensation is nowhere indicated in prophecy. In fact, prophetic times are only reckoned in relation to the history of Israel. When the Lord predicted the siege and destruction of Jerusalem He said, "Jerusalem shall be trodden under foot of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;" but whether that should be for one year or two thousand years, there is not a word in the prophecies to indicate. We can understand then how inspired Apostles should speak of their own expectation, and should admonish believers at all times to watch as though they knew not but that, before another sun rises, the Church may be removed from the world, which will then be ripe for judgment.

If the Lord's words are to be taken in their plain and obvious meaning, no one can doubt that this is the attitude in which he designed that his followers should at all times be found. It is the attitude in which we do find the Churches while under Apostolic guidance. Paul says, "Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour." And again and again he speaks of the saints as waiting for His coming. They cannot be supposed to be deluded; nor can their eager waiting arise from neglect or misunderstanding of the prophecies, for Paul was writing by inspiration, and it is all in conformity with the express warnings and admonitions of the Lord. The descent of the Lord into the air, and our gathering together unto Him, may take place any day or any hour, for aught we can know. The animating assurance of Paul comes home to us, gaining emphasis by every revolving year since he wrote it, "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent,—the day is at hand."

We have been endeavoring to sketch the history of modern prophetic inquiry, and to trace the steps by which

earnest and candid inquirers have reached the above conclusion regarding the actual hope of believers. That conclusion we cordially adopt as clearly taught in the Word of God ; but it will be understood that we have not pretended in this sketch to advocate or defend it. This will be accepted as the explanation of the summary statement of many points which we might properly be called upon to prove from Scripture. The article is already extended beyond the space we designed for it ; yet we cannot leave it without dwelling for a little upon the event for which we are taught joyfully to look.

No outward sign will precede the deliverance of the waiting Church. The descent of the Lord into the air will be marked by no visible pomp, or parade of preparation. The affairs of this world will not be brought to a pause of awe-stricken expectation. As in the old world at the deluge, and as in Sodom at its destruction, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded, not knowing that the presence of Lot in the one case, and of Noah in the other, was all that stood between them and the judgment of God. So the world will rush on in the pursuit of sin and folly, not knowing that all that stands between it and the last indignation is the presence of the despised few who wait for their Lord. The crowd in the pursuit of every-day cares, the revellers amidst their accustomed pleasures, or sleepers in their quiet homes, may be startled by that mighty voice from heaven ; and, like those who formerly listened to a voice from heaven, they may dismiss their alarm by saying, "It thundered!" In that instant the dead in Christ, from all their lowly graves, or wherever winds and waves have scattered their martyred ashes, shall arise, and with all of Christ's who are alive and remain, shall be clothed upon with "their house which is from heaven."

This will be no slow process on which men will gaze with wondering eyes, but the act of Omnipotence, which will be over in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. The Lord, anticipating by centuries the discoveries of science, intimated that as the event shall occur at the same instant round the whole circuit of the globe, at one point it shall be night; and of those who lay down without a suspicion that aught would disturb its repose, "one shall be taken and the other left;" at another point it shall be morning; and of those who resumed their household drudgery with no thought of anything to distinguish that from an every-day, "one shall be taken and the other left." From the scenes and associations of every-day life, those who are Christ's shall in an instant disappear. The dearest ties of earth shall in an instant be sundered. In workshops, in the resorts of busy commerce, in crowded streets, in the quiet fields, in humble homes, even in proud palaces, and in the gloom of dungeons, men shall suddenly miss their companions. In worshipping assemblies there may be a passing stir, and in pulpit and pew voices will be silenced and places left empty. All who love His appearing will in that moment depart, and, joined to the saints of past generations, all changed and fashioned in the likeness of Christ's glorious body, they shall at once be transported into the presence of Him whom they loved unseen. What meetings and greetings will be there! But chiefly, believer, what rapture will there be in your first view of the King in His beauty! With one simultaneous impulse, as with the throb of one heart, that mighty multitude will break forth in the new song to Him that loved us. And *there*, in the secret of His presence, will He hide them while the storm of wrath is passing over the world, which loses its safeguard when the Church is removed.

May we imagine the scene on the earth when the re-

deemed are standing before the Son of Man? One shall awake to find the place by his side vacant; another will look round bewildered for the companion who a moment ago responded to his call. The husband will seek in vain for the wife whose solicitude for his soul he scorned. The parent will seek in vain for the child whose humble faith he discouraged; the child for the parent, whose counsels he despised. The best members of every community, whose worth will be owned at last, will be missed from their accustomed places. The thoughtless will seek to conceal their uneasiness beneath reckless calumnies and untimely jests. The reflecting will suggest explanations and counsel patience. But by degrees the gathering rumors will exceed control, and strange fears will agitate every breast. The strange disappearance of the living, and the empty graves of the departed, will be the theme of every tongue. What can it all mean? Some from the first will have terrible misgivings. Upon the hypocrites and those who are familiar with a despised Gospel the awful truth will at last burst, "*the first resurrection is past!*" All who cared for their souls, who wept and prayed for them, and warned and entreated them, are gone. Then, in all the despair of truth known too late, they will learn what that means, "Many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able, when once the master of the house is risen up, and shall shut the door."

But to return for a moment to the expectation of the Church. How becoming an attitude it is for the children of God in an evil day and a perishing world! With the record in our hands of all He did and endured here, to stand anticipating His glorious return,—with the love of an unseen Saviour in our heart, to stand expecting the moment when we shall see Him as He is; and, with the consciousness that we are now the children of God, to stand waiting

for the moment when we shall be like Him! What an attitude is it to look at the frailty and groan beneath the burden of these vile bodies, and anticipate the hour when they shall be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body; to look back to the memory of the patriarchs, apostles, and prophets; to the muster-roll of the confessors and martyrs; to the great family of the redeemed of every age and nation; to remember the loved and lost, the friends with whom we took sweet counsel, the humble and holy wise, who instructed us, who now sleep in Jesus; and then to anticipate the time when the greedy grave shall give them back to us; and when we shall gather around our Lord, with the general assembly and Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, when everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, and they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away; and the joy of meeting shall be dashed by no fear of coming separation; and the beauty of holiness shall be marred by no stain of sin; to look on the sadness of creation, lovely even in its ruins; to hear its groans through all its feigned joy, and anticipate the hour when He who in the beginning said, "Let there be light," shall say, "Behold I make all things new!" and straightway the flush of eternal beauty shall spread over the face of emancipated nature; to look round on the meanness of avarice, the loathsomeness of vice, the littleness of pride, the emptiness of gaiety, the ceaseless surging of the sea of mortal trouble; to see the proud triumph of the wicked, to hear the groans of the oppressed, to catch, even at a distance, the wail and the shout of the battle-field, and to feel the quaking tumult into which the social system is rushing; and then, from all this, to look calmly out for the glorious forthcoming of the King of kings, to put down all might and dominion, and establish a kingdom of righteousness,

peace, and love, which shall never be destroyed! This is an attitude worthy of the children of God, and the only attitude which becomes them. This is a hope which may well endure all trials, and which must purify the soul as Christ himself is pure. We wait for the coming of the Son of God from heaven, desiring to be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless.

“BRIDE OF THE LAMB, AWAKE!”

BRIDE of the Lamb, awake! awake!

Why sleep for sorrow now?

The hope of glory, Christ, is thine,

A child of glory thou.

Thy spirit, through the lonely night,

From earthly joy apart,

Hath sigh'd for one that's far away,—

The Bridegroom of thy heart.

But see! the night is waning fast,

The breaking morn is near;

And Jesus comes with voice of love,

Thy drooping heart to cheer.

He comes—for oh! his yearning heart

No more can bear delay—

To scenes of full unmingled joy

To call his bride away.

This earth, the scene of all his woe,

A homeless wild to thee,

Full soon upon his heavenly throne

Its rightful King shall see.

Thou, too, shalt reign,—he will not wear

His crown of joy alone;

And earth his royal bride shall see,

Beside him on the throne.

Then weep no more—'tis all thine own,

His crown, his joy divine;

And sweeter far than all beside,

He, he himself, is thine.

“THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE.”

MANY are attracted by the beauty of the last discourse of Jesus with his disciples before he went out to suffer, who cannot appropriate its wealth of heavenly consolation. To them it is like a fountain pouring in living joy from a lofty and inaccessible rock. The traveller stops to gaze with delight on its sparkling beauty, though he cannot reach its waters to quench his thirst. But to the Church of God, what wells of consolation are here! From the hour of its utterance, an hour of peace amid gathering storms, the sweet stream of its comfort has flowed on through the wilderness; pilgrims of all ages have drank their fill, and it flows on fresh and full as ever.

The Lord here unfolds the distinguishing truths of the present dispensation, and though it has an aspect of peculiar tenderness towards those who had been the companions of his earthly pilgrimage, through them he conveys the assurances of his love to his people during all the period of his absence. Those among whom he had gone in and out, in the sensible reality of an every-day companionship, were taught to confide in his love and his care when they saw him no more. Just as they believed in God who was invisible, so we love him unseen; and, though now we see him not, yet believing in him, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The assurance, “In my Father’s house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you,” is not a hope of the future, as though he would describe the eternal

blessedness of his people as a condition in which each shall enjoy his separate dwelling, his solitary cell — it is a comfort for the present. If this earth had been the only spot where, as the Son of Man, he could dwell, he would not have concealed the truth from them. But in the universe, which is our Father's house, there are many mansions; and so, though he disappeared from earth, he continues to live, and the relationship between him and his people is undissolved. He is still in the Father's house; and does not forget his brethren. "For," says he, "I go to prepare a place for you;" not that He, by whom and for whom all things were created, is occupied in the laborious construction of a local habitation for us, but he has gone to make good our acceptance, and to maintain our place in the family, and in the family inheritance. He ascended as well as descended for us; on the throne as well as upon the cross he is ours. And he will return for us, for His love will not be satisfied with sending blessings which we may enjoy in his absence. He must have us where he is; when he comes again he will not be like a wayfaring man who turns aside to tarry for a night, but the mutual love of Christ and his Church will be satisfied in eternal association and fellowship.

But in this view of his departure and of his appearance in the presence of God for us, we have an intimation of what distinguishes believers in this dispensation from all who went before them. To the worshippers under the former dispensation, everything about the temple and temple service, spoke of a Saviour to come, and a propitiation to be set forth; but nothing in the typical system could make them perfect as pertaining to the conscience. "The way into the holiest was not yet made manifest;" they all stood without, while the high priest went once every year into the presence of the Lord, and they rejoiced when he came forth unscathed, to bless the people. But

now these types are all fulfilled—the true sacrifice for sin has been offered—the true high priest has entered once for all into the true sanctuary, and when we look upward, *he* is there, and there for us. “Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith; having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” To believers He is “the way, the truth, and the life,” for in Him we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him. Christless reader, Christ is the *only way, the truth, and the life*; and we desire to speak of Him to you in these three views of His character and office:

CHRIST IS THE WAY.—The word *way* signifies a path by which some given place may be reached; or, if we say *the way*, we mean the only path by which it can be reached. In God alone can the soul find full blessedness, and when Jesus says, “I am the way,” he means to say that it is through him alone that the soul can enter into this blessedness: as He says without a figure, “No man cometh unto the Father but by me.” Perhaps the announcement that you are estranged from God, that you are guilty and condemned, and the wrath of God abideth on you, is very familiar to you, and perhaps, it does not at present convey any startling and alarming import to your heart. You know that you are more than willing to forget God. Probably there have been times when you would willingly have accepted the destiny of the beasts that perish to escape the thought of meeting with Him; or you may have envied them their unreflecting enjoyment of existence, undisturbed by thoughts of a terrible hereafter. But the truth still remains, that it sums all the pitiful and appalling desola-

tion of your condition, that "you are without God." In contrast with this stands the immortal blessedness of the children of God, who are partakers of His nature, sharers of His counsel, the agents of His will, and the heirs of all that infinite love can bestow upon finite beings, of His own bliss and glory. The only alternative that is open to you is to be without God or in God, and that is just the alternative of heaven or hell. You are now without God, and the question is, How can one so estranged from God be reconciled to Him? How can a child of wrath become a child of God? Your sin raises a barrier between you and God which you cannot surmount. If God were to receive you as you are, by a mere act of clemency, He would (do you not shudder at the impious thought?) declare Himself to be as indifferent to the evil of sin as you are, make Himself a partaker of your guilt, and join with you in the overthrow of all righteousness. Can anything be more impossible than this?

In this awful straight, Christ meets your case. You are like a poor outcast, perishing on some solitary and barren rock of the ocean. It would only mock your misery to lead you to that rock's giddy brink, and across an awful chasm, impassable as the great gulf fixed between Abraham and Dives, show you the smiling home of a Father in the midst of a land of teeming abundance. Some men speak of Christ as though He were only a guide come to show us the way; but what could a guide do for that poor outcast but tantalize him with the view of inaccessible happiness? The gospel proclaims to you that the awful chasm is bridged over—Christ has borne our sins on His own body on the tree, and has satisfied every claim of divine justice against the sinner; and now He proclaims, "I am the way." The way is open to your reconciliation with God; and by that open

way a Father stands, with outstretched arms, crying to the poor perishing outcast, “Return unto me.”

You are a lost wanderer in a pathless desert, perishing in a waste, howling wilderness; and what would it avail you if a guide should take you by the hand and conduct you to the farthest border of the desert, only to leave you at the foot of a frowning rampart of inaccessible rocks, towering up mountain high, around whose summit lightnings forever flashed and thunders rolled, while beyond this insurmountable barrier of your guilt Paradise lay in the eternal sunshine of God’s love? Who can silence these awful thunders, and cleave a way for you through that mountain barrier? The gospel proclaims that Christ has put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, so that justice, fully satisfied, no longer forbids our approach. Christ Himself proclaims, “I am the way.” But you must remember He is the *only way*. To attempt to win God’s favor by anything of your own, is as if the outcast on the rock, turning from the way of sure escape, should, in his pride of heart, attempt to leap across the awful chasm, only to plunge into its horrible darkness, and be engulfed in its wrathful billows. “I am the way,” he says; “No man cometh unto the Father but by me.”

CHRIST IS THE TRUTH.—The discovery of a way to any place would be of no value to one who had no desire to go there, who would not or could not go. This is your case, sinner, when Christ reveals himself to you as the way to the Father. Desolate and wretched as you must forever be without God, you would take any way rather than the way that leads to Him. You would, perhaps, prefer annihilation to meeting with God, because your heart is estranged from its proper centre, and you are full of errors and misconceptions regarding Him. The belief of Satan’s lie regarding the character of God was the source of all the

pollution and wretchedness of fallen man. You hate His holiness, you dread His justice, you deny His love. You regard Him as your enemy,—an austere tyrant, who thwarts and opposes you, and at whose hands you expect nothing but destruction. Consequently, though every barrier is removed, you will not come unto Him until your views of God's character are wholly changed.

Now Christ meets you with the intimation, "I am the truth." He is not merely a teacher come to reveal a doctrine regarding God. He is Himself *the* truth,—the truth is in Jesus. "He that hath seen Me," he says, "hath seen the Father." He is the revelation of God, and the sum of the revelation is, "God is love." God speaks in the gracious words of Him who spoke as never man spoke. God acts in those mighty deeds of grace, and help, and healing; "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." You see the pity of God in the tenderness of the compassion of the Man of sorrow. You see the grace and mercy of God when you see the Holy One stretching out a helping hand to the fallen, till He became known as the friend of sinners. You see the long-suffering love of God when you see Jesus led like a lamb to the slaughter; and if, on the cross, Jesus declares God's righteous hatred of sin, He also manifests the unfathomable wonder of God's love to the sinner. Look upon the crucified One, and hear Him say, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father;" and is this He whom you account your enemy, against whose oppressions you revolt, from whose severity you shrink in guilty fear? What cruel wrong you have been doing to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. One look at *the truth*, one glance at God in Christ, must surely awaken in your contrite hearts the resolution, "I will arise and go to my Father." Well, then, there is none to forbid. The way is open, and Christ

himself is the assurance of the welcome that awaits you ;
He is the truth.

CHRIST IS THE LIFE.—Though the way to a place were known, though all its attractions and advantages were revealed, and a thousand motives for going there were urged, all would be unavailing to him who could not go there, who had no eye for its attractions, and no capacity to use or enjoy its advantages. This is your case, sinner. You are not only guilty and estranged from God, you are dead in trespasses and sins. The only life you know has its objects in this world, and its enjoyment in the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life. What could such a life be in the presence of God? His very perfections would be its dread and its destruction. “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Here, also, Christ meets you, not with proposals to invigorate the old nature, to refine its grossness, or repair its defects, but to be a new and divine life to you. He says, “I am the life,”—the overflowing fountain from which every stream is filled, the vine which sends its vital power to the remotest branch, that it may bring forth fruit.

When you consider that it is his own life that he communicates to the believer—it is “*Christ in you*, the hope of glory”—you will perceive that this is precisely what you need to fit you for the presence and the enjoyment of God. You are, by the very fact of receiving it, a child of God, not only in name, but in nature ; for out of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. Grievously, alas ! this life is hindered in its manifestation through this body of sin and death. But it is there,—he that believeth on the Son *hath* life. And in what heavenly perfection shall that life be manifested when all that now obscures it is removed, and it finds a fitting organization in a body fashioned like unto Christ’s glorious body ; for when He shall appear we

shall be like Him. But remember that as Christ is *the way*, and there is no other, so Christ is *the life*, and there is no other; for "he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. What more do you need? You are guilty and condemned. Well, then, here is Christ, who hath put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. The way is open for your reconciliation to God. In your estrangement you shrink from God in guilty fear. Well, then, in Christ you behold God pleading with you to return, conquering enmity by tenderness, meeting all your sin with the riches of His grace, hastening to greet the returning prodigal, stretching out the arms of paternal welcome, and rejoicing over the lost found. You are dead in trespasses and sins. Well, then, here is life, divine life, in all its holy affections and spiritual power. He offers Himself now in all His fulness to your confidence. Believing in Him, you are in the presence of God as Christ is; complete in Him, made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light—a child of God, and, if a child, then an heir,—an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ. What could be added to all this? and yourself being judge, how can you escape if you neglect so great salvation?

THE BISHOP OF OSSORY'S ANSWER TO THE QUESTION,
"WHAT IS BELIEVING ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST?"

THERE lies before us a volume on "The Nature and Effects of Faith," by Dr. O'Brien, formerly Divinity lecturer in the University of Dublin, now Bishop of Ossory. It is described as "an attempt to explain and establish the doctrine of justification by faith." The ten Sermons comprising the body of the work, were originally designed chiefly for students, but among other merits, they are admirable for this, that they are not of a character which would unfit them for the instruction of an ordinary congregation. The accompanying notes are scholarly, and display talent and attainments of no common order. The objects of our Magazine would not be promoted by a review of the volume; and we will not be understood as endorsing all the sentiments advanced in it, when we express unfeigned gratitude that such a witness to the truth should have been raised up, at the present time, and in the Church of which the distinguished author is a prelate. We may, moreover, be allowed to express the hope of seeing an American edition of the work, and shall rejoice if the extracts which follow prove the means of directing to it the attention of some friends of evangelical truth, who can procure its republication.

The immediate object of this notice is to introduce a quotation in which the author answers the question at the head of this article—a question, surely, of unspeakable

moment, since the Ambassador of Christ replies to the demand of the awakened sinner, What must I do to be saved? "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ* and thou shalt be saved." What is it to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? Doubtless many are saved by faith, who could give no satisfactory answer to the question; nay, who would give a very incorrect answer, if they gave any. But this would not show that correct views are of little importance to believers, either on their own account, or for the sake of those whom they seek to lead to the Saviour. There are, probably, few of us who have not suffered from vague and conflicting definitions of these apparently simple terms, which first bewildered us when we were inquiring the way of salvation, and which afterwards overclouded our enjoyment of salvation.

No individual's opportunities of observation would warrant him in speaking positively of the general practice of preachers; but we are not alone in saying that of the preachers, regarded as evangelical, to whom we have listened, a majority hesitate to commit themselves to the simple declaration of the apostle, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved,*" without encumbering it with conditions, or so qualifying the terms, as to leave the hearer at a loss to know whether salvation is of grace or of works. There are some indeed, who, in their anxiety to avoid everything that limits the freeness of the gospel, or obscures its terms, run into the opposite error, and speak of faith as though it were nothing more than an assent to the truth of the history of Jesus of Nazareth, or to certain propositions concerning his incarnation, life, death, and resurrection. In both of these classes of error, as Dr. O'Brien well remarks, the plain statements of the word of God are modified from a fear of the consequences to which it is supposed to lead. "Both, therefore, require,

and both equally, to be denounced as presumptuous attempts to supply safe-guards which God has seen fit to omit."

Rising far above the cold and mechanical systems which represent the faith of the gospel as a mere intellectual assent to certain facts and doctrines, we find among those whom we must recognize as earnest ministers, through whose instrumentality many souls have been led to the cross, a mode of speaking of faith, which may mislead in a way which they are very far from designing. Their aim may be to lead the sinner to a simple and undivided confidence in the Saviour of sinners; but their definitions of faith leave the living and loving object of it out of view. In their definitions, though not in their intention, belief of *truth* is substituted for faith in *the true One*. We would not assuredly undervalue the proclamation of the truth, which leads the way to faith in the true One, but it becomes us to be careful lest we place anything between the soul and Him in whom we have eternal life—careful, therefore, how we deal with the saving principle which unite us to Him, "believing on the Lord Jesus Christ," "faith in Him, in His name, and in His blood."

The force of such expressions may find illustration in the use of similar forms in ordinary life; "so that they who know what is meant by faith in a promise, know what is meant by faith in the gospel; they who know what is meant by faith in a remedy, know what is meant by faith in the blood of the Redeemer; they who know what is meant by faith in a physician, in an advocate, or in a friend, know what the Scriptures mean to express when they speak of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." "But," as our author remarks, "if there be a doubt about the meaning of a word used in Scripture, the question must be ultimately determined by an appeal to Scripture itself;" and it is the result

of his examination of the use of this word in the New Testament, that we desire to submit to our readers.

"The Bible is, as you know, a book of a cast so little formal and didactic, that you can hardly expect to find there regular definitions of the terms employed in it, but must be content, for the most part, to collect their meaning from their use. Of the examination required in the present case, I can, of course, give but an outline; but it will, I hope, be defective in few points which there can be any difficulty in supplying.

When, for example, we find our Lord addressing his disciples, "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, should He not much more clothe you, O ye of little *faith!*" You can have no doubt, I presume, of the sense in which he employs the word *faith*. No one can, I suppose, question that He means by it that *confidence in God's protection*, which their observation of His care for the lowest part of His creation ought to imprint on the hearts of His children, who should feel that they are objects of far warmer love, and of far tenderer care. A glance at the whole passage will show that it is designed to condemn, in God's children, all that unreasonable solicitude about life and its wants, in which they are so prone to indulge; to banish a *doubtful mind* concerning our necessities by the recollection that our *heavenly Father* knoweth that we have need of these things; to dispel all vain anxieties and too curious care, not merely by the depressing reflection that they can really do nothing for us, but by the more cheerful thought that we are better than those animals which are harrassed by no such anxieties, and can exercise no such care, and for which *He who is our Father*, amply provides. You will see, that in the reproof which I have quoted, it is so little the purpose of the Lord to charge those to whom He speaks with igno-

rance of God's providential care, or disbelief of it, that, on the contrary, the justice of His reproof of their want of *faith* rests chiefly on the impossibility of their being ignorant, or doubting those facts upon which confidence in God ought to be grounded.

Again, when the wild alarm to which they all gave way at the approach of danger, draws from him the rebuke, "Why are ye so *fearful*, O ye of little *faith*? or why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no *faith*? or where is your *faith*?" we have plain instances of a similar use of the term. The rebuke is here addressed to all the apostles; but, upon another occasion, there is recorded a touching reproof of one of them in particular, which furnishes a clear example of the same kind. One of the evangelists relates that upon a stormy night, when His disciples were in the midst of the sea, tossed with the waves, the Lord was seen coming to them, walking on the sea; that when He drew nigh to the ship and made himself known to them, Peter entreated that he might be commanded to go down to Him on the water; and that being commanded, His ardent follower at once went down. But when he saw himself surrounded by the dangers which he had voluntarily encountered, his heart died within him. His confidence in his Lord's power and in his love, was strong enough to make him dare peril, but too weak to keep him tranquil when it came; "and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord save me! and immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little *faith*, wherefore didst thou doubt?" And to these striking instances, to fix the sense of the word, your own memory will probably add others of the same class.

Now on the other hand, look at any of those instances of *faith* which draw forth the Lord's gracious approbation, and analyze the state of mind which he commends. Take,

for example, the notable case of the Syro-Phenician woman, whose faith he seems to have regarded as especially worthy of remark, and see in what it consists. Believing that He had come from God, and that He was invested with miraculous powers to execute God's gracious purposes, she had sought Him out to engage His assistance on behalf of her child, whose disease was beyond all human aid. She is received by Him, as you remember, in a way calculated to extinguish all the hope of relief which she had cherished, "He answered not a word." But she persevered under this heavy discouragement, in supplicating His compassion, so earnestly indeed that the disciples interposed in her behalf, but less, as it would seem, from sympathy with her in her distress, than from impatience of her urgent entreaties for relief. They ask Him to grant her petition that she may go away, and no longer follow them with her outcries. In answer to them the Lord speaks, though He had refused to vouchsafe any reply to the suppliant herself. "I am not sent," said He, "but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." His mission did not extend to the outcast race to which this heart-broken mother belonged. Of what avail, then, can it be to press her petition upon Him any more? But she does press it still upon Him with deeper humility, but with greater earnestness than before. And, when at length her importunity brings from Him an answer addressed to herself, it is even harder and more disheartening than the one given to her through the disciples: "It is not meet," He says, "to take the children's bread and to cast it to the dogs."

To confidence less steadfast such an answer would have been a final repulse; but hers was too genuine and too strong to be repelled. Her memorable reply shows at once the nature, the foundation, and the strength of the principle which urged her to prayer, and sustained her in it. It

showed that she confided in the Ruler of the world, not because she was insensible to the great and perplexing inequalities in human condition which He has established here; but because she had been enabled to see, in all the arrangements of His providence, the gracious character which pervades them all; to see that His tender mercies are over all His other works; that nothing, however humble, is neglected or overlooked by Him, but that He has wisely and kindly accommodated the circumstances to the nature even of the meaner animals, so as to secure a supply for the wants of the very lowest of the beings He has made. Her reply, I say, proves that she had been enabled to discern all this, and enabled her to draw, too, from all that she saw, the very lesson of humble confidence in God that the Lord's touching expostulation, just now adverted to, was calculated to teach to those who were so much more favorably circumstanced for collecting it. "Truth, Lord," she replies, "yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their Master's table."

Is it not the conviction thus affectingly expressed, that however low were the place which she occupied among mankind, however far removed she was from the high privileges which she unrepiningly saw others enjoying, she was not scorned or neglected by her Creator; but that, filling the station assigned to her by His wisdom, she was still the object, in the proper degree of which He alone was the proper judge, of His love and care. Is it not manifest, I say, that it is this humble and steadfast confidence in God, acquired under circumstances so untoward, and retained under a trial so severe, that moves the admiration and wonder (if we may so speak) which appear in the Lord's reply, "O woman, great is thy *faith!*"

I need hardly direct your attention to the importance of this example as confirmatory of the conclusion which we

drew from those which we looked at before. These instances, rightly considered, seemed not only to fix the true nature of the principle, but sufficiently to overthrow both the erroneous notions of it; for we saw that, when the Lord reprehends the want of faith in those to whom He speaks, there is not anything in what draws forth this reproof which can be fairly described as a failure in obedience, or a want of belief in any specific proposition proposed as the object of belief, or a want of belief in any sense that does not identify *belief* with *trust*; it is plainly want of trust that he condemns. And you must see how strikingly this last example, which is of a different kind, confirms the conclusion as to the proper sense of the word to which the former example led. For here, His recommendation of *faith* is drawn forth by no signal act of *obedience*,—by no act of obedience of any kind; and as little by any act of *belief* as distinguished from trust. It is manifestly, as I have before said, an exhibition of *trust in God*, every way deserving of wonder; but of *trust*, it is to be remarked, not manifested in believing what the Lord said, but in disbelieving it when in its apparent sense it contradicted her views of God's character, and tended to shake her confidence in Him by representing Him as careless about her sufferings, and indisposed to relieve them.

Here, then, is as strong a confirmation as could be desired of the sense which the former cases seem so clearly to assign to the Word. And if you examine in the same way other instances you will find, I think, just the same elements in the state of mind commended by our Lord under the name of faith. Not merely will you find in all of them strong desire for some benefit, and a strong hope of obtaining it, but, moreover, firm confidence that the Being applied to could and would bestow it, appears clearly to all.

But I must leave it to private investigation to establish this, and must pass over all intermediate instances of the use of the Word in the Acts and the Epistles, that we may have time for considering a passage which it is impossible to omit, and which seems to render the consideration of others superfluous; I mean the well-known account of *faith* which occurs in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The Apostle, as you know, there describes it as "the substance of things hoped for—the evidence of things not seen." And though there may be felt to be at first a little obscurity in the word "substance," yet I suppose most persons understand the sentence as conveying that it is the character or property of faith to give to things future and hoped for, all the reality of actual existence, all the effect upon the feelings and the conduct of substantial realities. And this is so easy a figure, and so fairly represents what is most important in the Apostle's meaning, that I do not know whether it be worth mentioning here, that the original probably expresses this meaning more directly. For while substance (taken in its common signification) is one of the primitive meanings of the Greek word for which it stands in our translation, that word has among its derived meanings *confident expectation*; and is, in fact, used familiarly in that sense both by sacred and profane writers. And when you recollect that, in this way of writing, the *things not seen* in the second clause, of which *faith* is the evidence or conviction, are the *things hoped for* in the first, you must see that this character of faith which describes it as the confident expectation of the things for which we hope; and a conviction that, though unseen, they are real and sure, coincides with the account which I have attempted to give from other sources; and the entire of what follows falls in perfectly with this account, and strongly confirms it.

I do not mean to go through, in detail, all the instances of the force of faith in God, which the Apostle takes from the lives of patriarchs, prophets, and martyrs, to illustrate his general account of the principle. But by referring to the places you will easily see that in all these servants of God, the principle, though existing doubtless in different degrees, and though tried and exhibited in very different ways, and upon very different occasions, is everywhere the same; that it is confidence in God, founded upon such a manifestation of His character as He saw fit to make; a reliance so deep and secure upon His power, His goodness, and His truth, as enabled them to hope undoubtingly for all He promised, and in hope to endure patiently all that He appointed, and to perform resolutely all that He enjoined.

The Apostle points to Noah, for example, sustained by this principle amidst the scoffs of a faithless generation, in his patient preparation of the appointed refuge against the day of God's wrath; to the severely tried father of the faithful in the strength of the same principle, raising his hand to slay his son, "his only son Isaac, whom he loved," at the command of Him who had given him that son by a miracle, and in whom he trusted as able and true to restore him by a miracle again; to Moses in *faith*, abandoning the luxuries of a sinful court, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, and esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the pleasures of Egypt, in certain hope of a future recompense of reward, and fearlessly encountering the vindictive wrath of an earthly monarch, under a sense of the presence of Him who is invisible; to Jephtha and Gideon, and the other heroes of Jewish history, who, in faith, renounced the arm of flesh in peril, and fearlessly trusted in Him who is mighty to save; yea, even to the heathen Rahab, in faith, severing so

many of the strongest human ties, forsaking her country and her country's idols, and taking her portion with the people of the true God."

We might take exception to the manner in which our author deals with some of his examples; for instance, in the case of the Syro-Phenician woman, we regard her confidence as arising, not from some general views of the gracious character of the Ruler of the world, but from a distinct view of the character of him whom she addressed; but this, instead of invalidating, gives increased force to the exemplification of the principle in question. The instruction we gather from these and kindred examples of the use of the word *faith* in the New Testament, is that it means simple trust in Christ as the procurer of salvation, or trust in God as the giver of salvation for Christ's sake; and that "the firmest belief in the Scripture narrative, with the clearest apprehension of the Gospel scheme, and the soundest views of Christian doctrine, do not constitute faith in Christ, until to this clear conviction of the sufficiency of His atoning sacrifice, are added a real desire for its fruits, and heartfelt confidence in its efficacy; until the Spirit has enabled us to cast ourselves in humble reliance, for time and eternity, upon the mercy and the truth of a reconciled God."

THE PRAYER WHICH GOD IS PLEDGED TO ANSWER.

IN an idle tale, which amused the childhood of many of our readers, there is a worse than foolish fancy of a wishing-cap, which, when the possessor wore it, invested him with the power of obtaining, instantaneously, whatever he desired. Men sometimes appear to regard the promises of God to answer prayer, as serving a similar purpose. As though they meant that a man, whatever his character, had only to work himself up to a blind and presumptuous confidence, and Omnipotence stood pledged to the accomplishment of his wishes, and unless his selfish desires were gratified, he would almost be entitled to impugn the divine veracity. If this is not the spirit in which men frequently address a throne of grace, or in which they are admonished to make experiments in prayer, it is, at all events, on some such misconception that infidelity bases its objection to the Christian doctrine, and its ridicule of the Christian practice of making our requests known unto God. "Is it for a moment to be supposed," they ask, "that the will of the Eternal is to be changed by the will of his creature, or that the order of nature and the course of Providence are to be interrupted or reversed, in obedience to the capricious demand of a vain mortal?" No, caviller, it is not for a moment to be supposed. No supposition could be more impious—none more inconsistent with the doctrine of Scripture—none more utterly repugnant to the convictions of a child of God. In this, as in almost every case, the objections of

2 THE PRAYER WHICH GOD IS PLEDGED TO ANSWER.

infidelity are based upon the grossest ignorance or misconception of what is taught in the Word of God.

We have no desire to evade, but rather court the fullest investigation of every article of our faith, claiming, however, that every article be taken in the Scriptural statement of it. We avow the fullest confidence in God as a God who heareth prayer, in his repeated promises to answer our supplication, and in the recorded testimony of His people that God hath heard them. "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He heareth us." Nor do we use language in any hidden or indirect sense, in avowing his confidence. Nor do we in any way modify the promises on which that confidence rests. We receive these promises as meaning *all*, and precisely *what* they affirm. But we claim, as a matter of simple justice, that they be considered in their Scriptural light and connections, and then it will be clearly seen that they are very far from teaching that the will of God is to be subject to the caprice of His creatures, or that He binds Himself to comply with their selfish desires.

In order to a just view of these promises we must remember to whom they are addressed; for the same Scriptures which contain the promise, also contain assurances, equally emphatic, that there are certain descriptions of persons whose prayers are an abomination to God. Thus, He says, of one class, "Then shall they call upon me but I will not answer, they shall seek me early but shall not find me." It is asked regarding the hypocrite, "Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?" Again, we are taught, "The Lord is far from the wicked, but He heareth the cry of the righteous." Without multiplying examples, we direct attention to the fact, that all the promises of God to hear and answer prayer are addressed to *believers*, whose highest ambition is that their will should be in strict

harmony with God's will. The promise, for example, "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you," is addressed, not to men indiscriminately, but to the disciples of Christ. Such promises can be urged by the people of God only when they are in their proper position of submission to the will of God. So one of them says, "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." So the confidence expressed in a passage quoted above, is the confidence of those who can say in the context, "Now are we the sons of God;" and their confidence has this express limitation, "If we ask anything *according to His will* He heareth us." The promise of a loving Father to His child must not be appropriated by His enemies.

In order to a just view of these promises we must take into account the Scriptural conditions of all true prayer; for, surely, it would be most unreasonable to consider God as bound to any other conditions. We are taught in Scripture that "we know not what we should pray for as we ought;" and, on this account, we are assured that "the Spirit helpeth our infirmities;" nay, that "the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us," and this is true prayer—prayer in the Spirit. This harmonizes with the view given above of the character of those to whom the promises are made. The Spirit who helps our infirmities, and makes intercession for us, is the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, and He maketh intercession for us *according to the will of God*. We do not ask at present *how* the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, or guides our desires into the channel of prayer; but this is the prayer to which the promise is given, and, therefore, "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us."

Another Scriptural condition of true prayer is, that it be offered in the name of Christ. He is the only medium

through whom prayer can be either offered or answered. "No man," He says, "cometh unto the Father but by me." He is the advocate and high priest who ever liveth to make intercession for us; and it is on this consideration that the promise turns, "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father *in my name* He will give it you." He is the only way whereby we have access to the Father, the only sacrifice through whose blood we have boldness to enter into the holiest, the only high priest through whose intercessions our plea can be accepted. All this is acknowledged in all true prayer. We disclaim all pretensions to be heard on our own account, and claim to be accepted and answered only for His sake. We profess our faith in the testimony of God concerning Him, that in Him we have pardon, peace, and eternal life. This implies our renunciation of all that opposes the will of *His* Father and *our* Father. And who that knows the meaning of all this, could for a moment think of profaning the holy name of Jesus, by using it as a plea for anything that is not in harmony with the will of the Father. When we rest our cause upon his intercession, who would presume to expect his advocacy of a right that contravenes the Divine will. Thus, whether we consider the parties to whom the promises are made, or the Scriptural conditions of true prayer, which originates in the intercession of the Spirit, is offered in the name of Jesus, and depends on his advocacy, the Scriptures are very far from teaching that the will of God can be controlled by the caprice or selfishness of His creatures.

They teach, on the contrary, that all the interests of His creatures are involved in the prevalence of His will. The happiness and perfection of His people consist in conforming their will to His, and all true prayer may be summed up in this, "Thy will be done." No child of God can deliberately ask anything contrary to the will of God, or in-

consistent with His glory. So far as true prayer is the intercession of the Spirit, it must be according to the will of God. And if, in the obscurity of this present state, a believer asks anything in the name of Jesus, regarding which the will of God is not known, the very fact of asking in that name implies that it is asked in submission to the will of the Father. The end in view is still that God's will may be done, however we may be mistaken regarding the time, means, or manner of its accomplishment; and thus, "if we know that He heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." When Paul was subjected to a bodily affliction which, in his own view, disqualified him for the service to which he was called, he besought the Lord thrice that it might be removed, and received the assurance, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is perfected in weakness." His prayer was answered, though in a way very different from what he expected. He had the petition which he desired of Him, not in the removal of the affliction, but in the assurance that the affliction would be made subservient to the very end which Paul feared it would hinder; and fully satisfied with the answer, he said, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmity, that the power of Christ may rest in me."

The child of God can never cease ardently to desire whatever he knows to be according to the will of God, and subservient to His glory. If his power were equal to his desire the object of it would at once be accomplished. But, while he is conscious that he is utterly destitute of such power, all that remains is that his inefficient will should go out and identify itself with the will of Him who speaks, and it is done; and, since he has a divine warrant for it, his ardent desire assumes the form and finds the utterance of confident supplication in a name that always prevails.

Here it may be demanded: "If, then, it is the will of God that is done, what does prayer avail, or how does it affect the issue?" If it availed nothing, the child of God could not do less than utter his ardent desire, "Thy will be done." But we are told that "the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man, availeth much." Nor will the infidel be warranted in disputing the truth of this, because a poor, short-sighted mortal, like himself, cannot explain *how* it avails, or *why* the spirit of God should make the prayer of a believer the vehicle of His intercession. The will of God must be accomplished in all things; all creatures combined could not thwart it. Yet God has been pleased to assign an important place to the agency of His servants in carrying out His purposes. They are "laborers together with Him" in carrying out His designs, though He no more needs their co-operation than He who fed thousands with five small loaves, needs the co-operation of the husbandman or the influence of sunshine and showers in giving bread to all that live. But if God has left room for the agency of our labors in the accomplishment of His designs, why not also for the agency of our prayers? If, for example, He employs Paul's preaching to the Gentiles as a means of their salvation, why not also employ Paul's prayers for them? If an objector demands, "Would they not have been saved if Paul had not prayed?" it is a sufficient reply to ask, "Would they not have been saved if Paul had not preached?" All difficulties that can be suggested lie no more against prayer than they do against any other form of creature agency. There is only this distinction, that a sanctified spirit, going out in unison with the divine will, and, in loving dependence, laying hold on the outstretched arm of Omnipotence, is the most sublime act of creature agency, and one to which it becomes God to give the first place among all the secondary causes which He is pleased

to employ. And it surely does not diminish our sense of His wisdom, while it sheds new glory on His condescending love, that in His providential arrangements for the execution of His sovereign will, He should have made provision for fulfilling the promise of His Son, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name He will give it you." That He has made such provision, we have the amplest proof. Neither in the inspired nor in the uninspired records of the people's experience, their written nor their unwritten testimony, can an instance be found in which their confidence has been disappointed. A host of worthies of all ages and countries, whose testimony is not to be impeached, and, least of all, by those who, from the nature of the case, can have no counter experience, unite in the grateful expression of a common experience, "But, verily, God hath heard me; He hath attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, who hath not turned away my prayer, nor His mercy from me."

Much, it is true, that has the sound of prayer in human ears, falls dead and ineffectual; for God is not deceived by words upon the lips when there is not behind them a soul intent on the accomplishment of His will and the manifestation of His glory. To many professed suppliants it may be said, "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." Their prayers, if not an empty sound, are the breathings of selfishness; or, when not the utterance of selfishness, the doubt in their heart belies the supplication of their lips. There is a plain direction regarding prayer which is often misunderstood or misapplied. The direction is, "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering;" and the misapprehension is, that a man whose habitual state is one of distrust or unbelief, has only to "work himself up" to a firm belief on any given occasion in order to claim the promise which belongs to the

prayer of faith. But the word "wavering" in that direction relates not to a man's state of mind with reference to a particular object, but to his character or habitual state of mind; for it is added, "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven of the wind and tossed." Not more positive is God's promise to hear the prayer of the believer than is His assurance of the vanity of the prayer of the waverer. "Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." Men cannot come and insult God by making experiments in prayer, pretending to plead with Him in order that they may see what the result will be. The prayer of faith can be offered only by a believer; the Spirit makes intercession only in the heart where He dwells; and prayer, in accordance with the will of God, can only come from a soul whose ruling desire and aim is that the will of God may be done. As Leighton has it, "He that hath nothing of the Spirit of God cannot pray at all; he may howl as a beast in his necessity or distress, or may speak words of prayer, as some birds learn the language of men, but pray he cannot." And again, "Only the children call God their *Father*, and cry unto Him as their Father; and therefore many a poor, unlettered Christian, far outstrips your school rabbies in this faculty; because it is not effectually taught in those lower academies. They must be taught in the school of God as children of His house, who speak His language. Men may give spiritual rules and directions in this, and such as may be useful, drawn from the Word, which furnishes us with all needed precepts; but you have still to bring these into the seat of this faculty of prayer, the heart, and stamp them upon it, and so to teach it to pray, without which there is no prayer. This is the prerogative royal of Him who framed the heart of man within him."

In His last discourse with His disciples before He suf-

ferred, the Lord makes this the condition on which He promises the answer of prayer, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you." Then only is the heart the receptacle, and then only are our words the utterance of the very mind of Jesus. Then, as has been remarked, "prayer in the name of Christ is such as is offered in the nature, mind, and spirit of Christ." Then the unlimited promise of the fulfilment of prayer will be understood, not as referring to spiritual blessings only, but to all that can possibly concern the children of God or affect His glory, were it an interest insignificant as the hairs of their head, which are all numbered. If prayer proceeds from our own will, the promise cannot be claimed, even though it relate to spiritual blessings which may be sought after, no less than earthly blessings, in a selfish spirit; but, when the incitement to prayer is derived from an inward divine operation, *that* prayer is truly offered in the name of the Lord, and has its fulfilment in itself; for, where God incites to prayer, there of course, in His veracity and faithfulness, He gives to him who prays.

And if in lonely places a fearful child I shrink,
 He prays the prayers within me, I cannot ask or think—
 The deep, unspoken language, known only to that love
 Which fathom's the heart's mystery from the throne of light above.

His Spirit to my spirit sweet words of comfort saith,
 How God the weak one strengthens who leans on Him in faith;
 How He hath built a city of love, and light, and song,
 Where the eye at last beholdeth what the heart hath loved so long.

FRANKE'S ORPHAN HOUSE.

IN "a narrative of the Lord's dealings with George Muller," which has been widely circulated and greatly blessed to many in this country, mention is made of the Lord's dealing with His servant, A. K. Franke, who, in dependence on the living God alone, established an immense Orphan-house, "which," says Mr. Muller, "I had many times seen with my own eyes." By this, and occasional notices of the Orphan-house itself, which, after, a hundred and fifty years, remains as a witness of the faithfulness of God, inquiry has been awakened regarding the man and his labors, which we propose in some measure to satisfy. Our object, however, is not merely to satisfy curiosity. In the introduction to a narrative from which the following account of this institution at Glaucha, is gleaned, Franke gives his reasons for publishing a statement of the facts in the case. After referring to the calumnies to which he desired to furnish a refutation "that Satan might be silenced and the name of God magnified;" to the duty of considering one another to provoke to love and good works; and to his confidence that the poor and the afflicted would be strengthened by the proof that God is still the same He hath ever been in times of old; he adds, "The works of God have commonly the greatest influences upon future ages; on the contrary, they, in whose time they were done, too commonly undervalue them, and harden themselves against them by permitting themselves to be overswayed by the damning sin of unbelief. Therefore, it is hoped that God,

according to His infinite mercy and goodness, will hand down this present narrative for a memorial to after ages, that they may magnify His name, and acknowledge that He only is the Lord Almighty, and there is none like Him." The memorial has not perished. George Muller is not the only one in our own day who has been encouraged by it. We gratefully accept the opportunity in these pages, to offer its comfort and refreshment to the hearts of God's tried and needy children. We do so with the assurance that the name of God will be glorified in their abundant thanksgiving.

Before turning to the Narrative, it may be of interest to the reader to learn a few particulars regarding the man whom God was pleased to employ to bear this signal testimony of His unchanging faithfulness to an unbelieving age. Augustus Herman Franke was born at Lubeck, in the year 1663, and died at Halle in the year 1727, at the age of 64. He was converted in early life, and was distinguished, also, by his remarkable progress in letters at an early age, so that he was admitted to the university in his 14th year. About the middle of the seventeenth century the Protestant Churches of Germany had settled down in a lifeless formality, which was only here and there disturbed by the testimony of some faithful preacher. God, however, was raising up His own chosen instruments of a revival, similar to that which extended over Great Britain and the Churches of New England. About the time of Franke's birth, Dr. Spener, who was the foremost of those who were instrumental in this work, began to preach the gospel with great power; and, subsequently, in the cities of Frankfort, Dresden and Berlin, where, in the providence of God, he successively occupied prominent positions, he was the means of spiritual blessing to thousands. When Franke was a student at Leipsic, he, with other students, formed a

society for the study of the Scriptures, which they called *Collegium Philo biblicum*. Their principal object at first was, the accurate study of the Hebrew and Greek texts, but gradually their exercises assumed a more practical and spiritual tone. Dr. Spener, with quick sagacity, discerning the importance of this movement at an early period of its progress, wrote a letter of encouragement and counsel to those engaged in it. Franke spent a portion of the year, 1689, in the family of Dr. Spener, at Dresden, and returned to Leipsic greatly stimulated in his zeal and advanced in knowledge. The society, of which he was one of the originators, had attracted much attention, and had given a great impulse to earnest inquiry into the mind of the Spirit. Franke was, therefore, encouraged to open a Biblical school, and expounded several of the Pauline Epistles to crowds of young men, many of whom gave evidence of a piety akin to that of their instructor. In these labors he was joined by John Caspar Schade, who had also a large audience when he expounded the Epistles of John and Peter. The influence of these classes upon the character of the University, was soon sufficiently felt to arouse the hostility of the ungodly, and all who attended them, or sympathized with them, were in derision styled "pietists," a name which, from that time, was used in Germany, very much as the name "Methodists," similarly bestowed on Mr. Wesley and his associates in Oxford, came to be used in England. Accusations of heresy and fanaticism were used, not only to poison the public mind, but to stir up the authorities against them; and the result was that Franke and Schade were banished from Leipsic.

The fire that was kindled persecution could not extinguish, and to banish such men was only to extend it. Franke was appointed pastor of Erfurt, where his preaching and his instruction of children, for which he had a peculiar

gift, were blessed as the means of an extensive awakening among the Roman Catholic, as well as the Protestant, population. The Roman Catholic magistracy appealed to the Elector of Mentz, who was no friend of evangelical truth, and he first endeavored to interdict all spiritual exercises, and finally banished Franke from his territories.

In the meantime Dr. Spener, who was styled "the Patriarch of the Pietists," was, in the providence of God, placed in a situation where he could protect the persecuted. The University of Halle was founded at that time, and, through Dr. Spener's influence, the professors' chairs were filled by men distinguished for their piety as well as their scholarship. The names of Breithaupt, Anthony, Michælis, and Lannies, who, with Franke, composed the theological faculty, are names familiar to American scholars. Franke was first appointed to the chair of Oriental Languages, and subsequently to that of Divinity. At the same time he became pastor of Glaucha, a suburb of Halle, and then he was led, step by step, to the accomplishment of the work of faith of which we now propose to trace the history. We may remark, that the revival of pure and undefiled religion, stigmatized as pietism, extended over a great part of Germany, with results which will only be duly appreciated in the day when the saints are gathered together unto Christ.

On Thursday of every week it was the custom of the poor of Halle and its suburbs to visit the houses of the benevolent to receive alms. One day, as these poor people flocked around the door of the parsonage at Glaucha, Professor Franke being touched by their evident degradation, invited them into his house, and, before distributing his alms, endeavored to interest them in the truth of the Gospel. He invited them to visit him every Thursday both for instruction and alms; and this proved the unsought origin

of his great work, which may be dated from the year 1694.

His faith and love expanded with his labors, and with an increasing acquaintance with the gross ignorance and wretchedness of the objects of his charity. Their children especially attracted his attention, and he sent some of them to school at his own expense. He also began to care for another class of the poor who shrank from seeking relief by begging. These various claims soon exceeded his own pecuniary resources; and, after finding how difficult it was to increase his means of doing good by soliciting subscriptions, he soon received an important lesson in the exercise of direct trust in God, in which he was afterwards so abundantly blessed. This first lesson is very instructive. He was in the act of preparing a contribution-box to be placed in his parlor, and had selected a scriptural inscription to attract the notice of his visitors, when, turning over the leaves of his Bible, his eye fell upon the word, "God is able to make all grace abound towards you, that ye always having all-sufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work." "This sentence made a deep impression on my mind," he says; "causing me to think, How is God able to do this? I should be glad to help the poor had I wherewithal, whereas now I am forced to send many away empty." Some hours after he received a letter from a friend, telling him of his deep poverty and urgent need. This recalled the passage with greater impressiveness than at first, "attended with sighs and aspirations." Led thus to cast the care of his friend upon the Lord, he found that the family were soon abundantly provided for. "This proved a sufficient demonstration how God is able to make us abound to every good work; which," he says, "I could not forbear to mention, because it helps to discover, as well the outward cause from which our undertaking took its

rise, as the frame of my mind which the Lord upheld for carrying on the work."

Soon after the contribution-box was set up, the amount found in it was so considerable as to suggest the propriety of establishing a school for the children of the poor. This was placed under the care of a poor student, to whom the small salary paid was an important assistance. The school was opened in the spring of 1696, and the number of scholars soon increased to fifty or sixty. In course of the summer a considerable sum of money was received to be distributed among the poor, with the provision that poor students should be remembered in the distribution. This led to an additional feature of the enterprise, which has been followed by important results—the support of poor students.

As the number of children in the school increased it became painfully evident that the labor bestowed on them was, to a large extent, neutralized by the vicious influences to which they were exposed at home. This suggested the thought of an hospital, in which they might be surrounded by influences of a far different home from that of their degraded parents. At first a few orphans were selected, who were boarded with persons of known piety. "But now," says the narrative, "that happened to me which is usual to persons under my circumstances; I mean if one hath but courage enough to bestow one groat upon the poor, he afterwards will be as willing to part with a crown. Having thus made a beginning in the name of God to take effectual care of the poor, without any settled provision, and without any regard to human supports, I relied entirely on Him, and so did not scruple to make daily additions to the number of our children." The hospital was founded, not upon any accumulated fund, or any pledges

of contributions, but entirely on the providence of God. "And he that begins in God will surely be able to finish."

Pecuniary resources were so increased that, besides defraying the expense of maintaining the orphans, sustaining the charity school, and assisting many poor students, a house was purchased, which was opened, in the year 1696, as a home for eighteen orphans, under the care of a teacher and steward. Within a year an adjoining house was purchased, and, in addition to the care of the orphans, a free table was provided for poor students at the University. On two days of the week also, people broken down with old age and poverty, were invited to come and receive religious instruction, among whom alms were regularly distributed.

The schools for the poor and the orphans were so admirably conducted, that, at the request of citizens of Halle, schools were opened for the education of their children, not as a matter of charity, but on the payment of suitable fees. Employment was thus found for the most deserving students, who, in addition to the ordinary branches, taught Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, with history, geography, geometry, music, and botany. In these schools, those of the orphans who discovered an aptitude for learning, received a classical education.

The increasing number, both of poor children and students, rendered it necessary to think of ampler accommodation. Circumstances soon opened the way to the purchase of the lands on which the Franke institution now stands, and the erection of a large orphan house was undertaken in simple dependence on God for its completion and support. "The work was begun without any settled provision, and the Lord from time to time seconded the enterprise with such a blessing, that even the builders and workmen cheerfully went about their business, by reason of their

pay. And it afforded no small satisfaction of mind to many of them, that each day's work was begun with prayer, and Saturdays, when they got their pay, were, now and then, finished with good admonitions, prayers, and thanksgiving for the assistance we had that week received at the hand of the Lord. He that will observe these things will understand the loving kindness of the Lord." The foundation was laid in the year 1698, and, in the year 1701, the orphans and students took possession of their new house. At the same time a house was bought in Glaucha, as an hospital for poor widows, whose spiritual wants and temporal welfare were tenderly cared for.

Having traced thus far the progress of the enterprise, we extract from the narrative a few remarkable instances of God's providence, and of His faithfulness to answer the prayer of faith. It will be remembered that the design was not first to provide a settled fund, and then go about the work, but "what the Lord bestowed on us as a means of present support, was readily expended, though it consisted of but a few crowns, and our care for a future supply was by faith committed to the Lord." In the instances we select it will be seen that the Lord was pleased often to try the faith of His servant, and to send the answer to prayer in such a way as to make it evident that the answer was from Him, and in such a way as to cherish a sense of dependence on Him from day to day. The first incident we quote is the first which Franke records. "Before Easter, 1696, I found the provision for the poor very low, and so far exhausted that I did not know where to get anything towards defraying the charges of the ensuing week, which happened before I had been used to such awakening trials; but God was pleased to relieve our want in a very seasonable hour, and by an unexpected help. He inclined the heart of a person, who it was, where residing, or of what

sex, the Lord knoweth, to pay down one thousand crowns for the relief of the poor, and this sum was delivered to me in such a time when our provision was brought to the last crown. The Lord, whose work this was, be praised for ever, and reward this benefactor with His blessing a thousand fold; for surely the Lord bestowed on that person a liberal heart."

By occasional trials of this kind, relieved by the most bountiful and timely supplies, the Lord prepared the heart of His servant for severer trials, and gently drew forth his faith to its most triumphant exercise. So that whatever might be the circumstances of the Institution, he was enabled to attend to his lectures in the college and his other multifarious duties without detraction of mind; avoiding temporal cares, and keeping the whole bent of his soul upon a close union with God. In the severest straits, no application was made to man for aid, nor did any outward token reveal to men the want, which, when carried to the Lord in prayer, was always seasonably met.

"At one time all our provision was spent. Then it fell out that, in addressing myself to the Lord, I found myself deeply affected with the fourth petition of the Lord's prayer: 'Give us this day our daily bread;' and my thoughts were fixed, in a more especial manner, upon the words, 'This day,' because, on the very same day, we had great occasion for it. While I was yet praying, a friend of mine came before my door in a coach, and brought the sum of four hundred crowns. Then I perceived the reason why I more eminently had found such a sweet savor in that expression, 'This day,' and praised the Lord, in whose disposal are all things. Thus the morrow takes thought for the things of itself."

Numerous instances are mentioned in which, at the very time when Franke was giving to strangers an account of

the wonderful providences of God, some gift for the poor was sent in their very presence, to confirm their faith; or when those connected with the Institution were importuning him for money, while he was admonishing them to unhesitating trust in the Lord, a supply would arrive when his admonition and his testimony to the faithfulness of God was scarcely out of his mouth. At length, when they were reduced to extremities, instead of being cast down, they learned to rejoice in the thought that the time had come when the Lord would make another signal display of His providence. The steward, who was at first oppressed with care, learned to say, when all their resources seemed exhausted, "Now will I patiently wait for the wonderful help of the Lord; and see by what way or means He will be pleased to relieve our necessities."

"About Micheltmas, 1699, I was in great want again. In a very fair and pleasant day I took a walk, and viewing the most glorious and magnificent fabric of the heavens, I found myself remarkably strengthened in faith, which, indeed, I do not ascribe to any disposition of my own, but entirely attributed it to the gracious operations of the spirit of God upon my soul. Hereupon, were suggested to my mind these and the like thoughts, 'How excellent a thing it is for any one, being deprived of all outward help, and having nothing to depend upon, but having the knowledge of the living God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and putting his trust in Him, to rest satisfied in the extremity of poverty.' Now, though I well know that the very same day I wanted money, yet I found myself not cast down; and, just-as I came home, the steward came for money to pay the workmen (it being Saturday) employed in the building of the hospital, and accordingly addressing himself to me, he said, 'Is there any money brought in?' To which I answered, 'No; but I believe in God.'" Scarce was the

word out of my mouth, when I was told a student desired to speak with me, who then brought thirty crowns from a person whose name he would not discover. So, I went back into the room, and asked the steward how much he wanted at present? He said, 'Thirty crowns.' I replied, 'Here they are; but do you want any more?' 'No;' said he. This confirmed us both in our reliance upon the Lord, because we plainly discerned the wonderful hand of God, who, in that very moment that we were in necessity did supply us, and even with the very sum we wanted. The exact sum showed the narrow inspection of God, and none being sent over left room for the exercise of faith."

We might multiply these instances, but after all it would be necessary to remind the reader that the manifestation of God's providential care, and His readiness to acknowledge the faith, and answer the prayers of His servants, was not the occasional, but the every-day experience of Prof. Franke, in the whole of this work. When princes and nobles interposed, and, from the kindest motives, endeavored to place the enterprise on what they regarded as a permanent footing, and to provide for it by worldly policy, the well meant endeavors proved a hinderance rather than a help, and it was shown, as Franke expressed it, that "faith's undertakings go best on the Lord's wheels." The Lord's hand was recognized, not only in the abundant and timely supplies which He sent to meet the wants of the Institution, but also in the character of the friends He raised up—friends who took it upon their hearts, and gave, some their money, sometimes out of their deep poverty; some their labor, and some, who had nothing else to give, their fervent prayers to God. Of these friends, Franke says, "I may deservedly call them the fathers and mothers of our poor." He acknowledges with especial gratitude, that the Lord, from the first, favored him "with the concurrence of such

fellow-laborers as sincerely loved God and their neighbors." "And I must confess," he adds, "I more admire this branch of God's providence, than the richest mines of silver and gold, and justly enumerate it amongst the means whereby the whole undertaking has been begun and thus far carried on."

Amidst these abounding tokens of the Divine power in this undertaking, no one who has observed the manner in which the Lord deals with His children, or who is in the least acquainted with the malice of Satan and the evil that is in the world, will, for a moment, suppose that this work was carried forward without severe trials and many afflictions. No purity of motive, no disinterestedness of love, no measure of self-sacrifice could exempt such a laborer as Professor Franke from the most cruel slander and aspersions of open and secret enemies. Sometimes it was alleged that he and his fellow-laborers were accumulating fortunes to themselves out of the contributions sent to the poor. The most unworthy motives were ascribed to every act, and the slightest apparent errors in the management were aggravated to the most heinous crime. Men who had given up all earthly prospects for their love to the orphans, were accused of cruelty to them, and men who were selling their books and clothes to feed the poor, were accused of an unsympathizing harshness if they did not place every suppliant in a situation of ease and comfort. More trying than all this, was the ingratitude of many of those who had enjoyed the benefits of the Institution. The parents and relatives of children who had been educated in the schools, sometimes represented that the diet was unfit for dogs, and that the children were bowed down with incessant labor. Children of profligate habits, who would not submit to wholesome regulations, ran away, and to justify themselves, spread abroad a world of lies. Students who had been

taken into the hospital on account of their poverty, and dismissed from it on account of their profligacy or irreligion, sought the same means of justifying themselves and being revenged on their benefactors. Nor will it be thought surprising if even the malicious inventions of these ingrates found ears open to receive them, and tongues ready to circulate them.

Besides these opponents whose malice was undisguised, there were not wanting professing Christians who blamed such a work of faith as a bold presumption and reckless imprudence. Those who are not accustomed to trust God beyond their purse or their store-house, naturally regarded it as a solecism in conduct to trust wholly in the living God, "As if," to use the language of Franke, "it was not a much safer way to reckon upon the powerful and infallible assistance of the Great Maker of heaven and earth, than to trust in the unstable promises of the wealthy, or have confidence in one's own possessions."

A chapter in the narrative, is devoted to a review of the advantages which manifestly flowed from the Institution, not only to those who directly enjoyed its privileges, but to society at large, and especially, to the community in the midst of which it had grown up. But to enumerate these does not come within the scope of this article. There are advantages obvious to every one, which have reached even to this land and to our own time. Of these Franke says, "The Lord hath fully assured me that the world will never be able to suppress them. The Lord, I am sure, will water this His lily, that it may still more and more diffuse the fragrance of its smell. For the Lord liveth, and praised be God who is my hiding place, and let the God of my salvation be exalted. Hallelujah!"

In a continuation of the narrative from which we have quoted, the author traces the further history and the

increasing prosperity of the undertaking; and shows that it had been carried on as it had been begun. "The well-spring of the divine bounty," he says, "hath ever since been flowing." He gives a number of instances similar to those already cited, in which the Lord evidently honored the faith and answered the prayers of His servants. He also traces God's hand in a number of subsidiary undertakings, such as the apothecary's shop, and the printing and bookselling establishment connected with the Orphan House. We could not, without extending this article beyond all reasonable limits, give any adequate view of the extent of the machinery which was set in motion by the instrumentality of this man's faith. His own labors appear herculean and beyond any man's power, who was not sustained and guided as he was. In the midst of all these labors he is calm and peaceful, and in the midst of all this apparent success he is humble as a child, "knowing well enough," he says, "that I am but a poor unprofitable servant, and an undone worm if the Lord withdraw Himself from me. I should be satisfied if every one would learn so much by my example as to know by experience the meaning of that expression, 'When this poor man cried, the Lord heard him and delivered him out of all his troubles;' and so rely entirely upon Him, who, being the most independent Good, hath an everlasting spring within Himself, and so is infinitely able to help."

Franke's confidence that the Institutions, of which he was honored to lay the foundation, would continue to be a blessing to future generations, has not been disappointed. "Franke's Institution," as it is now called, consists of the Orphan House, the various schools, classical and common; the Canstein Bible press, the apothecary's shop, and the bookselling establishment. The buildings of the Orphan House form two rows, each 800 feet long. The number of

orphans has been as large as 200 at one time. The number educated in it from its commencement exceeds 5000. It is still, in part, supported by charitable contributions, but Franke himself looked forward to a time when it might have an income from other sources. Speaking of a charter and certain privileges, such as the permission to establish the apothecary's and bookseller's stores, he shows that at the time he wrote they had been an expense rather than a profit, and adds, "They are to prove more beneficial to the ensuing age than I find them in the present." And so it has proved. A considerable income is derived from the apothecary's shop; a single remedy, of which it has the exclusive sale, at one time yielded an income, it is said, of twenty thousand dollars. The bookselling establishment, which is one of the largest in Germany, yields a large profit. The classical school, which has a high reputation, contributes to the support of the charity. The Canstein Bible press, established by Charles H. Canstein, a friend of Franke's, who left his library, and a part of his fortune to the Orphan House, was designed to furnish cheap Bibles to the poor. More than three millions of Bibles and Testaments have been issued from it. If any profit arise from the sales, it is employed to lower the price of succeeding editions.

We cannot easily understand how the force of the extraordinary facts connected with this work of faith can be evaded. Surely it would seem strange if any one, professing to be a Christian, should seek to evade their force, however humbly they may rebuke his own want of faith. We cannot but cherish the hope, as we fervently pray that the perusal of them may embolden some tried and timid believers to cast themselves entirely upon the providence of God, and in everything to make their requests known unto God. It need scarcely be added that God will honor

nothing short of unhesitating trust. Men must not, with a doubt in their heart, profess to enter on such a walk of faith, as though they would make an experiment upon the Divine promises. Still less should it be necessary to say that a great work is not to be lightly and inconsiderately undertaken, simply in view of the success of another. On this point Franke remarks, "I wish, with all my heart, that every one may, with a full assurance, and unshaken firmness of mind, trust in the living God, and so bring forth fruits of righteousness in greater plenty. But this I say, let every one be sure of the foundation he builds on. Let him beware of all manner of presumptuous self-conceitedness, and of all selfish willing and working, even in such projects as seem directly to tend to the promotion of the good cause. He is to count the cost over and over; I mean, he is to make the strictest inquiry into the certainty of his case, or the moving principle he acteth upon, for fear of falling under the just censure of that proverb, 'This man (and so not the Lord) began to build, but is not able to finish.'

"For my part I readily confess that I have been engaged in this affair, and am hardly able to give any sufficient reason for it. It was, I think, a secret guidance of the Lord, whereby I was carried to the performing of such things as tended to an end I had not yet conceived in my mind, which inclined me afterward to frame such a design, whereof, at first, I had not entertained any premeditated project, which being once laid down, it became a means, under the Divine guidance, of carrying on, facilitating, and accomplishing the whole undertaking; and, indeed, the experience for such a work grew up along with the work itself. Praised be, therefore, the wisdom of God, for all and in all His wonderful dealings."

The name of Franke, and the character of the institution at Glaucha, (which it has been our privilege to describe,) were familiar to the churches of New England a hundred and fifty years ago; and we find notices of contributions to the support of the orphans, forwarded by Dr. Cotton Mather. There is a letter, of great interest, from Dr. Franke to Dr. Mather, dated December 19, 1714, in which it is stated that at that time there were nearly five hundred persons, including orphans, students, teachers, and laborers, maintained at the hospital. The writer communicates to his correspondent all the information he possesses of evangelical and benevolent enterprises in different parts of the world. Among these he relates a number of instances in which the Lord's blessing on the Orphan House had stimulated and encouraged other efforts to do good in the name of the Lord. Of these our space permits us only to quote the following:

"In 1710, a countryman, who had hitherto gained a livelihood by driving a wagon, being brought some time since to a solicitous care about his own soul and its eternal salvation, found himself so deeply affected with the deplorable ignorance of so vast a number of people, that he formed a project of saving from eternal ruin at least some of the ignorant youths wherewith the country abounded, and to give them such wholesome instructions as he thought proper for obtaining that end. He took thought of building a house for their reception, and then to appoint a master for regulating their life and manners; but seeing himself almost destitute of such means as were necessary for accomplishing that design, he, without any more ado, sold wagon and horses in order to build a house fit for his purpose. Many laughed at the poor man's enterprise, and others maliciously opposed it; but himself, with unwearied application, and relying on the power and goodness of God

for seasonable assistance, made his way through all lets and obstructions, and raised such a building as he supposed would answer the purpose on hand. There are now twenty children in it who are not only provided with clothes and diet, but have also an able master set over them, to form their lives and train them up in the fear and knowledge of God. They have no other fund to depend on but what is cast in by good and charitable Christians."

The manner in which the bookselling establishment is mentioned above may leave the impression that it was connected with the institution chiefly as a source of income. The profit of the business was not at all in view when it was begun, but only such books were printed as promised to promote the glory of God and the edification of men. It has been the means of putting into circulation many valuable books. Among them may be mentioned Dr. Spener's works. Franke also, amid his other labors, was a somewhat voluminous author; and in the catalogue of the establishment we find twenty-seven volumes of his works, great and small. In the letter to Dr. Cotton Mather he speaks of it as having proved highly serviceable for promoting religion both at home and abroad. "Abundance of books, tending to revive a spirit of primitive piety, have been all along published from the hospital's press, and attended with a singular blessing in the conversion of readers. He mentions one instance in which some of these books, coming into the hands of prisoners banished to Siberia, had been the means of leading many of them to the Saviour. Mention is also made of the publication of versions of the Bible in various languages; and when some Danish missionaries made known to Franke their labors among the heathen on the Coromandel coast, and their progress in the translation of the New Testament, he had a font of Malabar types cut,

and procured a press, which were sent out under the care of Mr. John Berlin, a student of divinity, who had learned the art of printing in the Orphan House,—the first mission press in the world from which a translation of the New Testament was soon issued.

THE CRUSE THAT FAILETH NOT.

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

Is thy cruse of comfort wasting? rise and share it with another,
And through all the years of famine, it shall serve thee and thy
brother:

Love divine will fill thy storehouse, or thy handful still renew;
Scanty fare for one will often make a royal feast for two.

For the heart grows rich in giving; all its wealth is living grain;
Seeds, which mildew in the garner, scattered, fill with gold the plain.
Is thy burden hard and heavy? Do thy steps drag wearily?
Help to bear thy brother's burden; God will bear both it and thee.

Numb and weary on the mountains, wouldst thou sleep amidst the
snow?

Chafe that frozen form beside thee, and together both shall glow.
Art thou stricken in life's battle; many wounded round thee moan;
Lavish on their wounds thy balsams, and that balm shall heal thine
own.

Is the heart a well left empty? None but God its void can fill;
Nothing but a ceaseless fountain can its ceaseless longing still.
Is the heart a living power? Self-entwin'd, its strength sinks low;
It can only live in loving, and by serving love will grow.

“RIPE FOR HEAVEN.”

MANY of the children of God, who ought to be rejoicing in the liberty of the Gospel, are enthralled in some form of legal bondage. Comparatively few of these are exulting in a finished salvation, with the self-abasing, but soul-satisfying consciousness that “we are complete in Him in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” If the only consequences of this were the over-clouding of their joy and the disturbance of their peace, the evil would be worthy of every effort to correct it. How much more, when, in addition to this, it dishonors their Lord, while it cramps all their energies, obscures their graces, and leaves their position in the world uncertain both to themselves and others.

One of the most subtle forms of the evil may be thus stated, even when there is a distinct knowledge of the grounds on which God justifies the ungodly, after the soul has tasted the blessedness of “the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered,” and has rejoiced in hope of the glory of God, there is an impression that much remains to be done before the soul is, to use a common expression, “ripe for heaven.” The impression seems to be that, after his justification, the believer must undergo a process of sanctification, and that for this reason he is left for a time amid the trials and conflicts of a hostile world. The wide prevalence of this notion appears in public teaching and in the mutual exhortations of Christians, and, if

possible, more distinctly in their prayers; for they may very often be heard pleading that they may be made meet, but are rarely heard giving thanks to the Father, who *hath* made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

One might suppose that those who are toiling on under this impression, would be staggered by their experience and observation. Their progress must at the best be unsatisfactory. They cannot know when the process is completed. They see others, in whose Christian character they have the fullest confidence, cut off apparently in very various stages of the process; and if the completion of it be what men style "perfect sanctification," in how few cases, so far as we can judge, is any such state of preparation for glory attained? On their death-beds, the most eminent saints appear most humbled in view of their own attainments, most dissatisfied with all that they are in themselves. *There*, self is most completely renounced, and their parting triumph is not in what they are, but in what Christ is. Besides, how can we with confidence say to a man—to a dying man—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," when we do not know if his life may be prolonged beyond the instant of believing? "Justification," they say, "is an act completed at once, but sanctification is a progressive work;" and there can be no objection to the expression in speaking of our growth in holiness, and the manifestation of it in this life. But if this be said with reference to our preparation for glory, and if such a preparation be the grand object of the believer's life in the flesh, then it is difficult to know how Paul could say, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But, if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor; yet what I shall chose I wot not; for I am in a straight betwixt two; having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better;

nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And, having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith.” Especially difficult is it to know how Paul could use such language when in a subsequent portion of the same epistle he says, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect.” How, in short, could believers either have a desire to depart, or long for the coming of the Lord, while the very fact that they are in the body was the proof that the process was not completed which would fit them for His coming? A person who had spent a lifetime in reaching a boasted consciousness of perfect sanctification, upon a death-bed, was betrayed into a fit of ungoverned anger. She found the labor of so many years frustrated in a moment, and would have died in despair had not the Spirit of God, in her extremity, brought home this truth to her heart, ‘Jesus Christ is of God, made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption.’”

The confusion and vagueness of prevailing views on this subject, which is of unspeakable moment to us, warrant us in inviting a patient consideration of a passage in the Epistle to the Colossians, which seems to give an unambiguous answer to all inquiries regarding the believer’s preparation for glory. “Giving thanks to the Father who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” (Col. i. 12). The apostle tells these “saints and faithful brethren at Colosse,” of his unceasing prayers for them; and the matter of his prayers shows that he was very far from regarding them as perfect either in knowledge or in grace, yet he does not pray that they may be made meet for the inheritance, but speaks of himself and them as already “made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.” From the manner in which this occasion of thanksgiving is introduced, it appears that Paul considered, or rather the

Holy Spirit teaches, that their gratitude for such meetness was intimately connected with their advancement in grace, knowledge and spiritual fertility. For he does not inform them that *he* gave thanks for them on this behalf, but that he does not cease to pray that *they* might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing—giving thanks to the Father for what he had actually accomplished in them. At any rate, whether it be regarded as a statement of Paul's thanksgiving, or of Paul's prayer that their gratitude might be awakened, this much is clear, that the occasion of thanksgiving is that the Father had actually made Paul and the saints at Colosse meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. We may, therefore, at once proceed to inquire: In what does our meetness to be partakers of that inheritance consist? and then we shall see how it is an occasion of gratitude to believers that such meetness is actually bestowed upon them, and not an occasion of prayerful solicitude that they may yet attain it.

But it will clear our way to the consideration of these questions, if we inquire first of all, what is the inheritance spoken of? An inheritance is a profession or dignity which we do not acquire by our labor or merits, nor purchase with money, but to which we lawfully succeed in virtue of our relationship to another. Primarily, it is that to which a child succeeds in virtue of his relationship to his father, as a son inherits the estate of his father, or as the son of a king inherits the crown. In this case the inheritance becomes ours in virtue of our being sons of God. So Peter speaks of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ having begotten us again unto a lively hope, to an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. So Paul speaks of the Spirit witnessing with our spirits that we are sons of God—and then he argues, "if sons, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ."

When we inquire more distinctly, what is this inheritance of the sons of God? the next verse explains it as the kingdom of God's dear Son; or, more accurately, “of the Son of His love.” Those who are joint-heirs with Christ, must share His kingdom. “He hath made us kings and priests unto God,” and the inheritance of kings is a crown, a throne, a kingdom. The blessedness which lies before us is not merely to be subjects of the King of kings, but to sit with Him on His throne, to reign with Him forever and ever. Such is the dignity of our inheritance, and we cannot doubt its glory and blessedness. As to its extent, we are joined heirs with Him whom God hath appointed heir of *all things*. Our destiny is bound up with His. The inheritance of the saints in light must be holy. The term “in light” describes, not the saints, though they are children of light, but the inheritance, which thus stands in contrast with the empire of darkness from which they are delivered; and it describes, not only the glory with which it is radiant, but the effulgence of knowledge, truth, purity and joy, in which it lies, bathed in the perpetual sunshine of the Divine presence.

We shall now find a shorter and clearer answer to the question, What constitutes meekness for the inheritance of the saints in light?

Nothing can be more plain than that fallen man, in his natural state, cannot enjoy it. A child of wrath cannot, as such, be a partaker of the inheritance of the children of God. The rejector of Christ cannot be a joint heir with Christ. A mind at enmity with God can have no relish for the joys of the inheritance, and no sympathy with the saints. The presence of impurity would taint its holiness; the presence of darkness would throw a shadow athwart the kingdom of light, vitiating its whole character. Only think of a man with the wrath of God abiding on him, sitting with

Christ on His throne! think of the horror of a guilty soul in the unclouded sunshine of the Divine presence, where its hideousness would stand revealed in the contrast of spotless holiness! so that, as one expresses it, "he would plunge for relief into the gloom of hell." But when we know what the inheritance is, no argument is needed to enforce the Lord's declaration, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Now the question is, What is necessary to make a fallen, guilty man meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light?"

If we were to answer, first of all, the forgiveness of sins, it might be said that the forgiveness of sins is not so much meetness for the inheritance, as the removal of a disqualification. Yet there can be no question that guilt is a disqualification that must be removed, and it will be seen that, when it is removed in the manner provided in the gracious purpose of God, meetness for the inheritance necessarily follows. Nothing could be more monstrous than to suppose a guilty and condemned being enjoying eternal life in despite of God; or standing in the highest place of favor, and at the same time, the wrath of God abiding on him. So the gospel meets the sinner, first of all, with a proclamation of forgiveness. But then, it is forgiveness of such a character, and provided in such a way, that it is the first link of a chain of blessings which cannot possibly be dissevered, the whole of which is *salvation*. The forgiveness of the gospel is not a mere act of clemency which remits the penalty of sin, as might be supposed if we were to take our idea of God's forgiveness of the sinner, from man's forgiveness of his offending fellow, when he either forgoes his revenge or sets aside the sentence of justice. There is, indeed, love passing knowledge, there are divine riches of mercy in the forgiveness of sins by God, but there is justice also gloriously manifested and truth com-

pletely vindicated in the act. God displays the riches of His mercy, not in foregoing vengeance or setting aside the claims of justice, but in setting forth His son to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, in laying our sins upon Him, and meeting every claim against the sinner. But, when we consider how and by whom all this is accomplished, it must be evident that the love displayed in it, and the glory that redounds to God, are infinitely greater in this than in any other sphere of the Divine operation. The obedience of Christ for guilty man, is of an infinitely more exalted character than any obedience of unfallen man could have been. There is not only a removal of every obstruction, but there is a ground laid for the communication of blessing which may manifest the grace and attest the faithfulness and righteousness of God.

The results of this interposition of Divine mercy must evidently prove as beneficial to those who are the objects of it as it is honoring to Him by whom it has been made. So that it by no means tells the whole truth about this redemption, even the forgiveness of sins, to say that we are reinstated in the place from which man fell. The innocence of man would have been something infinitely inferior to the righteousness of God. Now “He hath made Him to sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the *righteousness* of God in Him.” The rank, favor, or position before God, which would have been the just acknowledgment or reward of the most perfect creature righteousness, must be infinitely beneath that of the believer in Christ. No one can suppose that Adam, if he had never fallen, could have been exalted to the throne on which Christ shall sit, or attain the glory with which he is now crowned. But it is evident that redemption, accomplished through the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sin, procured as we have seen it is, means, not merely deliverance from the curse

and remission of the guilt of sin, placing us in the position we would have occupied if we had never sinned at all; but implies our exaltation to the place of favor and love which He who is our righteousness occupies. It is not merely that the thunder is silenced, but the light of God's countenance shines forth. It is not merely that hell has lost its prey, but that we have, in Christ, a perfect and indefeasible title to the inheritance of the saints in light.

But an inheritance implies sonship. And this leads us to another view of our standing in Christ. It is not necessary to speak at length, here, of the condition of fallen man, or of the family to which he belongs; but, in speaking of God's gracious design concerning those who were lost and undone by sin, an apostle exclaims, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we might be called sons of God." The obstruction to our being called sons of God was removed, as we have seen, by the only begotten and well beloved Son of God. "God gave His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." But you will observe, that after He had died for our sins, had been forsaken by the Father, and was made a curse for us, there is a peculiar sense in which He was acknowledged to be the Son of God; for it is to his resurrection from the dead that the acknowledgment in the second Psalm is applied, "Thou art my Son, *this day* have I begotten Thee." So Paul says, He was "declared to be the Son of God, with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Not that He then became the Son of God; but, in a peculiar relation to us, after all that had taken place, He was then declared or proved to be the Son of God. And then, as in Him we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins, so in Him we are sons of God. After His resurrection, and not before it, He recognizes the relationship as common to Him and

His people:—“Go, tell my brethren,” he says, “that I ascend to my God and your God, to my Father and your Father.” Up to this point, he is spoken of as the “Only begotten Son,” for it may be seen in the Scriptures that wherever this designation is employed, it is with reference to what precedes His resurrection from the dead. But from this point, He is the first-born among many brethren, the elder brother of the many sons whom he is bringing to glory. All that He had endured for us was in order that we might receive the adoption of sons. “Wherefore,” says the apostle, “thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” The believer’s title to the inheritance is complete in Christ,—“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” This is not a prospective but a present distinction of every believer; “Now are we the sons of God.” His title can never be defeated or even disputed; and yet it seems, according to the prevailing doctrine, that all this may be true of a man, and yet he is not made meet for the inheritance; he must pass through a certain course of training and discipline; there is a process of sanctification before he is qualified to be a partaker of the inheritance. We could easily suppose such a thing in human relations as a man, having a claim to a position, nay, actually occupying a position for which he is not qualified; but how can we suppose such an anomaly in the express arrangement of God, and especially in His gracious undertaking of human salvation. This much, however, is settled, and in this believers may confidently exult, that the inheritance is theirs; *that* cannot be questioned, unless the righteousness of God, which is the basis of their claim, be disputed; unless the title of Christ, in whom they are made sons of God, is disputed. And this much being settled, they need not fear to have their qualification for the inheritance investigated.

In what, beyond their title to the inheritance, does meekness for it consist? Evidently, they must be saints if they obtain the inheritance of saints; but *that* they are as believers, and as soon as they believe, they are sanctified by that very blood in which they have the forgiveness of sins. Evidently, also, they must be children of *light* who obtain the inheritance in light; but *that* also they are, by the very fact that they are believers: "Ye are all the children of light and of the day, we are not of the night nor of darkness." But these may appear very vague and general statements of their qualifications, and we may willingly meet the most minute investigation. It is further evident, that in order to the enjoyment of an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away,—an everlasting kingdom, a crown of unfading glory,—we must have eternal life; but *that* also the believer has in the very act of believing; for we are assured that "he that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life." This, in fact, is the very record which God gave of his Son, "that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son;" so that "he that hath the Son, hath life." But that new life which the believer has in Christ is not a restoration of the life we had lost; it is nothing less than the life of Christ. "He is our life," as truly as our righteousness,—the infinite fountain of life from which every stream is filled. But is its perpetuity its only characteristic in which we can now rejoice? Is it, as yet, a feeble spark which must be fanned into a flame; an infantile life, which must be cherished and nursed to maturity? There is, indeed, a body of sin and death through which its presence is now manifested, and the manifestation of it may be feeble, infantile, and obscure, like the sunbeam making its way through an opaque medium; the sunbeam itself is not dim, though it may be dimmed in its shining; and the removal of the opaque body

would at once make it manifest in its perfection. So, also, of this everlasting life which the believer has. If *He* is our life, there can be no defect in the life itself, though its manifestation may be obstructed by a mortal body. It is, in itself, as perfect as it can ever be, and he who hath life in the Son of God, is made meet to be a partaker of an inheritance which is its proper sphere.

We have already seen that only the sons of God can obtain the inheritance, and we have seen that believers are all the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Can it be supposed that they are sons in name, but not in nature? Then it might be supposed that a man had a claim to the inheritance without meetness for it; but, then, that would be to suppose that sonship was a mockery, and not a reality. This is very far from being the teaching of the word of God; for *there* we are taught that we become sons of God by being born again. This does not mean a gradual improvement or purification of the old nature, but the communication of a new nature. It is styled “a new creation.” The Almighty agent of it is the Spirit of God, the means employed in it is the word of God, which is His testimony of Christ, and we thus come to the same point as before—faith in Christ; for we are taught “to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” They are born of God—born of the Spirit. Now, does any man suppose that that which is born of God requires to be gradually purified or perfected? Will any man speak of sanctification as a progressive work in this new man, this son of God? It is indeed true, that the old nature remains what it ever was, and opposes all the desires, tendencies, and affections of the new nature; for “that which is born of the flesh is flesh,” neither more

nor less ; and so the believer, so long as he is in the flesh, is called upon, "through the Spirit, to mortify the deeds of the body." But it is none the less true, that "that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." The new life is of the same nature as its source. The child partakes of the nature of his Father. Many a weary conflict, indeed, must the Spirit maintain against the flesh ; and many an humbling occasion of confession may the Christian have, who finds in his experience that nature is nature still. But that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit also, unaffected and uncontaminated by the vileness in the midst of which it exists, and which it seeks continually to renounce and subdue. "Who-soever is born of God doth not commit sin. He cannot sin, because he is born of God." The new nature is not only in itself perfect, so that no motion of sin can proceed from it ; but it cannot be defiled from without. It is true, that we still bear outwardly the image of the earthy. The body is dead, because of the sin ; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. We are now the sons of God, though it doth not appear what we shall be. The *real*, with the believer, is not the *apparent* ; but it is not the less real. So, by the very fact that, as soon as we have, in Christ, a title to the inheritance, we are also, as sons, made meet for the inheritance. The real will, at last, be the apparent : there will be a manifestation of the sons of God ; we shall bear the image of the heavenly ; when He "shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

Yes, we are now sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and the spirit of adoption is the earnest of the inheritance. We are one with Christ, and joint-heirs with Him. The inheritance is His kingdom ; and though it is now true that He has gone to receive a kingdom and to return, it is true *now* that He is a King ; all the usurpations of Satan can-

not invalidate His title. But if we are one with Him, then it is true of believers that they are made kings and priests unto God, though they do not now reign, nor enjoy the inheritance. When the glorious destiny of the saints is considered, it cannot for a moment be supposed that any conceivable improvement of nature could qualify them for occupying the exalted place in which they shall be Christ's partners. Adam, in the perfection of his nature, would no more have been qualified for that exalted destiny, than he could, by any perfection of his own obedience, have deserved it. And, in looking forward to that destiny of glory, we can only expect to fill it as we receive from Christ's fulness. The soul would shrink from that exceeding great and eternal weight of glory which angels could not sustain, were it not that our completeness is in Christ, “who, of God, is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” But surely He who has made Him all this to us, hath, by the very fact, made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. We do not undervalue the importance of our present growth in knowledge and in grace, when we say that no attainment of ours can qualify us, any more than it can entitle us to reign with Him. No, as it is *His* joy and glory we shall share, *His* throne on which we shall sit, and with *Him* we shall reign, so it is in *His* holiness we shall be arrayed, and in *His* wisdom and *His* strength we shall fill our places in the administration of *His* kingdom. But for the present, knowing all this, and rejoicing in all this, we should seek 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.”

MAN'S RELIGION.

AMONG the works of Horatius Bonar, D. D., the circulation of which has been blessed to the edification of thousands in this land, we would commend as especially adapted to the present exigencies of the Church, a little volume on "Man, his Religion, and his World," from which we subjoin a brief extract:

"Man's religion keeps God at a distance—God's brings Him nigh. Homage to God, but not communion with Him, is the object of the former; nearness of fellowship and companionship, coupled with lowliest reverence, is the aim of the latter. Man says, 'God is my enemy, and must be appeased; or, He is at the best a doubtful friend, and must be kept at a distance: He is incomprehensible and unapproachable, and therefore can have no common sympathies with me: I will lay my gift upon His altar, and retire out of His presence.' God says, 'Man is my creature, and though he is a sinner, dreading, but not loving me, I will not leave him to his misery; I will come nigh; I will speak with him in love; I will win back his confidence, and teach him to love me; I will make him feel that I am not his enemy, but his friend; I will show him that in my favor is life, and that companionship with me is the joy and health of his being.'

"Man's religion begins by enjoining worship—God's by preparing the worshipper. And here the difference is as wide as it is striking. The main idea that man has in

connection with worship is, that it is the means of securing acceptance, and effecting reconciliation with God. He brings his gifts as the bribes or payments of the criminal, not as the thank-offerings of the forgiven. He worships in order to pacify God, and persuade Him to extend his favor towards him. In God's religion this order is reversed. The *worshipper* is accepted first, and then his *worship*. The person is first taken into favor, and then all services are acknowledged as well-pleasing. This is the Divine order of things; and the reversal of this order not merely *injures* worship—it wholly invalidates it. God's order is absolutely essential to that which *He* recognizes as religion. He will receive no offering, save from the hand of an accepted worshipper."

WAYMARKS

IN

THE WILDERNESS.

• SCRIPTURAL MOTIVES AND PROSPECTS OF EVANGELICAL
EFFORT.

DURING the last sixty years the impression has generally prevailed among Christians that their efforts to propagate the Gospel at home and abroad would ultimately be crowned with complete success; and that, for a period of one thousand years, the blessings of the Gospel will extend to the whole human race, not as at present in a partial illumination, but in a complete and universal triumph over all ignorance, error, and evil. Twenty years ago, such a desirable conclusion of the long conflict of the Church was anticipated with great confidence; and the most charming pictures of the happy era which was supposed to be just then dawning on the world, were the common entertainment of the anniversaries of missionary and philanthropic societies. The experience of the last twenty years has abated somewhat the confidence with which the near approach of the consummation has been announced, and pictures of the good time coming have been exhibited in colors less warm, and a light more subdued; yet it has been held almost as an

article of orthodox faith that the anticipated result is only a question of time. Those who have been led back to the ancient hope of the speedy coming of the Lord to establish His kingdom in person, have been spoken of as heretical. And, among other charges against our millenarian views, it has been somewhat bitterly urged that their prevalence would paralyze all evangelical efforts, and leave the Church without an adequate motive to prosecute the great commission, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." We purpose, at present, to inquire into the justice of this charge.

The charge takes it for granted that the love of Christ and the love of souls are not in themselves sufficient motives to stimulate the efforts of Christians; that they need the big ambition of converting the human race to command their interest; and that, as a matter of fact, the hope of the ultimate "conversion of the world" is the prime impulse of all evangelical labors. Such an expectation has, as we have intimated, occupied a prominent place in the declamations of anniversary orators, and supplies the finishing grace to many missionary sermons; yet it may fairly be questioned if its use does not end with the delight of listening congregations. The really influential thought has been the thought of millions going down to eternal darkness; of the love of God, who gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life; of the glory of the Redeemer, who waits to see, in brands plucked from the burning, of the travail of his soul. Far other motives, doubtless, may lead men to contribute means, and lend their efforts to what is called the cause of missions. The history of Jesuit missions,

unexampled in modern times for their zeal and self-devotion, and the liberal contributions of Roman Catholic Europe for the propagation of the faith in our own land, warn us that party zeal, superstition, or self-righteousness, may lie at the foundation of much that passes for evangelical philanthropy. The preaching of the Gospel may be prompted by envy and strife. But when evangelical effort is undertaken, and conducted in the spirit and with the aim of Christ, it does not depend upon visionary anticipations that this sin-stricken world is ever to be transformed into a paradise of bliss and purity by the instrumentalities now employed by the Church, or within the limits of this dispensation.

To suppose that such a romantic dream has any practical influence, even among those who engage in such efforts without the spirit and aim of Christ, betrays an astonishing ignorance of the human heart. It wants something less remote and less shadowy to sustain men in action. In our reluctance to cope with the obduracy and depravity of the world, we may sit down and luxuriate in dreams of a good time coming. There is, we know, a sentimental voluptuousness in seeing distant or future evil changed into holiness and happiness, without the dust and drudgery of actual conflict with it. And so, we are not unfamiliar with amiable enthusiasts, who expend their sympathies on distant fields of romantic adventure, and lose sight of "the Greeks at their door;" who clamor for the conversion of the world, but look without emotion on their neighbors, and even their households, going down to eternal destruction.

Not a few of us have had youthful dreams of missionary life. Accustomed from our earliest years to listen to the story of missionary adventure, and to glowing descriptions of the speedy transformation of savage hordes into noble and enlightened nations, the purpose of girding on the armor of the Christian hero, following a Judson from dun-

geon to dungeon, and wielding the sword of truth against the hosts of superstition, may have been among the fondest and wildest of our day-dreams. In fancy we may have surveyed lands which were altogether given to idolatry, sitting in smiling peace beneath the benign light of the Gospel, ourselves, the heroes of the scene, receiving the homage of a ransomed people. But how soon must we have awakened, and behold it was a dream! The reality was that we, all the while, were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

Experience testifies that it is a false and flimsy zeal which takes its inspiration from the vague hope of the world's conversion; and it is necessary to the healthy activity of the churches that they be recalled to the actual verities of perishing souls, and a free and full salvation. As a matter of fact, do Christian ministers and missionaries go out into the world sustained by the expectation of absolute and universal success in preaching the Gospel? If we saw such a visionary, our first emotion would be pity for the dreamer, and we would feel assured that a brief contact with the corruption of the world would dispel the delusion; and, unless these were a substratum of Christian principle, he would soon retire from the field a soured and broken-spirited misanthrope.

If we appeal to the records of Christianity, it will be found that the Gospel has been preached with the greatest fidelity and success when it has been preached in the face of the most unrelenting hostility, when there was least to encourage the hope of extended success, and when there was most to concentrate the efforts of the Church upon the less ambitious aim of individual conversion. The most earnest and sustained activity has been displayed by humble men, in whose souls the fire of ambition was extinguished, whose

views of the condition of human nature were the darkest, whose anticipations of success were least sanguine, and who thought least of anything, save the glory of the Redeemer in the salvation of souls. Such men were independent of the stimulus of external success, and superior to the discouragement of seeming failures.

If we carry up the appeal to the inspired records, we find the prophets of old going on their mission with the explicit charge sounding in their ears, "Be not afraid, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dwell among scorpions. Speak My words, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear, for they are a rebellious house." Not less explicit was the language of the Lord to his Apostles when He sent them to gather His chosen by the foolishness of preaching. He warned them that they would encounter hatred, shame, and death, rather than honor and triumphant success in the world. If it be alleged that they must still have felt assured that their lives, labor, and blood were contributing to the ultimate success of the cause, then we ask for a single expression of any such assurance. Paul, for instance, gives not the feeblest hint of any such hope cheering him as he went preaching Christ; troubled on every side, but not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; cast down, but not discouraged. He sets no such encouragement before the persecuted Churches; or before Timothy, Titus, and his other fellow-laborers, on whom the service of holding forth the Word of life devolved, when the first witnesses had fought the good fight, and finished their course. Nor is it enough to say that there is no trace of any such romantic anticipation of absolute success influencing the first preachers of the Gospel. The motives under which they labored and suffered, and the views of the future which were held up before them, positively excluded any such anticipations. The Lord, when He sent

them forth, while He promised them all needed countenance, guidance, and support, warned them that He sent them forth as lambs among wolves, to be hated of all men for His sake; and, so far from leading them to expect a temporal millennium, he foretold, in parable and plain language, the decay of faith, the obscuration of divine truth, and a state of unparalleled ungodliness, as the characteristics of the time when He shall come to afford rest and reward to His weary heritage, and to execute vengeance upon a world of rebels and despisers. The hopes and desires of these first believers were concentrated on that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

What we need to inflame our zeal, and influence our devotion to the great work of propagating the Gospel, is to be brought thoroughly under the influence of the truth which inspired the heroism of the first good soldiers of the cross and the crown of Jesus. Human invention has found no more efficacious motives than God has revealed. Those who argue that, to extinguish the hope of converting the world would extinguish the desire of the people of God to give the Gospel to the perishing, will not go so far as to pretend that a modern fiction has carried the Churches of our day beyond the measure of primitive zeal, or of primitive success. It remains for us, therefore, to endeavor to ascertain precisely what were the views under the influence of which the devoted laborers of the apostolic era went everywhere preaching the Word, in order to ascertain the motives by which we should now be urged to prosecute the same work, and what are the prospects by which we are encouraged in our toil.

A full exhibition of the truth on this subject would include, 1st, a view of the character and attitude of primitive Christians in the world; and 2d, a view of the Gospel which

they actually preached ; and we should probably find these standing in marked contrast with the character of modern Christians, and with much that is now preached for Gospel. But our limits forbid us to attempt more than to make a few suggestions on either head.

I. In speaking of the character and attitude of primitive Christians, it will be proper to leave out of view, on the one hand, all that was peculiar to any of them in special commissions and supernatural endowments ; and, on the other hand, to leave out of view the individual instances of defection and corruption which marred the glory even of that age. In what remains, when these are omitted, we find an example for our encouragement. In that example we do not find that the propagation of the Gospel was the exclusive mission of a class, but that it was the proper business of every Christian. Believers are not, indeed, left to perform an isolated and individual work. Their forces are collected in a well-knit organization—the Church ; and the Church has its proper governing and administrative officers. But this organization, for the purpose of combining their forces, does not impair individual responsibility. We find, in the New Testament, a limited number of inspired and specially authorized ambassadors, who, by their living instructions, supplied to the primitive Church what their collected writings furnish to us ; but we find no order of men on whom devolved the whole responsibility of preaching the Word. There was free and unfettered scope for the exercise of all gifts with which the Church was endowed, and the use of all means with which the Church was entrusted ; and, up to the full measure of every man's ability and opportunity, they were instructed to edify the body and make known the way of salvation.

Corresponding with such views of their common responsibility, all believers were taught to assume the attitude

and maintain the character of saints. They were not a mere *party* in the world, but a body of men separated *from* the world. They were not mere adherents of a sect or system, but had entered into a living and actual union with Christ, as members of His body. They were instructed to reckon themselves indeed dead unto sin, and alive unto God, through Jesus Christ; to count themselves not their own, but bought with a price; and to judge that they should not, henceforth, live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again. There was no class of them specially devoted to religious services, for all were consecrated to the Lord, body, soul, and spirit. The language of an apostle, not to a sacred order, but to all believers, was, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."

Their separation from the world, or rather their opposition to it, was open and undisguised, and they had nothing to expect from it but hatred and scorn. It was not a few called to distant and perilous missions, who took their lives in their hand, but all of them took up their cross and followed the Captain of their salvation, who was made perfect through suffering. Among Churches composed of such men there was no temporizing, no courting of worldly influence. They were allied to no schemes of social amelioration or temporal aggrandizement, had no party interests or institutions to build up, and cherished no expectation of temporal greatness or earthly triumph. Placed individually face to face with a perishing world, each with the solemn charge and an earnest desire to make known the Word of life, they aimed simply and directly at the conversion of ungodly men. What else could they have to do with the world? They had no selfish interest to build up any-

where; their field was the world. They had no temporal patriotism to fan or flatter; their citizenship was in heaven; They had neither home prepossessions nor foreign antipathies to restrain them; they were pilgrims and strangers everywhere. For rest and reward they looked away beyond the seen and temporal. In the patient waiting for the glorious appearing of their Lord they found strength for all endurance, and compensation for every loss. In the world which was passing away they had nothing to hope or fear; but, giving all diligence, they added to their faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity; that so an entrance might be ministered to them abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is not necessary to point out the contrast between all this and the attitude of modern Churches; or the utter incompatibility of prevailing notions of the mission and prospects of the Church with such an attitude as that which primitive Christians occupied.

II. A fair exhibition of the Gospel which primitive Christians preached, would present an equally marked contrast with the teaching of the modern pulpit; but to draw the contrast would demand ampler space than we can now command. Suffice it to say that they made a clear and explicit announcement of a Divine Saviour and a glorious salvation. That *salvation* they announced in the Gospel of the kingdom of God. It recognized the sad truth that, through man's sin, Satan has established his empire here; the world itself lies under the curse; and all men are by nature children of wrath. It announced God's gracious design to overthrow the empire of Satan, redeem the groaning creation, and deliver men from wrath; to establish, on the renovated earth, the glorious kingdom of His Son, and

to make regenerated men joint-heirs with Him of this inheritance. **THE SAVIOUR** they announced is Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, whom He sent to be a propitiation for sin, that repentance and the remission of sins might be preached in His name among all nations. They testified that once, in the end of the world, He hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and then sat down at the right hand of God, waiting until His enemies be made his footstool. Upon the faith of this accepted sacrifice they called upon men to be reconciled unto God, that they might be justified from all things, adopted into the family of God, and, by sanctification of the Spirit, be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

They preached "the things concerning the kingdom of God in the name of Jesus Christ;" and they did so with the clear conviction that the kingdom of God, or everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, was the only alternative. The notion that this world is a place of probation, and a school of discipline for a better world, leaves the carnal mind at liberty to speculate regarding the rewards of natural virtue; and, in the spurious liberality of this age, even the pulpit speaks with hesitation about the destiny of many who are out of Christ, and especially of those whom they call virtuous heathens. But, with those who held a primitive Gospel, there was no obscurity on this point. Apart from the kingdom of heaven, there is no heaven for any man; and the Master has declared that, except a man be born again, he cannot enter there. His disciples preached repentance and the remission of sins in the name of Jesus, knowing that there is no other name given under heaven, or among men, whereby they can be saved. The charge to preach the Gospel to every creature was assurance enough for them that, out of Christ, men are condemned and undone.

What a solemn thing it was for these men to be placed

face to face with perishing men, with this well-defined and settled conviction. But it was a blessed thing also to occupy that place with a heartfelt experience of the wisdom and power of God in the Gospel which was committed to them. Rejoicing in the Saviour with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and animated by the love of Christ, they went everywhere preaching the Word with convincing ardor and energy. The spontaneous utterance of their heart was, "Oh, that I could awaken all about me to a sense of their guilt and danger! Oh, that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly over all the earth, and testify what a Saviour I have found, what a salvation I have in prospect!" This desire matured into the strength and stability of a ruling principle—sometimes it appears as a holy passion for the glory of God in the salvation of sinners.

From this hasty glance at primitive Christian character and preaching, we turn to consider the views and motives which should still influence Christians to disseminate the Gospel among perishing men. We address ourselves of course to believers, for we cannot discuss this question with any others. And *first* of all, there is, apart from all arguments or persuasions, the instinct of a new life prompting the Christian to speak because he believes, which will not wait for a reason or a command. It is the spontaneous and irresistible impulse of a renewed heart to say, "Come," to commend Christ, to tell of the glory of His kingdom. Proof of this need not be sought either in the inspired or the ordinary records of Christian experience, for he who does not know this instinct knows nothing of that life. The desire, though instinctive, may still need direction and nourishment. It must be maintained in abiding union with Christ, and all that promotes spirituality of mind and conformity to the image of Christ will strengthen it. The believer must therefore widen the separation between him

and the world, cultivate the habit of walking by faith, and not by sight, and get more into the attitude of a pilgrim and stranger here. To this end he must cut loose from all earthly alliances, all sectarian rivalries, all expectation of temporal success, all motives to religious zeal which have both their origin and issue on this side of the coming of the Lord. He must present himself a living sacrifice unto God, perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord, live as one who is looking for his Lord, and labor that, whether present or absent, he may be accepted of Him.

But, in speaking of the views which should be cherished as promotive of evangelical zeal, all may be summed up in Scriptural views of the purpose of grace in relation to the believer himself, to the Church, and to the world. We do not asperse the Christianity of this age when we say that the tendency is to underrate the evil of sin, and to over-estimate the moral capabilities of man. Deep and searching views of the evil of sin are palliated by the disposition to dwell merely upon the inconveniences of it; and those abasing views of the lost state of man which find the most pathetic utterance on every page of revelation, are obscured, if not obliterated, by flattering notions of human progress. Sin must be brought into the light of divine truth and love, that it may be seen in its exceeding sinfulness; and the dark depths of our fallen state must be searched by the light of the cross of Christ, that we may know what is meant by being dead in trespasses and sins, children of wrath. The believer must see all this in his own case, that sin *in him* may appear exceeding sinful; that he may see the rock from which he was hewn, and the hole of the pit from which he was digged, in order that he may have a constantly expanding sense of the great love wherewith He hath loved us, and of the preciousness of the salvation which the grace of God brings; and, in

order that knowing how much has been forgiven, he may love much.

Nor do we asperse the Christianity of the age when we say that the tendency is to underrate and overlook the person, offices, and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. His divinity is indeed the topic of many a fierce debate, and half the religious strife of the world has been occupied with His atonement; but, with all this, He is not the Alpha and Omega of modern faith. The doctrine of His cross is lost sight of in ethical disquisitions, and the doctrine of His crown is forgotten in the boasted progress of the age and the anticipated triumph of civilization. What we see and hear around us, gives little proof of a close-cleaving attachment to a living Saviour,—a rapt and adoring love of Him who, though unseen, is known to be the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Believers need to learn anew to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord; that, growing in knowledge of Him, they may grow in love to Him; and by this love they will be perfected and prepared, out of the fulness of their hearts, to commend Him. They need to gain clearer views of the completeness of His sacrifice, and the prevalence of His intercession, to simplify their sense of their actual acceptance in the Beloved, and to expand their conceptions both of their present distinction in Him and of the glory that shall be brought to them at His appearing, in order that their testimony to the grace of God may be decided and earnest.

Again, defective views prevail of the office of the Holy Spirit, and our dependence on His aid. We may hear enough at particular times of the Spirit and His influences, but there is reason to fear that these are little more than names, by which men attempt to consecrate the short-lived excitement of their own sensibilities, and the ephemeral

zeal of rare seasons of religious activity. Where do we find the habitual recognition of the Spirit as that in which we live, the habitual consciousness of His indwelling, and a habitual dependence on His constant presence in every act and movement of the Christian life? Christians need to be admonished to cherish the conviction that they are temples of the Holy Ghost; as they live in the Spirit to walk in the Spirit, and not in occasional impulses, but in an ever-living energy, to cultivate an entire dependence on the Spirit in the use of all means, whether for the edification of the body of Christ, or the ingathering of perishing souls.

Again, the views which prevail in this age regarding the final salvation of believers, are vague and uninfluential. There may be a sense of relief from condemnation, but there is scarcely a distinct conviction of the actual blessedness of adoption into the family of God, and of being made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Beyond the present, the Heaven which is now and then held up to the eye of hope is a dreamy haze of supernatural light, or frequently an inflated description of a state of existence whose fancied employments are alien from all our sympathies; its enjoyments, inappreciable by our affections, cannot mingle with our holiest thoughts, and cannot influence our hopes or desires. The salvation of the Gospel, though it transcends our highest thoughts, is yet distinct,—a salvation for man, a resurrection to renewed and immortal existence in the kingdom of the Lord we love, which shall become to us an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. The children of God should now find, in the hope of the glory which shall be revealed, in the crown which shall be bestowed, and the kingdom which shall be inherited, objects of expectation and desire which shed a hallowing and energetic influence on their every-day lives.

Dead to the world, and strangers here, they should be going up through the wilderness leaning upon the arm of their Beloved, prepared to do and endure everything for His sake ; and thus they would learn their proper mission among perishing men.

Such views of the purpose of God in relation to the believer himself, would correct his views of the character and position of the Church in the world. He would no longer be misled by the carnal notion of the Church as an imposing corporation, destined to identify with itself all the influences and resources of civilization, to pervade all social and political institutions, to gather into its treasury all the gains of human industry and invention, and all the resources of human learning and science. He would no longer chime in with the world's vain dream of progress, nor scatter over vague projects of temporal ascendancy, thoughts which should be bent on the salvation of men, and affections which should be set on the things that are above. He will see the Church as a company of cross-bearing pilgrims, poor and despised in the eyes of the world ; but the Church, nevertheless, which Christ loved, and for which He gave Himself, and with reference to whose final triumph He is now overturning among the nations ; which, meanwhile, is left here to hold forth the Word of life, to gather into itself those whom the Father has given to its head, and which is to find its glory and perfection when a triumphant Saviour shall fulfil his promise, "I will come again to receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also."

Such views of the purpose of God in relation to the individual believer and to the Churches, would afford correct views of the condition and prospects of this world. The race of man will thus be seen, not existing here under an original constitution of things, under which they are advancing from a rude infancy to the stature of perfect man-

hood, but as a fallen race, lying under the ban of a righteous sentence, the execution of which is stayed by an interposition of the forbearance of God. Their present existence is a reprieve, vouchsafed by the long-suffering of God, who is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. That which we call "time," is not a shoreless expanse, through which human society is to advance on an interminable course of improvement; but a brief day of grace which, amid ceaseless displays of human perversity, is hastening to a terrible close. In this light all of human genius and talent, invention and industry, all efforts which do not bear upon the great end of human salvation, will seem impertinent as the festivity or avarice of a criminal under sentence of death; and, instead of dreaming that the Christian's mission is to lead the world in the vain pursuit of glory and greatness, the only work that will seem worth doing here is that which would appear becoming by the couch of the dying, or at the very hour when the Lord shall come to take His people to Himself.

The present is not the development of human excellence, by which all evil is finally to be extirpated, but the working out of human corruption and selfish passions; in the midst of which He who maketh the wrath of man to praise Him, is safely guiding His Church. By the light of the same word of prophecy we see all temporal sovereignty, wisdom, and might rushing headlong to a fatal collision with the little stone cut out of the mountain without hands; and by the shock they shall be broken in pieces, and become as the chaff of the summer threshing floor. In the light of this truth the strife of parties, the wars of nations, the rivalries of ambition, the competitions of commerce, seem less than the pride of insects, the anger of atoms.

We see the world itself, not as the theatre which man is to make illustrious by his achievements, or the field which

he is to beautify and ennoble by the monuments of his genius or prowess, but as the scene of man's sin and shame. The fragments of its pristine loveliness lie broken and marred among the hideous wreck of his guilt and grief. We see the whole creation groaning and travailing together in pain until now, and find a solace only in anticipation of the time when He who has chosen this scene of wrong and ruin to be a theatre for the display of the exceeding riches of His grace, shall make all things new, and there shall be no more curse. The fashion of this world passeth away. The cloud-capped towers of mortal strength, and the gorgeous palaces of mortal pride, the dungeon of man's oppression, the lazar-house of his diseases, the hovel of poverty and the den of crime, earthly possessions and honors, the triumphal arch and the tomb, all, all shall dissolve, and, like the baseless fabric of a vision, leave not a rack behind.

The habitual contemplation of the truth regarding this world, will not only throw contempt on all its pride and its possessions, and keep believers in the attitude of pilgrims and strangers here, but when they look upon men as they are, and associate this world's future, not with a fancied perfection, but with a certain and an imminent destruction so utter and appalling, then, knowing the terrors of the Lord, they will persuade men, and, with an urgency which brooks no delay, will seek to pluck them as brands from the burning. Getting it into their hearts, as well as their understandings, that men out of Christ are lost, then, with an established confidence in the Redeemer, a joyful experience of the preciousness of His grace, and with expanding views of the glory of the salvation soon to be revealed, they will pant to give light to them that sit in darkness, and to proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound.

We are painfully conscious that this great subject has

been presented very imperfectly, but even thus presented, we may ask, are these the views which will make Christians remiss in the discharge of their mission? Or, will it lead them to relax their efforts to be assured that the day is at hand when "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever?" Or will it dispose them to lukewarmness in their zeal, or to occupation with the trifles of earth; will it paralyze evangelical action, and take away all motive to evangelical labor, to be convinced that the time is short, not speaking merely of the brevity and uncertainty of human life, but of the duration of the world's day of grace? There lies before the world no unlimited series of ages, in the lapse of which the noble work of its enlightenment may be prosecuted in dignified leisure. But the shades of a dark and starless night are fast gathering in upon mortal hopes and prospects. The day will soon be passed, and the things of their peace will forever be hid from the eyes of the living generation; and everything conspires to give emphasis to the solemn call to every one who knows the joyful sound, "**WORK WHILE IT IS CALLED DAY.**"

THE CHERUBIM.

IN the fourth chapter of the Book of Revelation we find the opening of the second vision which John had: "*After this*"—*μετὰ ταῦτα*, after those things—what he had seen before and relates from Rev. i. to 3d chapter inclusive. *εἶδον*, I had a vision—I saw. The scene presented was that of a door thrown open in the heavens—the entrance of the great celestial temple—the gateway to the palace of the King. A voice thence proclaimed in colloquial terms, but in tones like a trumpet—a bugle call—that he should ascend and enter to receive further revelations. The voice he heard was the same with that in the first vision—*ἡ φωνὴ ἡ πρώτη*—the voice the first, not the first on that special occasion, but a voice that on a former occasion had addressed him. Ch. i. 10. It was the voice of Jesus, the Lord and Revelator, as before described. This vision had referred to things that "must be hereafter"—*μετὰ ταῦτα*. *After these things*—the things to that time subsequent already predicted.

V. 2. That voice threw him into the ecstatic state. "Immediately I was in the spirit," entranced as was Daniel. Dan. x. 15, 16. His senses were overpowered, but his mind remained consciously active, having cognizance of scenes which lay beyond the sphere of the senses. It is a form of speech denoting a miraculous inspiration, technically—a vision. The first object presented to his mind was a throne or royal seat, fixed firmly, set in heaven. He

describes it in accordance with the perceptions of sense, for it was not possible to make it intelligible to us, creatures of sense, in any other way. That throne (v. 3,) he says, was occupied. "One sat on the throne" — καθήμενος; it is in the participial form, describing the position, but nothing more of the term apparent. The inference or presumption is, that that form was human, resembling what he saw in the first vision. Rev. i. 12, 16. Yet it is not so said — ὁ καθήμενος — the seated, "he that sat." Nothing farther of the aspect and form of the occupant of the throne is related, but that he that sat on the throne was to look upon — ὁμοιος ὁράσει λίθῳ ἰάσπιδι καὶ σαρδίῳ — "like for appearance to a stone, a jasper, and sardius" — a most brilliant gem, blending the intensely lucid, crystalline white of the jasper, with the flame-like redness of the sardius — "the stone" destined to destroy (Dan. ii. 25) the nations of the earth, "the brightness of the Father's glory." Heb. i. 3. Described by Moses, (Exod. xxiv. 10, 17,) as he saw him on Sinai. It sublimely denotes the nameless majesty of God. "And there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." Ezek. i. 27. The rainbow was the token of God's covenant with Noah for the perpetuation of the seasons, and the exemption of the world from any future destruction by a flood. It was painted by His Almighty hand upon the dark and stormy clouds of the retiring tempests of the deluge. It implied that while the throne or government of Christ should be maintained amid storms and convulsions, yet should they prove ineffectual for its overthrow. The covenant of God will stand firm and sure, and, under the administration of the incarnate Son of God, nothing shall overcome it. The emerald green color predominated in the bow, denoting the thickness and darkness of the clouds, which proportionately gives intensity and brilliance to this above the other iris hues. Green is the

rich, refreshing, luxuriant hue of the vegetable creation, of nature generally, and is above all others most pleasant to the eyes. So the covenant of God encircling the throne, is the enlivening object of faith, which inspires with hope and joy all that behold it.

V. 4. "And round about the throne were four-and-twenty seats (*θρόνοι*, thrones,) and upon the seats I saw four-and-twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and they had on their heads crowns of gold." This scene presents to view a grand company or congress of royal dignitaries, subordinate to, yet associated with, the Sovereign occupying the central highest throne at the apex of the semicircle, the celestial Divan. They do not represent *angels*, for the description afterwards of their adoration and praise, ch. v. 9, 10, shows that they were "the ancients" (Isa. xxiv. 23) before whom the Lord reigns gloriously, — redeemed saints of the human race. Their garments of white indicated their priestly character, and the crowns of gold on their heads show royal priests and kings, (chap. v. 10,) as they affirm.

5. "And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices"—the very force and fury of the tempest. Terrific judgments should be ordered by the Sovereign King. The instruments of vengeance should come at His command. The Lord Christ shall reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. He lacks not means for the infliction of His wrath, but rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm. This scene displays the pomp and majesty of the Divine providence administered by Him.

"And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." The golden candlestick in the temple had seven lamps, and it stood before the entrance to the Holy of holies. The interprete

tion of this symbol was given to John, who says it denoted the Spirit of God complete in all His offices. Ch. i. 4. His agency in enlightening, purifying, reproof, transforming, regenerating, beautifying, quickening, transforming, is the glorious element of Christ's power, the efficient force of His dominion. John v. 21, 27.

V. 6. "And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal." This symbol corresponds with "the molten sea" in the temple, which stood in front of the altar. It was thirty cubits, forty-five feet in circumference, and five cubits or seven and a half feet deep; a reservoir of water, furnished with vents or fascets, through which the water might be drawn into ten lavers or troughs on its side, in which the priests were to wash the offerings, and themselves in the sea. 1 Kings, vii. 23, 39; 2 Chron. iv. 6. The symbol aptly represents the purifying virtue of the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Mal. iii. 3; Tit. ii. 14; 1 Pet. i. 19; 1 John i. 7. It is this which opens the way, and is the only means of access to the throne of our Saviour God.

"And in the midst of the throne and sound about (*κύκλος*, in the circle) of the throne, were four beasts, (*ζωα*, living creatures, things, forms,) full of eyes before and behind. The word *ζωα*, translated beasts, does not mean *θηρσα*, wild, ravenous creatures. Daubney translates it "wights," an obsolete expression, which was derived from the Saxon *wiht*, denoting lively, nimble, active, swift; though the German *wicht* has an opposite signification of heavy, weighty. The original word *ζωον* denotes whatever possesses or is endowed with life. Woodhouse (on the Apocalypse, p. 106, in note,) says, "Plato has been observed to apply the term *ζωον* to God. (Dial. Timæus.) To which we might add, that Aristotle has done the same: *φαμεν δα τον θεον εινα ζωον αιδιον, αφρον.* (Metaphyne, lib. xiv. cap. viii. *ζωον* is anything which has life, and in its highest signification, may

be applied to Him who alone "has life in Himself." John v. 26. Christ, in Apoc. i. 18, calls Himself ὁ Ζῶν, the living. It is the same word which is used by the Septuagint translation to designate the כַּרְיִימוֹת, seen by Ezek. i. 5, afterwards כַּרְיִימוֹת, called כַּרְיִימוֹת, χερουβιμ, Cherubim. It is used in Gen. i. 24, to designate a portion of the beasts or animals created on the fifth day; frequently, more especially quadrupeds, the creatures domesticated and used to assist man in working and bearing burthens. In 2 Sam. xx. 10, and Ps. i. 8, 10, it is said of God, "He rode upon a cherub. וַיִּסַּב עַל-אֲרֻבַּי did fly; "yea, he did fly upon וַיִּרְכַּב

the wings of the wind"—"was seen upon the wings of the wind." The cherub was one of the faces of the cherubim, especially that of the ox, the calf, the bull, differently named, but of the same species, the beast of burden, what the Latins called *jumentum*, the worker at the plow, in the cart, or wagon.

Solomon directed that "the molten sea" should be supported by twelve oxen, whose bodies were under the laver, their backs being its resting place, and showing outside of it but the face and head. 1 Kings vii. 27, 37. To the beholder they appeared to be "within and round about the sea"—ἐν μέσῳ καὶ περιελάω. In the vision of John, the Ζῶα, as seen ὡς by him, are said to be "*in the midst of the throne and round about the throne*;" that is, the bodies were under toward the centre, and the heads outside and around on the sides of the throne. Their office and use evidently were those of supporters, bearers, carriers of the throne. The description given of the cherubim in Ezek. i. 2, 10, of the seraphim in Isa. vi., and of the hieroglyphic forms attached to the ark of the covenant, and mercy seat, as described in Exod. xxxvii. 7, 9; xxv. 19, 23, shows that the Ζῶα, of which the cherubic figures were the hieroglyphic representation, what-

ever might be their nature and meaning, held the same relation and performed the same functions toward the throne of Jehovah of Hosts. The circumstantial differences do not impair the general identity, any more than do the varying accounts we have of the same thing by different persons, and under different aspects and conditions, when observed from different points of view. Whatever the *Zoa* therefore might be, they were the supports and bearers of the throne; in other words, according to the analogy of the symbol, the instrumental agencies or forces employed by the great Sovereign Lord, in maintaining and carrying forward His providential government. Their being full of eyes before and behind, aptly represents their abundant fitness for the service they render; for the eyes, being the inlets of knowledge, the means of perception and observation, and being plentifully on all sides provided, qualified them for the work assigned them, just as the keen visual powers and intelligence of trained steeds in a chariot, fit them to receive the direction and instruction of the driver for the employment of his force and accomplishment of his will.

This simple, obvious, and generic idea, will enable us to determine satisfactorily, we think, the meaning of the cherubim in every stage of their history, under the various aspects in which they have been presented to view, from the very expulsion of our first parents from Eden, down through the patriarchal ages and those of the Israelitish theocracy, whether in the lifeless metallic furniture of the tabernacle, the seraphim seen by Isaiah, or the *Zoa* of Ezekiel, or of John in this last and magnificent vision which he had of their forms and functions.

The word כְּרֻבִים is in the plural of the noun sing. כְּרֹב. It is differently derived, but that derivation, to us

most satisfactory, makes it a compound word, consisting of the prefix **ר** caph simul, as, like as, and **רובים** or **רבים**, signifying great ones, mighty ones, princes, prefects, workers, strugglers, contesters, many, large, vast, according to the nature of the object whose property is meant to be designated by it, and according as it may be literally or metaphorically used. The word translated, as thus derived, explains itself. The cherubim were representative resemblances of the mighty ones, as, like as **רובים** the mighty ones, the great, powerful, magnates, potentates, &c. But who or what were the **רבים**, **רובים**, or **רבים**.

The word denoted the persons of Deity, and, as applied to Jehovah, was equivalent with **אלוהים**, *Rubim, Roubim, Rabbim*; whence *Rabbi, Magister*, Lord's spiritual, and *Elohim*, plural always, but not correctly translated in the singular number, God, θεος. 2 Kings vi. 16. "For they are the great **רבים**, who are with us." Ezra v. 8. "The house **אלהא רבא** of the great God." Prov. xxvi. 10. **רב** "the great one who formed all things." Especially Isa. liii. 11, "By his knowledge shall my righteous servants justify many." **עריק** shall make justification, or cause vindication, render satisfaction. **לרבים** to the mighty ones; "therefore will I divide him a portion with the great," **ברבים**, with the mighty ones, "because He hath poured out His soul unto death," made naked for death His soul; and "He bore the sin of many," **אשר**, rendered an offering, made a sacrifice, a sin-offering to the mighty ones. The term **רובים**, or **רבים**, being a title applied to Jehovah, and equivalent therefore with **אלוהים**, *Elohim*, it is pertinent and necessary, in this attempt to analyze its meaning, to

determine what the latter meant. That it is a plural noun, and is used in close connection with the singular יהוה, Jehovah, to denote the one only living and true Creator of all things, will be denied by none. That no form of speech would more aptly express the Scriptural idea of a triune God, the divine nature essentially one, existing and exerting its infinite energies in three persons, or distinctive personal subsistences, is unquestionable. No other language of later date than the Hebrew, and its cognate dialects, possesses terms which, without a periphrase, can express the precise and full import of the words אֱלֹהִים. יהוה, Jehovah Elohim, rendered incorrectly by the Greek Septuagint, ὁ κυριος ὁ θεος, and in the Latin, Dominus Deus, and in the English, *the Lord God*. The denials and criticisms of Jews, rationalists, and other anti-trinitarians, have no force against the significance of such a peculiar, and unique, idiomatic form of speech as this; especially when we take into view that the Scriptures are miraculously inspired; that it is the designation of Himself, which God from the very beginning has used in His addresses and communications to men, whether directly or through His prophets, who have reported the same to us from His own mouth; and that this Trinity, or Tripersonality, in One Essence, pervades and is kept perpetually in view in the Sacred Scriptures. "There are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are One," 1 John v. 7, Jehovah Elohim. As to the meaning of the word Jehovah, compounded from different tenses of the verb יהיה; or of יה and יהוה, and aptly denoting the self-sufficient, self-existing, essential, supreme Being, all are agreed. The word Elohim אֱלֹהִים, designating three personal agencies in that essence, Jeho-

vah, is derived from the verb אָלַף, juravit, he swore. It denotes the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, not only as objects of adoration, by whom men make oath, but themselves, as having brought themselves under the obligation of their own oath. This oath is that under which Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bound Himself in the covenant made for the redemption of fallen man; to which reference is often made in the Scriptures. See Heb. vii. 16; xiii. 20; Isa. xlix. 8; Heb. vi. 17. For, in the fulfilment of that covenant, the divine essence, Jehovah, in the person of the Son, the second of the glorious Trinity, has assumed human nature into permanent union, and thus constituted the God-man, Jehovah Jesus, the representative of the Godhead, and the efficient Sovereign of the universe. The declared design of the whole scheme of redemption, to which God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, by oath are committed, is the enthronement of the Son as the glorious exhibition of the Godhead in union with humanity. He is the appointed Sovereign Ruler of the universe, and is sustained by all the forces and agencies of the Infinite Eternal Three in One. This glorious constitution forms the warp and woof of the entire web of revelation, as unfolded in the sacred Scriptures. It pervades the word of God from Genesis to Revelation. The cherubim form its hieroglyphic representation. A careful examination of the Bible account will show that in and through them, as significant symbols, grouped in one impressive and marvellous display, we are taught the fact, that the divine agencies of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the triune Jehovah, all mutually and severally stand pledged to each other, by oath, and to man by promise, to co-operate for the redemption of sinners; that, in the prosecution of this work, the human nature is to be exalted, and incorporated into permanent union with the divine, in the person of the Son

of God; that God in Christ is the declared and destined Lord and Ruler of the universe; that subservient to His will, and efficiently directed and controlled by Him, are all the mighty forces and energies, and whatever agencies may be necessary to maintain and establish His universal dominion. The cherubim always appear as bearers, supporters, or carriers of the throne of the Lord, while prosecuting and accomplishing the glorious work of redemption. Being presented to us therefore in this relation and aspect, as the bearers and supporters of His throne, the surroundings of His majestic presence, the resemblance directs us obviously to the forces and agencies by which the Lord, Christ, Jehovah of Hosts, carries out and executes the great interests of His government.

Now this government of God is twofold; 1st, that of His physical providence, as the creator and upholder of all things in heaven and earth; and 2d, that of His mediatorial rule or dominion.

The first is natural and rightful to Him as one of the Elohim, God equal with the Father. The last is a totally different thing, being an extraordinary device of infinite wisdom and power, a mystery hid from the foundation of the world, not revealed in the natural creation, but to be unfolded and executed by the Son of God incarnate, who, by the triune, Jehovah Elohim, has been appointed heir of all things, Heb. i. 2, and is efficiently executing His administrative sway, Eph. i. 10, "that in the dispensation of the fulness of time he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven and which are on earth."

In confirmation of these views we trace, through the history of the past, as given in the Bible record, the cherubic manifestations made in different stages or dispensations under this administrative rule of the Lord God, destined,

as God incarnate, to be the Sovereign Lord of all. In the divine Word, he first appears after the fall of man in Eden, as the voice of the Lord God **קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים**, the voice ⁵ or word of Jehovah Elohim, walking, **מַתְהַלֵּךְ**. The voice is a personal title, and what was heard was the tread of his footsteps. He came the representative of Jehovah Elohim, one of the mighty personages of the Godhead. This title identifies him with the **ὁπαῖος τοῦ Θεοῦ**, the word of ⁶ **ὁ λαγος** God, (John i. 1, 14), that pitched His tent, **εσκηνωσε**, dwelt among men. The first representation or display of Himself made by God to man was in the creation, and in the particular arrangements and ordinances, or constitution granted and provided in Eden. Of these we have but a few hints recorded, in what we read concerning the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam was created in the image and likeness of God, in righteousness and holiness; and, so endowed, he was able, intuitively, like God, to discern the nature of things in the material and animate world around him. Of this, proof was given in the names used by him to designate the creatures, which are according to and expressive of their natures. Gen. ii. 19, 20, 23. While innocent and obedient he could look through nature up to nature's God. Creation was the bright mirror in which to discern the glories of his Creator, and worship and commune with Him. In himself he might discern traces of the divine moral perfectness. He was ⁷ nature's high priest, so to speak, God's picture of Himself; His image and likeness, and endowed with sovereign dominion over all the earth. Lord of this lower creation, he had no reason to fear harm from God, or dread His presence. As God's representative and vicegerent, he had authority over all the earth. But he had no sooner sinned than ~~he had~~ rebelled and forfeited all his possessions, au-

thority, and life itself, all was changed. The threatened penalty had certified to him what he might expect—dying, he should die. The prospect filled him with dismay. He was liable at any moment to have that sentence of death executed, and through the promptings of instinct, under consciousness of guilt, he fled for escape from God. But the whole created universe was inadequate to give him any knowledge of God that might inspire hope or comfort his heart after he had sinned and fallen. He needed, as a guilty, ruined sinner, condemned by the law he had violated, to know what God might, and could, or would be pleased to do, if anything, to deliver him from the death and destruction to which he had become liable. His own reason was inadequate to it, so was the light of nature. He must be indebted for it, therefore, to a new revelation from God Himself, if ever he could know that escape was possible, that there were pardons with the Most High, or anything but wrath and terror for the guilty.

This, as we learn from the history given in the third chapter of Genesis, was mercifully vouchsafed by God to our fallen parents. A deliverer, the seed of the woman, was promised afterward. They were expelled from Eden, but not cast out from God in utter despair. In their own righteousness and innocence they could not confide, for they had lost them—defaced, destroyed them, by their own guilt. To a sacrificial victim they were taught, by "the voice of God," to look for atonement and forgiveness. "The Lord God made coats of skins and clothed them." These were significant, symbolical procedures. Animal sacrifice, for expiatory purposes, directly instituted by God, had their origin, and man was taught to look for covering, from the sacrifice, for his guilt and nakedness. Heb. xi. 4, teaches, that animal sacrifices were divinely authorized; for on no other ground could Abel have offered such in faith, and been

approved and accepted of God. The paradisaic institutions and ordinances, all being arrangements for the worship of innocent creatures only, were no longer suitable. It was an act of mercy, on the part of God, to exclude fallen man from having access to them. "And the Lord God said, behold the man! He was as one of us, to know good and evil, and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, that he should eat and live forever!" v. 22. It is the language of deep emotion; an unfinished sentence, suppressed, as it were, amid the sobbings of grief, rendering utterance difficult. The ellipsis may be as well, and better, supplied: "I will send him, or lead him, forth from the garden." This was done, in fact. "So He drove out the man," as a shepherd drives his flock, with sufficient demonstrative violence to let him know he must forthwith hasten from the garden; and it is added, "He placed, at the east of the Garden of Eden, cherubims." (*וַיִּשְׁכְּנוּ* habitavit, caused to dwell, tented; *מִכְרָבִים*, from the East, *לְנֹן-עֵדֶן* to the garden of Eden *אֶת-הַכְּרָבִים* the cherubim.) The transaction was that of putting or placing in a tabernacle, perchance some bower, enclosure or copse, near the entrance or gateway, the cherubim, "and a flaming sword, on the eastern side or edge of the garden, which turned every way, to keep the way to the tree of life." *וְאֵת לַחַשׁ הַחַדָּב* and the flaming of the sword, *הַמְתַּחַפֶּכֶת* that turneth itself,—revolving, thus acting as a guard to prevent entrance into the garden, and access to the tree of life. Moses here speaks of the cherubim as something well known, and needing no description. What was its appearance or form, we learn not from this or any account of it, in the sacred Scriptures, until the period when, at the direction of Moses, Bezaleel made the hieroglyphic forms attached to the mercy-seat, overlying the ark

of the covenant, in the holy of holies, and which were placed in the inner chamber of the tabernacle; and they are partially described, Exod. xxv. 17, 22; xxxvii. 6, 9. These hieroglyphic forms had faces, but of what form is not here stated. They were the appointed place for access to and communion with God. Oracular responses were thence to be had also. Instances of their use for such purposes, and of answers having been obtained, are noticed, Exod. xxviii. 30; Num. vii. 39; 1 Sam. ix. 9, 19; xiv. 37; xxviii. 6, 15; xxiii. 11, 12. These hieroglyphic forms, there is every reason to believe, were resemblances of the cherubim first placed at the entrance to Eden. The patterns of them were shown to Moses in the Mount. Exod. xxv. 40; xxvi. 30. Acts vii. 44. Heb. viii. 5; ix. 9. These patterns were representations, diagrams, models, probably, in some circumstances, varying from the original forms placed at the gate of Eden; something intended to be exemplars to him, and give him an idea or view, not so much backward to them, but forward to the heavenly or spiritual realities of which the cherubim were the hieroglyphic. But however modified in form and material of structure the cherubic figures of the tabernacle may have been from the cherubim of Eden, by reason of being adapted to a different dispensation, and its relations and restrictions of divine worship, there undoubtedly was a general substantial agreement, especially in the visage or facial appearances of the image forms. The original or paradisaic hieroglyphic had faces; for Cain, when, by the sentence of God, after the murder of Abel, he was expelled from his father's family, and condemned to be "a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth," said, "From thy face shall I be hid." Gen. iv. 14. The word מַפְּאֵיִךְ is in the plural, *from thy* (Jehovah's) *faces*. Gen. iv. 14. In the 16th verse, it is said, "and Cain went out from the

presence of the Lord," *הוֹדָה מִלְפָּנָיו*, from the faces of Jehovah. The faces, in all subsequent cherubic manifestations, were those of the lion, the bull, calf, or ox, the man, and the eagle. Doubtless these were the faces, also, of the first cherubim shown to Adam, and ordained to be some permanent, abiding manifestation of the presence of Jehovah, and, hence, naturally arose the current familiar phrase, the faces of God. In some way, most probably by the flaming sword, revolving, hovering, overshadowing, vibrating, God gave tokens to the senses of men of His immediate presence. This flaming sword answers to the brilliant light or Shekinah—the shining of the glory of God over and from between the cherubic figures in the holy of holies, by which the presence of Jehovah Elohim was visibly, to the eyes of the High Priest, made known. The ark of the covenant, on which rested the mercy-seat, with the cherubic figures on each side, formed the throne or seat of Jehovah of Hosts, the Elohim of Israel. The form or figure assumed by the light beaming forth over it, is not described. The Jews called that light the Shekinah; but the Scriptural use of this word expresses the idea of sacred indwelling. The holy of holies was the presence-chamber of the Lord God of Israel. See Exod. xxv. 8; xxix. 45. Num. v. 3. Ps. lxxviii. 16; lxxiv. 12. It designated, also, the brilliant light or glory that dwelt on Sinai, when God descended there. Exod. xxiv. 16. The light or glory, therefore, naturally, was regarded as the symbol of the Lord's presence, and so was called the glory of the Lord. In Num. vii. 89, the same idea is intimated, though not so explicitly stated as to formal appearance. His effulgence, Rom. ix. 4, *ἀπαύλασμα τῆς δόξης*, Heb. i. 3. Ezekiel, in his vision of the cherubim, (ch. i. 26, 29,) speaks of this brilliant light as though it were an intense irradiation from or around the appearance of a man upon the throne. It

was, he says, "the likeness as the appearance of a man above, upon it"—on the throne. "This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God," *i.e.*, Jehovah of Hosts presented visibly in human form effulgent. In Ps. lxxx. 1, He is addressed: "He that dwelleth between the cherubim"—inhabiting the cherubim **יֹשֵׁב הַכְרֻבִים**. So in Ps. xcix. 1. "He sitteth (dwelleth) between the cherubim"—inhabitheth the cherubim **יֹשֵׁב הַמְצִיִּים** 2 Sam. vi. 2. The ark of God **הָאֱלֹהִים** the three persons bound by covenant, the divine covenanters, or oath-pledged, where is invoked the name,—“the name of Jehovah of Hosts, who dwelleth in the cherubim, upon it” **יֹשֵׁב כְּרֻבִים, צִלְיָא** inhabiting the cherubim—over it or upon it. 1 Sam. iv. 4 has the same phrase, which is somewhat modified in 1 Chron. xiii. 6, the ark of the divine oath-bound covenanters **הָאֱלֹהִים**, Jehovah inhabiting the cherubim **יֹשֵׁב הַכְרֻבִים**, who is invoked there. ~~**אֲשֶׁר נִרְאָה שָׁם**~~ Ezekiel, chap. x. 20, leaves no room for doubt as to what they were. "This is the living creature that I saw *under* the God of Israel, and I knew that they were the cherubim." **אֱלֹהֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל** **תַּחַת** not under but *pro*, instead of, Gen. xxx. 2; 1. 19, in the place of, for, the substitute,—here, therefore, the representation. They were the hieroglyphic exhibition. In estimating them and their import, the unity of the hieroglyphic must be kept in view. The throne, or ark of the covenant, mercy-seat, four-faced figures, and glory, together have a joint, general, and comprehensive significance. The cherubim, therefore,—that is, the *tout ensemble*, the throne, its supporters or attendant guardians, the four-faced figures, and the beaming glory over them in human form—we must regard to have been a visible manifestation of the enthroned-

ment, in human nature, of the person of the Son of God; one of the triune Deity bound in covenant, by oath, for man's redemption, whose throne, or divine mediatorial government, is supported by the concurrent, co-operating agency of the persons of the Godhead, in the various forces and methods employed in the omnipotent providence or dominion of Jehovah God יְהוָה הָאֱלֹהִים. Such being the design and use of this hieroglyphic, in the antediluvian and postdiluvian patriarchal ages, as the knowledge of the true God, and the faith delivered to Adam and preserved by Noah, died out of the world; through the migration and succession of generations who would preserve still the outward forms and representations of things, it is easy to see how naturally idolatry arose. The attributing of some indwelling of deity to images set apart as representatives, such as in the first place were authorized by God in the cherubic forms, naturally led to a similar sacredness on the part of men's own fictile, metallic, wood, engraven, or molten or carved, rude or exquisite imitations or copies of them, whether large, or of miniature size to be used as amulets on the neck, and manufactured for aid and excitement in private or family worship. Hence, also, the colossal cherubic figures of the man-bull, lion-man, eagle-headed man and winged monsters that occupied so conspicuous a place in the ancient temples in Nineveh, Babylon, Thebes, and the triple-headed monsters of Egypt, Greece and Rome, objects of worship.—Serapis, Jupiter, Sol, Diana, Gergones, Janus with four faces, the many-eyed and many-handed Gergones, Hecate, Cerberus, &c. Hence, also, the teraphim brought by Rachel, from the family of Laban, her father—representative images, in miniature exhibitions, of the cherubim used as private memorials. But a slight dialectic change of pronunciation is needed to change the words, viz., by sub-

stituting the \aleph for \beth and \daleth for \aleph sounds easily convertible, and not easily distinguishable when inarticulately spoken. Jacob called them Laban's Elohim, אֱלֹהֵיךָ (thy gods, En. Tr.) Gen. xxxi., xxxii., v. 35. The penates of the Greeks and Romans, endlessly varied, were used in like manner to represent their deities.

The cherubim, therefore, being representative figures of the Elohim, or persons of the Godhead, co-operating by covenant and oath for the support, establishment, and glorification of the dominion of the Son, the second person, as incarnate Redeemer and Purifier, This vision of John, in which he saw the four ζωα, or living creatures, four hieroglyphic forms, becomes magnificently significant. It was sustained by the entire Godhead in the administration of His lofty mediatorial rule; in other words, a display of the Lord Christ as the great God of providence. Jesus Christ, the brightness of the glory of God, enthroned in heaven, in the exercise of His mediatorial dominion, employs and directs the energies of the Godhead in all the forces and agencies, appropriate to, and ordained by them, both in nature and in providence. He rides upon the cherubim—the chariot of the Lord—still, as truly as when He descended on Sinai. Ps. lxxviii. 17. What are these forces in the physical universe, but as the philosophic and learned call them, *the laws of nature*? These exist not independent of God. They are not to be referred to as forces controlling Him from all eternity, existing anterior to or irrespective of His will or creative fiat. We know not how one, believing the Scriptures to be miraculously inspired, a divine authoritative revelation—i. e., *the word* of the Lord, can do it. The eternity of creation or of matter was assumed and taught by pagan priests and philosophers. But it is directly at variance with the teachings of

the Bible. "By faith," says Paul, "we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Heb. xi. 3. And so Moses, by inspiration, has unmistakably affirmed. "In the beginning God אֱלֹהִים created the heavens and the earth." Gen. i. 1. This comprehends the entire physical universe, and affirms two things in opposition to the ancient Egyptian and Oriental philosophy, 1st, that they had a beginning, and 2d, that they owed their origin to the will and power of the אֱלֹהִים. The earth, הָאָרֶץ, is this globe which man inhabits. The heavens, הַשָּׁמַיִם, is space, with its stellar hosts, all outside of and beyond this planet—the vast expanse. "God called the firmament (רָקִיעַ, the expanse) heaven." Gen. i. viii. The word הַשָּׁמַיִם may literally and properly be translated, the names being taken as plural of שֵׁם. The name is that by which any person or thing is designated or made known, and distinguished from others. These names, therefore, which God אֱלֹהִים created, must, of necessity, be His or their names, that is, the things by which the persons of Jehovah הָאֱלֹהִים made themselves known, i. e., revealed themselves. We are therefore, to regard the expanse—the infinitude of space called heaven, (הַשָּׁמַיִם—the names (of God), the original manifestation of God, that by which He reveals Himself, or makes Himself known. But why is space called the names or revelators of God; in other words, how does the vast expanse of the universe present or reveal to us the Being that made it? It may be replied, as it is a type, shadow, or representation in some way. Jehovah is a Spirit, some essence immaterial and not directly cogni-

zible by our senses. We have no direct spiritual perception or cognition of God, but must form our conceptions of Him from analogies or resemblances attributed to Him, of somewhat perceptible or cognizable by means of or through our senses. His image or resemblance, His invisibility, Paul says, is clearly seen by the creation. Rom. i. 20. It is his Godhead of which he speaks; His essential Being and persons, for the word includes both. The Godhead, *θειότης*, in Greek, is in Hebrew, יהוה צללים—Jehovah Elohim. The essential, self-existent, personal agents, a unity of essence involving a tripersonality of agency or subsistency, as Paul has it, *ὑποστάσις*. The word *ὑποστάσις* signifies foundation, base, substratum, and is applied to God by analogy or verisimilitude, and designates His essence, substance, nature, Heb. i. 3, *χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως ἑαυτοῦ*, or literally a delineation of the essence or being of Him; an image of the invisible immutable essential Godhead. As applicable to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Bible is uniform in its teaching. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." John xiv. 9, etc. He is the brightest and most glorious and perfect likeness of Jehovah Elohim; but only one, *χαρακτήρ*, a character. Man was at first created to be such. Gen. i. 26. But is there any other? Yes, space or *הַשָּׁמַיִם*. If these are the names of God, then must they be some resemblance or manifestation of Him. Is there, then, anything predicable of the vast expanse of the universe, or space, which constitutes it, *χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως τοῦ θεοῦ*, a representative image of the triune God, i. e., the essential Deity, existing and operating as the Jehovah Elohim, the three agents, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? In other words, does creation present any image of the triune Godhead? Has nature a Trinity? If so, that which is called the names *הַשָּׁמַיִם*, the heavens—space—the universe must contain it. If what

we call space be not a vacuum, but a plenum, or some universal, primordial, essential fluid, containing all the stellar worlds, involving the earth, and all beside it, then may we be able to read the *γραφαὶ τῶν θεῶν*, the lineaments or representation of God. Is there reason to believe there is such a thing? The deductions of science are against the old theory of a vacuum, and corroborative of the truth or fact, that there exists an exceedingly subtle, elastic fluid, and possessing various mechanical properties or modes of action, which may be and has been variously named spiritus, halitus, air, ether, electricity, more properly *ουσία*, essence, substance, which has certain characteristic modes of action, called laws of nature.

We talk of gravitation, repulsion, centripetal and centrifugal forces, chemical affinities, vital power, etc., and call them laws of nature; but what intelligible view can we take of the forces, agents, etc., other than that they are established modes of the Creator's agency—some continued, uniform, efficient causality, originally brought into action by God himself, and ordained thereafter to operate with invariable certainty. Whether this continual causal force, exhibited in the conservation of matter, is to be regarded as a continued creation; whether eternity of being with God, who lives not by succession, is an ever present now; in other words, whether supporting and creating acts of power Almighty, differ essentially from creating energy, are questions wholly metaphysical, which, in the nature of things, we can never satisfactorily resolve, and which it is utterly unnecessary for us to attempt to do. It is one of those incomprehensible things that God alone can understand. We can but look on, observe, and carefully scrutinize the modes or laws of His agency—the action of forces dependent at first on His will for their rise, and as certainly and equally on that will for their continuity. The great, essen-

tial forces in the mechanism of the universe, however diversified and developed in their action, varied operations and results, may all be found in the three elements, if we may so speak, or modified conditions of force, which we call light, heat, elastic *spirit*, as Newton called electricity, whether it be magnetism, ether, spiritus, or by whatever other name we may deem appropriate. And what are these so named, but modified action or modes of agency of some one universal fluid or essence, that pervades all things—fills the universe? Heat or fire, light, and electro-magnetism so called, or that force or agent essential to or connected with all development of life are correlate forces. Tyndal proves the first to be a peculiar motion of the corpuscles or ultimate atoms; light is another, and galvanism or electro-magnetism a third. How related, whether as diverse, varying vibratiuncular motions of some one universal fluid or element, perhaps it were in vain to search. But if one essence or fluid, filling the universe, possesses and exerts these great generic modes of action or forces, in accordance with a triple condition, within which may be ranged, as in their proper categories, the entire phenomena of the material creation—then have we a very remarkable type or representation of the triune God, a marvellous significance in the Hebrew names, by which Moses, under divine miraculous inspiration, designated His essential being and personal subsistencies. Without entering into the scientific discussions on this subject, it is sufficient to remark that investigations and deductions of men learned in natural science, have led some to the opinion that caloric, or fire, or heat, however designated, light, and what is called electricity, are but modified conditions and actions of some one simple elastic element pervading all things. (See Newton's *Principia*, p. 507.) "And now we might add something concerning a certain most subtle spirit which pervades and lies

hid in all gross bodies ; by the force and action of which spirit, the particles of bodies mutually attract one another at near distances, and when contiguous ; and electric bodies operate to greater distances, as well repelling as attracting the neighboring corpuscles ; and light is emitted, reflected, refracted, inflected, and heats bodies ; and all sensation is excited, and the members of animal bodies move at the command of the will, namely, by the vibration of this spirit, mutually propagated along the solid filaments of the nerves, from the outward organs of sense to the brain, and from the brain into the muscles. But these are things that cannot be explained in a few words, nor are we furnished with that sufficiency of experiments which is required to an accurate determination and demonstration of the laws by which this electric and elastic spirit operates." (See also Faraday, vol. iii.)

Assuming this to be fact, we discern peculiar force and significance in the terms or names by which the Scriptures designate the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The natural elements or forces being constituted by Jehovah the symbols or resemblances of the personal agencies, the names fire, light, spirit, designating the created element or type, become appropriate as illustrative titles of the persons of the Godhead. That they are so used, every careful student of the Bible knows. God is called Fire, as He, and especially the Father, is revealed to us as the Avenger, exercising his punitive justice, punishing sin by consuming sinners. Deut. iv. 24. "The Lord thy God is a consuming fire." Heb. xii. 29 ; Deut. xxxii. 22. "A fire is kindled in mine anger." Isa. x. 17 ; lxvi. 15, 16 ; Ezek. xxi. 31 ; Nahum i. 6 ; Psalm xviii. 8. The divine appearances or interpositions were made by means of this element or force. Gen. xv. 7 ; xix. 24 ; Exod. iii. 2 ; Deut. xxxiii. 16 ; Deut. iv. 24 ; ix. 3 ; 2 Sam. xxi. 9, 12 ; 1 Kings xviii. 24, 38 ; 2

Chron. vii. 1, 3; Ps. l. 1; xcvi. 1; Lam. ii. 3. Whether as a representative emblem or as a metaphorical expression, the fire of God's wrath is a phrase, which, for thousands of years, from the very beginning, whatever may be men's philosophy or hermeneutics, has been in familiar use. The most vivid idea we can have of the intensity of heat or fire is the glory or irradiation of the sun. Hence the sun became an object of worship very early in the history of the world, first as the emblem, and afterward as the very substance or fiery flashing eye of God.

The Son of God, the second person of the Godhead, is spoken of as the Sun of Righteousness. Jer. iii. 15; Mal. iii. 20; iv. 2; Isa. xlvi. 6; xlix.; Luke ii. 32; John i. 4; viii. 12; xii. 35, 36; Acts xiii. 47; Heb. i. 3. As the Father is the avenging fire, Christ is the irradiating saving illuminator. The Spirit of God is the third name or title more especially used to designate the third person, but equally, with the names Fire and Light, sometimes expressive of the entire Godhead. In Gen. i. 2 it is said the Spirit of God, **רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים**, moved upon the face of the waters, **מְרִדָּהּ**, moved itself or himself. He was the originator of motion, the formative force, which, in the Scriptures is represented as especially the office or work of the third person of the Godhead. All that relates to motion, crystallization, garnishing, beautifying, vitalizing, is spoken of as pertaining to the Godhead exerting their divine energy through or by the Spirit.

HOME AND THE HOUSEHOLD.

MEN who look no further than the temporal happiness of individuals and the welfare of existing society, are not insensible of the importance of our domestic relations, which the strongest affections of nature secure, and which even our wants and weaknesses cement. We can form no conception of social virtue or enjoyment, or, we might say, no conception of human society itself, which has not its spring and fountain in the family. No matter how excellent the constitution and laws of a country may be, or what its resources and its means of power and prosperity, unless a sure foundation for social order, and public as well as private virtue be laid in the healthy regulation and wise discipline of its families. "A nation," it has been remarked, "is but a shorter name for the individuals who compose it, and when these are good fathers, good sons, good brothers and good husbands, it is superfluous to say they will be good citizens."

There are not a few who have become convinced that defective views of the family relationship, and the relaxation of family government, threaten the stability and prosperity of this country far more seriously than domestic treason or foreign hostility. The Scriptural view of the relative duties of the members of a Christian household, presents the prevailing defects in an alarming aspect, as dishonoring to God, disastrous to the spiritual condition of the churches, and as throwing the most serious obstruc-

tions in the way of evangelical progress. Professing Christians are largely responsible for the general disregard of domestic obligations. At least, they will confess that it is from the churches alone that a healthful influence can ever be shed abroad upon the homes of the land. They, therefore, may, with propriety, be summoned to a serious and prayerful consideration of the revealed will of God on a subject as interesting as it is momentous.

Home! How much that word conveys to the heart of every man who is not utterly hardened in vice! Christianity aside, we regard a man as lost to society to whom home has lost its charm. But when, to all its natural attractions, are added the hallowed associations which gather around a Christian home, there is little wonder if, in our common forms of speech, the word should have been transferred from a terrestrial to the heavenly resting-place of our hopes and affections; as God has been pleased to employ its relations as symbols of the most exalted relations which subsist between Himself and His creatures.

It is a common saying that, in order to know a man you must see him at home; not because he is to be regarded as a hypocrite or an impostor, who only lays aside his mask when he can do it with safety; but because men learn to be guarded, both in action and expression, in the ordinary intercourse of life. In spite of themselves, their best as well as their worst characteristics are under restraint while they are surrounded by those with whom they are not perfectly familiar, or in whose friendship they have not perfect confidence. The reality and extent of a work of grace in the heart of a Christian are also revealed in the unguarded confidence and amid the multiplied petty trials of home. Here the husband, wife, parent, child, brother, and sister show whether they have a mere form of godliness or own its power. Here their consistency is most severely tested,

and here the influence of each, for good or evil, finds its most energetic exercise. This is especially true of the head of the house, who cannot fail to stamp it with his own character. An accurate observer of wide experience says, "I never can form a correct judgment of a man from seeing him or hearing him in a religious meeting. He may seem a very spiritual person, and teach very beautiful and very true things, but let me go home with him, and then I learn the actual state of the case. He may speak like an angel from heaven, but if his house be not ordered according to the mind of God, he cannot be a true witness for Christ."

The character of those who appear most prominently on the page of Scripture is frequently subjected to this test. The curtain of the patriarch's tent is raised, the door of the saint's abode is opened, and we are permitted to see him within the sanctuary of home. We not only see himself there, but we see his household laid under a responsibility and made sharers of a blessing in proportion to his fidelity. Thus, when God was about to destroy the old world, He said to Noah, "Come thou and thy household into the ark, for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." We have no definite information, indeed, of the manner in which Noah discharged his obligations as the head of that family, but, so far as it goes, the record shows how God regards a man's household as identified with himself. It shows both the responsibility and the blessedness of such a connection. The members of his family were saved from the flood, because they formed the household of one who, in the language of Paul, had become heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

In addition to all that physiologists may tell us of hereditary influences on character, and in addition to all that a moralist may tell us of the far-reaching influence of parental instruction and example, we find throughout the Scriptures

abundant proof of a peculiarity both of responsibility and blessing, resting upon the households of the children of God. Numerous examples are recorded of the favor with which God crowns the faithfulness of believers in their relations to their children. For example, God gave this as a reason for admitting Abraham into his confidence, "For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment." Nor is the lesson less impressive in the record of the disastrous consequences of a man's inconsistency and unfaithfulness in these relations. Two examples will occur to almost every reader—the bitter consequences to Lot's family, of his separation from Abraham to sojourn in Sodom, and the wreck of Eli's family because "his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not."

The principle involved in the numerous examples which might be cited from the Old Testament, must not be regarded as peculiar to a former dispensation. Although grace is not hereditary, the New Testament is not without its encouraging instances of a household joined with its head in the enjoyment of spiritual blessings. Prominent among these stands the case of the jailor at Philippi, who "rejoiced, believing with all his house;" and the house of Onesiphorus is joined with him in the apostolic benediction, "because," says Paul, "he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain." There is a noticeable example of making the state of a man's house the test of his character, when we are taught that a bishop must be "one that ruleth well his own house," and that he shall have faithful or believing children, as though the fact that his children were unbelievers would bring suspicion upon his fidelity and consistency, and must, therefore, invalidate his testimony to the truth.

Without multiplying proofs, it will readily be admitted that we have the sanction of Scripture when we say that a man's house furnishes the proper test of his character, and that the household of a believer enjoys important advantages, and is laid under corresponding responsibility by the very fact of its connection with him. A Christian, consequently, lies under peculiar responsibility for the manner in which he occupies his place as its head. His authority is sustained by a divine ordinance, and he has the implied assurance of the divine blessing in exercising it faithfully. In a certain sense, he represents God in that position, and is called to occupy it for God. Since he is not his own, but bought with a price, he must aim at the glory of God in every relation of life, and do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God, even the Father, by him. If in everything and in every place he is to show that he is Christ's, then, surely, next to the church of God, his own house will be the sphere of his most manifest devotedness. The love of God ruling in his heart will pervade his home, all its arrangements will bear the stamp of his heavenly vocation. As he occupies the place of its head by divine appointment, we should find in everything an acknowledgment of the presence, the providence, the grace, and the authority of God. All its affairs should be so conducted as to leave on the mind of every spectator the impression, "God is here."

This influence will not be confined to the household, it will reach to the house itself, which, with all its furniture, will bespeak a heart dead to the world. On the one hand, there will be an absence of all that savors of the world's empty display and enslaving luxury, but, on the other hand, however humble his roof, and however poor its equipments, it will not be dishonored by filth and disorder. The

charge that is given to us regarding the house of God, "let all things be done decently and in order," will be carried out in the house of the man of God. The admonition, "provide things honest in the sight of all men," which extends to all our social relations, as well as our personal deportment, will have its most accurate application to that sphere of our more immediate control. It would be difficult to tell which is most unseemly in the dwelling of a Christian, ostentation and vanity, or slovenliness and confusion; but it is certain that either indicates something wrong in the state of a man's heart, and must mar his Christian influence.

Nothing can be more flagrantly absurd than to hear a man speak of being dead with Christ and of living in the expectation of a coming Saviour, while his home and his style of living plainly show that he is engaged in the carnal rivalries of the worldly, who know no other than an earthly home, no glory but to outshine their neighbors, no delights but such as minister to the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. Such a man may profess what he pleases, he may excuse or defend himself as he chooses, but the worldly, with whom he vies in fashion and display, are quick to discern the palpable contradiction of his profession. Little wonder if our public warnings and persuasions fall dead and ineffectual, when there is so much in the homes and households of those who bear the Christian name, which must carry to the world the irresistible conviction of our insincerity. The standard of life cannot, surely, be lower among those who profess to be crucified with Christ than it was among the ancient people of God amid the promised temporal blessings of their own land. Yet, when we listen to the wo pronounced upon those who were at ease in Zion, it requires but a slight change of terms to make the description of luxury which

called down the divine judgments on them, an accurate picture of many a so-called Christian home, where "they put far away the evil day, and lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves on their couches, and eat the lambs of the flock and the calves out of the midst of the stall, and chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music like David, and drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments, but they are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph."

Familiarity reconciles us to the most unseemly and revolting sights, but it will doubtless appear in the record of history as a most heartless enormity, that fashionable display, luxury, and extravagance, instead of being arrested, should have received a new impulse amidst the calamities which threaten, not the prosperity alone, but the existence of a nation; nay, which threaten the overthrow of all that is dearest and most promising in the temporal hopes of mankind; to say nothing of the untold woes which have been inflicted on so many thousands of our fellow-citizens. Nothing more is necessary to expose the tendency of fashion and luxury and the character of those whose hearts are enslaved by them. But there is something even more monstrous than this, when we find those who profess to be watching, because they know not what a day nor an hour may bring forth, and to have set their affections on the things that are above, the foremost in the race of worldliness,—when we find the most flagrant display of fashions which outrage good taste and Christian propriety in the families of professing Christians, and in the assemblies of professed worshippers, as though they would defy God to His face. Do they forget Him who hath said, "The Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments, and their curls, and their round tires like the moon, the chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and

the ornaments of the legs, and the head-bands, and the tablets and the earrings, the rings and nose jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles and the wimples, and the crisping-pin, the glasses and the fine linen, and the hood and the veil." These things were not unnoticed by the All-seeing eye, and the enumeration of them stands in the Scriptures of truth. They are not, therefore, beneath our notice. Very vanity they are indeed in themselves; but not trivial is the sin which gives them a place in the hearts of men, and which displays them where sackcloth and ashes would best become the wearers.

The evil of which we speak is not confined to those who are the recognized votaries of fashion, and who attract general notice by their extravagance. The evil does not consist in the amount of money expended on it. The heart and home of many whose means of display are very limited are all overrun with the plague; and it may manifest itself only in the envy with which the poor look upon a splendor which they cannot emulate. Those who would be faithful in this, as in other matters, must go beyond the outward appearance, on which man looks, to the heart, upon which God looks, and must search themselves as in His sight. Instead of comparing their home, dress, and style of living with those of their wealthier neighbors, they should inquire whether the bent and aspiration of their hearts would not lead them to rival the excesses of the wealthy, and whether they are not going as far in that direction as their means and opportunities enable them. They should inquire whether they are not sacrificing opportunities of laying up treasures in heaven, for the sake of idle and hurtful display; and if they are not, after all, somewhat discontented with the circumstances of a lot which render that display so limited.

They may rest assured that just such things are taken by all, except themselves, as an index of their true cha-

racter. Men judge of us not by the doctrines we profess, but the lives we lead. They do not follow us to religious meetings to hear how loudly we exhort, or how fervently we pray, but they look at our homes, and our households, and our mode of living, and if these bear the stamp of worldliness, then, though we speak with the tongues of men and of angels, we are become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal in the estimation of our children, friends, and neighbors. The state of things in the homes of Christians goes far to explain the want of spiritual power in our churches, and the want of apparent success in the preaching of the Gospel. Such power and success, it is true, depend directly on the agency of the Holy Spirit. But God, though sovereign, is not capricious or arbitrary in the bestowment of spiritual blessings. The Spirit, though quenched and grieved, has not been withdrawn. It becomes us, therefore, to search ourselves unsparingly for the hinderance of His manifested power. Let us not occupy ourselves with other churches, or the households of our neighbors, nor exhaust our zeal in vague lamentations over the condition of the country or the world; but let us begin in our own hearts and our own homes, each asking, "Lord is it I?" After such an inquiry mayhap none of us will think ourselves entitled to cast the first stone, or, at least, we may find a beam to be cast out of our own eye, that we may see clearly to take the mote out of our brother's eye. But when we are thus led to take our place in genuine contrition at the feet of Christ, we may thence set out on a new course of service, and the fulness of blessing may be restored.

If a Christian's home contradicts his profession of being crucified with Christ, it is not surprising if his children go forth from it more settled in ungodliness, and less accessible to Christian influences, than children who go from homes

where the pursuit of the world is undisguised. The tone of worldliness pervading a Christian's home reacts also powerfully upon himself. A worldly man finds in a home which is regulated on principles of worldly prudence, where the love of wife and children always wait to welcome him, not only a relaxation from care and toil, but an antidote to the more hardening and corrupting influence of his association with the outer world. The Christian surely ought to find, in a home regulated upon Christian principles, where all is purified and enhanced by the fear of the Lord, a powerful influence to counteract the secularizing tendencies of everyday life, if not an escape from the world itself. When he enters it he shuts the door upon the world, and there the tastes and affections of the new man might be expected to find unfettered scope. Everything speaks to him of another home, the light of which is reflected in this, and so recalls his distracted thoughts to their proper centre. An ungodly man said, "I never was so near heaven, and probably never shall be again, as when I spent a day in the house of Ebenezer Brown."* Alas! that such homes are so rare! On the other hand, if the home to which the Christian ought to retire from the world, only presents the world to him in more inviting aspects, it must prove the most dangerous of all snares. Its influence must chill every remaining affection of spirituality, and paralyze all his spiritual energies. Ultimately it must silence his testimony for Christ, or, at least, it will render his testimony a lifeless form, which were better abandoned.

The Christian head of a house does not stand alone in his responsibility there. His influence for good or evil is not complete in itself; he cannot dispense with the co-operation of his wife. In fact, so far as carrying out Christian

* The "Uncle Ebenezer" of John Brown's "Spare Hours."

principles, in their application to the details of family government is concerned, almost everything depends upon her. For, while he is occupied with the business of the day, which requires his absence, the business of her day lies in the discharge of many little duties in the household, which together they are to mould and control. Such a home as we have pictured that of a Christian to be, can only be found when they are dwelling together as heirs of the grace of life. No affliction throws a deeper shadow across an earthly lot than when the godly aims of the one party are thwarted by the worldliness of the other; and, in that case, a Christian can only be counselled to wrestle in prayer with God, to whom all things are possible. But when they profess a common faith, they should make the condition of their home a matter of joint-examination. They ought to deal with the errors and inconsistencies which exist there in the mutual confidence of those who are no more twain but one flesh, and who, moreover, are one in the Lord. They must act in concert in the removal of discovered errors; and with united voice, they must cry to God, whose name has been dishonored by these things. The fruits of such a course and the answer of such prayers will speedily be seen, not only in our homes, but in the Church of God, and God's name will be glorified where it is now blasphemed.

This is not a question of the believer's personal salvation. That, through grace, is already settled. But in as far as he knows it to be so, it will cut him to the heart and humble him in the dust to think that through his inconsistencies, the name of God should be reproached. He cannot make his children, friends, or neighbors Christians, but there could be no clearer proof that a man is not a Christian, than that this thought should render him indifferent to their salvation, or careless about his walk and conversa-

tion before them. The Lord does not leave his people in this world for their personal salvation. That is secured for ever when they believe on Him, and he would at once deliver them from the conflicts and sorrows of earth, were it not that He designs them to be His witnesses here, and to glorify the Father by bringing forth much fruit in a world that hates Him. "Ye are the lights of the world," said the Lord to His disciples, but what if the light be quenched in the worldliness of their homes, and if their testimony be contradicted by their everyday life? If they are true witnesses for Christ, then, as their homes reflect their character, everything there will sustain their testimony. Every Christian's dwelling will be a centre of light, shining in the midst of darkness—a practical illustration of the Christian faith, it will remind all who enter it of the eternal home for which we wait, and at the same time it will intimate that we are but pilgrims and strangers here.

It is a solemn thought that a day is coming when, from many of our homes, "one shall be taken and another left." Eternal separations will take place among those who have been united in the closest affinities of earth—husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters. Reader, if that day were now to come, how would it be in your home? Is it ordered as you would desire to have it when the Master comes? Are those you love all ready and loving His appearing?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S VISION OF EMPIRE.

THE book of Daniel has generally taken precedence of the other prophetic books in the attention of modern students of prophecy, for reasons which are thus given by Joseph Mede: "For the true account of times in scripture, we must have recourse to that sacred calendar and almanac of prophecy, the four kingdoms of Daniel; which are a prophetic chronology of times, measured by the succession of four principal kingdoms, from the beginning of the captivity of Israel until the mystery of God is finished." The reason might be more briefly stated that in Daniel the course of Gentile sovereignty is traced from its commencement to its close; while the other prophetic books are more exclusively occupied with the destiny of Israel. At any rate, both millenarians and anti-millenarians have used Nebuchadnezzar's vision of a colossal image, with Daniel's interpretation of it, as the basis of their calculations of prophetic time.

An early consideration of this vision may naturally be expected in a periodical which has for one of its leading objects, the exposition of the prophetic scriptures, though we may have no novel or peculiar views of it to offer. The attention which it has generally received renders it unnecessary to recite the details, either of the vision or the interpretation. The application of it to the four universal monarchies—the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman, is generally understood, and

scarcely admits of discussion. Secular writers have not failed to notice that there have been four, and only four, universal monarchies in the history of the world; though human sagacity could not determine that there cannot be a fifth monarchy claiming the dignity of universal. Even when such writers are not, in the proper sense of the word, believers, they have been arrested by the Prescience which has so accurately portrayed the character of these successive empires, diminishing in pomp, and increasing in power, as the metals of which the different portions of the image are composed decrease in splendor but increase in strength, from the fine gold of the head to the iron of the legs—a Prescience which in the day of Babylon's glory, anticipated its downfall, and revealed that when these four had run their destined career, the imperial power should be broken and distributed, as it has been for centuries. "Infidels as well as Nebuchadnezzar, may well be troubled on account of the image."

Before glancing at the history of the four great empires, it may be interesting to turn to the original seat of empire, art and civilization; and dim tradition points, as revelation guides us, to the cradle and homestead of postdiluvian humanity. In the plain of Shinar, whose beauty and fertility arrested the stream of population as it flowed onward from Mount Ararat, the design was formed to centralize the forces of mankind in a vast city, under a sovereign head. This design was frustrated by divine interposition, and mankind were dispersed; but the central power and intelligence still lingered around Babel, the city of confusion. Whether Nimrod, the fourth from Noah, was concerned in the first ambitious project, we cannot tell. He is the first who is named as the founder of a kingdom, and we know that the beginning of his kingdom was "Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar;" and "out

of that land, he went into Assyria, and built Nineveh, and Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resen, between Nineveh and Calah, the same is a great city." In the plains watered by the Euphrates and Tigris, we find very early traces of the contemporaneous sovereignties of Syria and Chaldea. On the east, we find the kingdoms of Media, Parthia, and Persia; and away to the west, in the valley of the Nile, we find Egypt, the rival of Assyria in antiquity, civilization and power.

The magnificence of Assyria has recently been illustrated by the explorers of its ruined palaces, which probably date back 1200 years before Christ. From the dawn of history, we have evidence of the supremacy of Assyria among the nations of Western Asia. The boundaries of her power seem to have been coextensive with civilization. Troy appears to have been among her tributaries; and history has even preserved the terms in which Priam applied to his Assyrian suzerain for assistance against the Greeks. But it is worthy of note that there is no evidence of the grandeur of Assyria, which does not also prove that the ambition of empire is identical with rebellion against God. The name "Nimrod" signifies apostacy, impiety, or rebellion; and in these original seats of empire the father of Abraham served other gods. It is also worthy of note that, however human ambition might extend its conquests, no universal monarchy could be established on the earth, until the chosen nation had utterly forfeited their covenant blessings. Even when the ten tribes had been carried into captivity, Judah remained an impassable barrier to ambition; and it was only after Nebuchadnezzar had carried the Jews captive to Babylon, that he could issue his haughty decree, "to every people, nation and language," and only then it could be said to him, "Thy greatness is grown and reaches to heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth."

Assyria lost its pre-eminence, and it was to the conqueror of Judah that the prophet of God said, "Thou art this head of gold"—the first and most magnificent of the four universal monarchies.

The original seat of this kingdom was a region of small extent around the metropolis, which included the site of the tower of Babel. Gradually it had absorbed the accumulated wealth and glory of Assyria, Egypt, and all who had claimed a share of earthly dominion. The city, according to Herodotus, was sixty miles in circumference; the walls, according to the most moderate computation, were seventy-five feet high, and thirty-five feet in breadth. Its wealth may be inferred from the fact that Xerxes took a statue valued at a hundred millions of dollars from the temple of Belus, after it had been repeatedly plundered by his predecessors. Of the extent of the Empire, we know that, beside subduing Egypt, Syria and Phenicia, Nebuchadnezzar carried his victorious arms as far as the Pillars of Hercules, and laid Spain under tribute.

Even before the captivity, Jewish prophets had foretold the downfall of Babylon, and had designated the king of the Medes as her vanquisher. The prophets graphically depict the desolation, which is now so complete that our antiquarians are still disputing what is the actual site of "the golden city," "the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldean excellency."

The early history of Media and Persia is covered with oblivion. They become accurately known to us only when they are united under Cyrus in the overthrow of Babylon; and, enriched by her spoil, appear as the second universal monarchy. This kingdom is symbolized by the two breasts and arms of the great image, by "the beast like unto a bear, which raised itself on one side," in a subsequent vision of Daniel; and again by "the ram with two high

horns, one higher than the other; and the higher came up last," to express the greater antiquity of Media, but the ascendancy of Persia, in their union. Ancient writers describe the crown of the Persian kings as a ram's head of gold; and Sir John Chardin found among the ruins of Persepolis, an emblematic ram's head, with horns of unequal length.

The inferiority of the Medo-Persian Empire, represented by the inferiority of silver to gold, was in its splendor, rather than its extent; for, though the Persians abandoned the more remote of Nebuchadnezzar's conquests in the west, their own conquests reached eastward to regions unknown to Babylon. From the book of Esther we learn that Ahasuerus reigned from India to Ethiopia. This people, raised from insignificance to the possession of the arts and wealth of Babylon, soon fell into a shameful effeminacy, and became an easy prey to Alexander; and, after a career extending over only two centuries, Persia, with all its conquests, was swallowed up by the Macedonian empire. The fate of Darius, with his magnificent retinue, supplies one of the most pitiful pages in the history of fallen greatness. Deserted, betrayed, and insulted, he who commanded an army of nearly a million men, yielded to the dagger of an assassin, and left Alexander the undisputed master of the world.

The Macedonian, or Grecian empire, was the third universal monarchy, symbolized by the belly and sides of brass in the great image; by the beast like a leopard with four wings and four heads, in a subsequent vision of Daniel; and by the he-goat that came from the west in Daniel's vision of the ram. Expositors have given many reasons for the use of brass as the symbol of the Greek kingdom. Daniel's interpretation, as given by Josephus, is, "that another coming from the west, armed in brass, shall destroy

the empire of the Medes and Persians." But all that is important is the inferiority of the metal to gold and silver. For, whatever may be said of the genius of Alexander, or of the discipline and prowess of his army, we cannot but perceive the diminished splendor, power, and solidity of the empire which he so speedily achieved. In extent it exceeded the second empire; for, when Persia lay at the feet of the victor, with an insatiable desire of conquest, he pushed his arms northward to the Caspian Sea, and then marched victoriously through India. On his return he died at Babylon, it is said, from the effects of a fit of intemperance, in his thirty-second year, after a reign of twelve years. His kingdom was divided among four of his generals, as was foreshadowed by the four heads of the leopard, and by the four horns of the he-goat, which came up after the first horn was broken. Ptolemy obtained Egypt, and Cœlo-Syria; Cassander, Macedon and Greece; Lysimachus, Thrace and the north of Asia Minor; Seleucus obtained the rest, including Syria and Babylonia.

About the time that Assyria was approaching the zenith of her power, and when the prophets were warning Israel that God would bring the Assyrians against them, an adventurer was, according to tradition, tracing a furrow round the Palatine hill, on the banks of the Tiber. Within this line a few huts were erected by the band of outlaws who owned him as their chief; and *this* they called by the afterwards proud name of "Rome." A fond patriotism has often styled it "The Eternal City;" and for twenty-five centuries it has, in some way, been connected with most that is important in the history of Europe, if not of mankind. By slow steps this originally contemptible community advanced to greatness. Nearly five hundred years from the founding of the city, they made their first movement towards the conquest of the world in the first Punic

war. Seventy years later, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Spain, and Cisalpine Gaul, were Roman provinces. In fifty years more Greece and Macedon lay at her feet, and Rome was, in fact, the mistress of the world. Syria and the whole kingdom of the Seleucidæ became a Roman province sixty-five years before Christ. Egypt and the kingdom of the Lagidæ fell thirty years before Christ. And now at last, a consolidated empire, under the Cæsars, we behold the fourth universal monarchy symbolized by the iron legs of the great image, and by the fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, with great iron teeth and ten horns, in Daniel's subsequent vision.

Thus far there is, and there can be, no dispute as to the application of Daniel's interpretation of the vision. But, according to that interpretation, the fourth kingdom is not subverted like the others, but is at last divided; and, in its divided state, it is described as partly strong and partly brittle,—the iron is mixed with clay. The final division is represented in the vision by the toes of the image; and, though nothing is said in the interpretation of the precise number of the divisions, we find the same divisions represented by the ten horns of the fourth beast in the subsequent vision of Daniel; and in the interpretation of it, we are informed, "the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise." As it is in the days of these ten kings that the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, and as it is from among them that the little horn came up which is the symbol of Antichrist, it becomes a matter of deep importance to determine who these ten kings are, and whether they have yet arisen. There has been little difference of opinion among the expositors of prophecy as to the last point. The ten toes and the ten horns have generally been understood as symbolizing the existing kingdoms of Europe; but it has been found a more difficult task to

name ten kingdoms as realizing that tenfold division. Any one at all acquainted with the political divisions of Europe will understand this difficulty, and will understand why these expositors cannot agree among themselves in the enumeration; for neither at present, nor at any period since the fall of the Roman empire, has Europe been divided among precisely ten sovereignties.

Against the authority of the weightiest names, both of millenarians and anti-millenarians, we suggest that the predicted division into ten kingdoms has not yet taken place; and that, therefore, all their attempts to name the ten kingdoms must be futile. In their attempts they seem to have forgotten that the map of Europe does not include the whole of the Roman empire. It may be satisfactory to our readers if we indicate by their modern names the countries that fall within its bounds. The western extremity of it was Spain and Portugal. Ancient Gaul embraced France, Belgium, Holland and Prussia west of the Rhine, and Switzerland. "If we except," says Gibbon, "Bohemia, Moravia, the northern skirts of Austria, and a part of Hungary, all the other dominions of the house of Austria formed part of the Roman empire. Britain, as a Roman province, comprehended England, Wales, and the lowlands of Scotland. Bavaria and Wirtemberg formed part of the ancient province of Rhoetia. The ancient Dacia included part of Hungary, Transylvania, Wallachia, Moldavia, and Bessarabia. In south and southeastern Europe we have Italy, Greece, the islands of the Mediterranean, and Turkey in Europe. In Asia the Roman empire extended over what is now the Turkish empire, with the Euphrates as its southeastern boundary, including Palestine and Asia Minor. The countries now known as Crim-Tartary, Circassia, and Mongrelia, also acknowledged the sway of the Emperors. In Africa the empire embraced Egypt and the long line of ter-

ritory from one to two hundred miles in breadth, which extends from Egypt, along the Mediterranean, to the Atlantic ocean. It includes Tripoli and Tunis, which occupy the seat of the republic of Carthage; and Algiers, which occupies the territory of the ancient Numidia. The ancient Mauritania is represented by Morocco." A glance at this empire will satisfy any one how much is omitted in any attempted enumeration of the ten kings by those expositors who hold that the tenfold division has taken place. It will be observed that the empire extended over the seats of the three empires that preceded it; and it is somewhat remarkable that the enumerations in question leave out nearly the whole of this region, and confines itself to that portion of the Roman empire which was peculiar to itself, or not included in the preceding empires.

But there is an important feature of the symbol which has been strangely overlooked in popular expositions. The two legs of the image represent the Roman empire, distinctly symbolizing the twofold character of the empire from the time of its establishment till its fall. Beyond the formal division into the western and eastern empire, the distinction of the east and west was a natural and radical one. "The western countries," says Gibbon, "were civilized by the hands that subdued them. The language of Virgil and Cicero, though with some inevitable mixture of corruption, was so universally adopted in Africa, Spain, Gaul, Britain, and Pannonia, that the faint traces of the Punic or Celtic idioms were preserved only in the mountains or among the peasants. Education and study insensibly inspired the natives of these countries with the sentiments of Romans, and Italy gave fashions as well as laws to her Latin provinces. The situation of the Greeks was very different from that of the barbarians. The former had long since been civilized and corrupted. They had too much taste to

relinquish their language, and too much vanity to adopt foreign institutions. Nor was the influence of the Grecian language and sentiments confined to the narrow limits of that once celebrated country. Their empire, by the progress of colonies and conquest, had been diffused from the Adriatic to the Euphrates and the Nile. Asia was covered with Greek cities; and the long reign of the Macedonian kings had introduced a silent revolution into Syria and Egypt. In their pompous courts these princes united the elegance of Athens with the luxury of the East; and the example of the court was imitated, at an humble distance, by the higher ranks of their subjects. Such was the general division of the Roman empire between the Latin and Greek languages."

One of the first indisputable evidences of the approaching dissolution of that vast monarchy was the more formal recognition of the division, when Valentinian solemnly and formally bestowed on his brother the empire of the East, extending from the Lower Danube to Persia; reserving for himself the Western Empire, from the extremity of Greece to the Caledonian rampart, and from the Caledonian rampart to Mount Atlas. After the fall of the empire this division was perpetuated in the separation of the Greek and Latin Churches, and it has left its traces on all subsequent history. Since the fall of Constantinople and the triumph of Mahommed, the Eastern Empire has been lost to civilization; but yet it is strange that expositors of prophecy should have forgotten the region in which prophecy was penned and in which its chief interest always lies, and should have confined their attention to the Western Empire.

Judging by the analogy of prophetic symbols, which are so full of meaning in their apparently insignificant details, we should conclude that five of the predicted divisions will

be found in the eastern division, and five in the western. But however this may be, we claim it as obvious to the common intelligence of mankind, that the fourth kingdom, which is ultimately to be divided among ten kings, includes much more than Europe; and that no such division has yet taken place. The endeavor to maintain that it has already taken place has arisen out of the earnest desire to identify the Pope with the Anti-Christ of prophecy. And we own, of course, that if the division in question has not taken place, then the Pope is not Anti-Christ, and Anti-Christ has not yet appeared.

It would be presumptuous to attempt to say what will be the final tenfold division of the map of that Old World. But recent events, which have reminded mankind that there is an East as well as a West, seem to intimate that the dark shadow under which the East with its great history has lain, is about to pass away. The disturbing elements of European and Asiatic politics affect the whole sphere of prophecy, and point to speedy changes of vast importance. Those powers which occupy the seat of ancient empire are, in spite of their prejudices, drawn into closer alliances with one another; and those powers which lie beyond the boundaries of the Roman world are being separated from a confederacy to which they do not belong. Napoleon, looking at the signs of the times, from a human point of view, predicted that Europe must speedily become either republican or Russian. We know that it can be neither. It cannot be republican, for according to prophecy monarchy shall be perpetuated there, however it may be divided, until temporal history is closed. It cannot become Russian, for Russia lies beyond the limits of the fourth empire, and cannot even have a place, in the final division, unless, like the Turks when they established themselves at Constantinople, she ceases to be Russian. The diplomatists

of Europe may strive to maintain the integrity of the Turkish Empire, but their efforts will be vain. Palestine must be restored to the Jews ; and from the rest of Turkey in Asia probably four of the ten kingdoms will be constituted. When Jerusalem fell before Roman arms, the empire, having served its great purpose, began to crumble ; and it appears that when Jerusalem is rebuilt, the kingdoms which are to share her power will be constituted, in anticipation of the final issue ; “ and in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed ; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

FLESH AND SPIRIT.

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.”

WITH the views which prevailed in his day of the kingdom of God, Nicodemus, a man of the Pharisees and a ruler of the Jews, confidently expected, doubtless, an exalted place in its administration. And we can imagine the shock which his cherished expectations must have received, when one whom he recognized as a teacher sent from God, announced that “except a man be born again,” or as the Lord explains it, “be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot see or enter the kingdom of God.” As a reason for the conclusion thus announced, the Lord says “that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.” The thing produced partakes of the nature of that from which it springs.

He had just intimated that except a man be born again, that is, born of the spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God; which is, just in other words, to say that a man in his natural state, cannot see the kingdom of God. We must therefore understand Him as using the term “flesh” in contrast with the term “spirit,” to describe that natural condition in which a man is incapable of enjoying that kingdom. So Paul expressly teaches that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” Without discussing the subject at present, we understand the phrase, “the kingdom of God,”

to mean the glorious and everlasting kingdom, in which the purpose of God in the redemption of man shall be consummated. Consequently, exclusion from it is equivalent to everlasting condemnation, and admission to it is the attainment of eternal glory and blessedness. Of so great moment is it to each of us clearly to understand the terms of exclusion and admission to the kingdom of God.

I. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh."

In the Old Testament, the word *flesh* is used as a general term for human nature, or for mankind. The Hebrew language, indeed, has no other word equivalent to mankind. The Psalmist says, "Let *all flesh*," that is, all men, "bless His holy name for ever and ever." Isaiah says, "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and *all flesh* shall see it together." In the New Testament the word occurs in the same sense. Thus the Lord, speaking of the last great tribulation, says, "Except these days shall be shortened, there should no *flesh* be saved." Paul says, "By the deeds of the law, there shall *no flesh* be justified in His sight." When the Lord assumed our nature, we are told, "the Word was made *flesh*," or "God was manifest in the *flesh*."

But then, as mankind are fallen and human nature is corrupt, the term "*flesh*" becomes the expression of this fact; and, in its most frequent use in Scripture, the word relates to the corruption of our nature, without any reference to the distinction which we make between mind and body. This is very evident in a passage where the flesh and the spirit are contrasted: "Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led by the spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are

manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like, of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in times past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

In this enumeration of the works of the flesh, there are several in which the body, as distinguished from the mind, is not implicated. The word *flesh*, therefore, is used to designate the tendencies and affections which naturally result in such sins—the corruption of our fallen humanity; and this includes all its imperfections and infirmities, its spiritual deadness and incapacity to discern divine things; its wisdom, which is foolishness with God; its fallacious judgments, and its frail and perishing existence compared to the flower of the field.

When the Lord says, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," he does not merely intimate that every man that is born into this world inherits a corrupt and fallen nature, and therefore cannot inherit the kingdom of God. He also intimates that corrupt nature can never be anything else but corrupt; so that no culture or improvement of it can fit it for the kingdom of God. Its tendencies may be restrained; the manifestation of its corrupt affections may be modified by education and circumstances, but the sinful tendencies and affections are still there. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, prune and trim it as you may. Reform, restrain, and educate the flesh as you may, it is still flesh, and therefore, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Men readily admit that the openly vicious and profane must be reformed before they could be admitted into the kingdom of God—that the drunkard must become sober;

the churl bountiful, the impious devout, the revengeful meek, the proud humble. They would probably admit that there is no man who has not faults to be corrected, as well as sins to be forgiven, before he could enter into the enjoyment of eternal life. But then they see in all this only an improvement or cultivation of human nature as it is. They point to the progress of civilization, and the results of education in the character of the elevated and refined, in contrast with the ignorant and degraded, as the proofs of the perfectibility of human nature. They would cite the most noted instances of goodness and nobility, of stern virtue and attractive graces in the history of our race; in behalf of whom they challenge, not only our admiration, but the admission that no such radical change as that of which we are speaking, can be necessary to fit them for the society of the blessed. They demand of us if beings so amiable and noble are to be swept away in a common destruction with the polluted and abominable. They might institute a comparison between their model men and our humble Christian, very much to the disparagement of the latter, according to any merely human standard of excellence. But the sweeping declaration of the incarnate Word includes all: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" no matter what he may be by birth or education. For, whatever virtues or graces may win the hearts of men, that which is born of the flesh is flesh—corrupt, estranged from God, frail, erring, and perishing, and, therefore, incapable of enjoying an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled and unfading. We are not insensible to the graces which adorn, and the virtues which ennoble their character; and, with the example of the Master before us, of whom it is recorded, when a young man of such a character sought an interview with Him, "And Jesus beholding him, loved him," we need not hesitate to

accord them more than admiration. If our hearts are in unison with His, there must be a peculiar tenderness in the pity with which we see them turning away from the Saviour of sinners. But that will not change the truth that, so turning away, they cannot see the kingdom of God. A river whose waters are tainted may flow through a valley of surpassing beauty, its banks adorned to the water's edge by the hand of exquisite taste, and its tainted waters will flow on, unhealed by all the beauty of the landscape which is reflected by their unruffled surface. So in the most cultivated society, and in spite of the qualities which command our admiration or win our love, our fallen nature is unredeemed, and "that which is born of the flesh is flesh."

The task must be a difficult one, or, we should rather say, it is a work which only the spirit of God can accomplish, to reveal the corruption of nature to one who is insensible of sin just because his heart is sinful. Humanly speaking, the difficulty of the task must be immensely increased, when the heart, naturally insensible, is fortified in the pride of its virtues, and by the flattery of admiration and respect which these virtues inspire. Yet the Word of God enables us to penetrate the guise of virtue and grace, and detect inherent corruption, nay to find, amidst these graces, the most impressive proof of the truth of the proposition that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh."

We need now refer to only one aspect of that corruption which remains unredeemed and unhealed by all that can ever grace the character of an unrenewed man; an aspect of it which bears directly upon the Saviour's declaration of the incapacity of the natural man for the enjoyment of the kingdom of God. All who admit the authority of revelation will admit that an indispensable qualification for the enjoyment of that kingdom is the love of God; such a love

as will bring the will of the creature into complete harmony with the will of God, render the service of God delightful, and make the presence of God the completion of all blessedness. Now, by the testimony of Scripture, "the sensual or fleshly mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God—neither indeed can be." The amiable and virtuous, of whom we have been speaking, may deny all consciousness of enmity to God; but when they do so they refer to God, not according to His revelation of Himself, but according to their own conception of Him. They cannot love Him as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ while they reject Christ. Even taking it at their own estimate, their veneration of a Deity is but one among the many elevating and becoming sentiments which they cherish. The love of God is not the controlling motive of their lives; the virtues which men admire are not the results of a delighted conformity to the will of God; their excellencies do not spring from God; their affections do not tend to God; the generosity and honor in which they pride themselves, the amiability which wins our love, the fidelity and integrity which command our confidence, all, all are Godless; and, practically, it would make no perceptible difference in their characters if all the sentiments regarding a Deity which they express so handsomely were obliterated. In the virtues, as clearly as in the vices of unrenewed men, we see the proof of alienation from God; for they may have love, gratitude, and kindness for all but for Him who is love; and those whom the world esteems as the best and loveliest unite with the worst and most degraded, practically, to exile God from the world which He has made and redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. And what shall we say when, in addition to all this, we consider the pride with which they regard a position so dishonoring to God: and the complacency with

which, in that position, they receive the homage of hearts like their own, in rebellion against God, or forgetful of all His claims?

Nowhere could we find more humiliating or more convincing proof of the corruption of our nature than in the religious systems which men have devised to regale their imaginations, or flatter their self-esteem. We speak not alone of the monstrous systems of idolatry in which, when in their estrangement from God they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things. We refer rather to the doctrines and the forms which prevail under the full blaze of Gospel light, and which are palmed upon the world under Scriptural authority, and in the insulted name of Jesus. Beyond even these an unrenewed man may be tenacious of a hereditary creed, and that creed may be orthodox and of traditional forms of worship, and these forms may be scriptural; he may be conversant with his Bible, fluent in discussing its doctrines, and he may be susceptible of apparently deep religious emotion; he may be punctual in his observance of religious duties, bustling in his religious activity, and untiring in his zeal for his Church and his sect, and all this tenacity, fluency, formality and zeal are the very works of the flesh, the very conceit and pride of an unmortified self, the very vanity of self-seeking, the manifestation of unhallowed passions, which show him to be carnal; and may only prove most conclusively that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." In view of the virtues and the religiousness of unrenewed men, more clearly than in their vices, we learn that "they that are in the flesh cannot please God;" and that no culture or im-

provement of the old nature can fit us for the kingdom of God. For *that* we need a new nature—we must be born again—and then it will appear with equal clearness that—

II. “That which is born of the spirit is spirit.”

The word “regeneration” itself intimates that what it signifies is not an improvement or education of the old nature, but the production of a new and a better, for birth is the commencement of a life; and it is also styled “a new creation.” Now creation is a divine prerogative; the new life is from God; and he in whom the change has been effected is said to be born of God, and to be a child of God; or, as the agent in accomplishing this, as well as every other work of God, is the Holy Spirit, such a man is said to be born of the Spirit. The means employed in the accomplishment of this work is the word of God; as James says, “Of His own will he begat us by the word of God;” and as Peter says, “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; and this,” he adds, “is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.”

In our inquiries into the nature and character of the new life, of which the Lord says, “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit,” these two points must be carefully noted; the Holy Spirit is the agent in its communication, and the word of God is the means, as the Spirit of God is the agent, and the word of God the means of every divine work. So an apostle, comparing this new creation with the first great work of the Creator in this world, says, “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.” The word of God, which is the means employed in regeneration, is, says Peter, “the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you;” the Gospel which, setting before us Jesus, the Christ,

the Son of God, crucified for our offences, and raised again for our justification, declares God's message to each of us, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." If saved, we are assuredly born again, for, "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and out of that kingdom there is no salvation. This may prepare us to hear another declaration of Scripture regarding this new life, "As many as received him (Jesus the Christ), to them gave He power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on His name, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;" or, as it is more briefly expressed in another place, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."

In accordance with this, when the Lord proceeds to instruct Nicodemus regarding the means of regeneration, in reply to the question, "How can these things be?" He says, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." In the historical incident to which reference is here made, the Israelite, who was perishing from the effects of the fatal bite of the fiery flying serpent, might be regarded to be as good as dead, and by looking at the brazen serpent, according to the word of God, he received new life. The whole transaction was only typical—the brazen serpent was a type of an uplifted Saviour; and the restored or renewed temporal life of the perishing Israelite who looked upon it, was a type of the communication of eternal life to the perishing sinner who believes upon Him. In the latter case it is not a restoration or renewal of the old life, but the communication of a new

life; and that, in accordance with its origin, is eternal, and so it is properly styled being "born again."

"That which is born of the Spirit is spirit;" the new life, as well as the old, partakes of the nature of that from which it springs. He who is born again is a son of God, not in name only, but in nature. The Spirit accomplishes His work by means of the Gospel, which leads us to Christ, who, having taken our sins upon Himself, and having answered for them, received eternal life for us. Believing on Him we are justified from all things, and are made partakers of the life which He received for us. He is at once our righteousness and our life. The new life communicated to us is, in other words, "Christ in us." So Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This one word "*Christ*" sums up the characteristics of the renewed man, "for of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."

The tendencies and affections of the natural man are always corrupt,—the flesh is flesh; a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. In like manner the tendencies and affections of the new man are always holy; spirit is spirit still; a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. It is impossible; and therefore we are assured, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Wherever sin appears we may rest assured that it does not proceed from that which is born of God; and we may also rest assured that that which is born of God cannot be contaminated by the contact of sin; but is like the Holy One, in whose image we shall at last appear, who, though he was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, and dwelt in a polluted world, yet contracted no stain, but was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." When we find such decided and unqualified statements on this point in the word of

God, it may perhaps be asked, Where, then, are the children of God in this world? Where are those sinless ones who are born of God? And the answer to this question is one of great practical importance.

We have seen that regeneration is in no sense an improvement or amendment of the flesh, but is the communication of new life in Christ. Believers who are born again are, however, still in the body, and know to their sorrow, that the flesh is flesh still. The old nature is the same in its tendencies that it was before, only that now these tendencies no longer reign, and are no longer obeyed. A new life is introduced, the tendencies of which are all diametrically opposed to the former. So that the personality of the believer has a twofold aspect: in one, he says with Paul, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing;" in the other, he says with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ in me." Of the one it is said, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;" and of the other it is said, "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Consequently, while it is true that "now are we the sons of God," it is also true that "it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

What we have said of the nature of flesh and spirit will leave it indubitably certain that, when they meet in the same personality, or wherever they come in contact, there must be an irreconcilable opposition between them. And so the life of the Christian in this world is one of ceaseless conflict. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.

There is no doubt, indeed, as to which will ultimately triumph; for the one is frail and perishing; the other is divine and immortal; but, in the meanwhile, the believer

may say with Paul, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death;" while he can also add with Paul, "I thank God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." In the midst of ceaseless conflict we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us; yet surely it is no wonder if we that are in this tabernacle do groan being burdened, not so much beneath the load of this life's sorrows, as beneath the burden of the tabernacle itself; longing for the day when we shall be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven; when the life which is now hidden shall be manifested; when our sonship, which is now indeed real, shall at least be apparent also; when, as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall bear the image of the heavenly; for He in whom we now have eternal life "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His own glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto Himself."

If these pages are perused by a man who is out of Christ, he is entreated to ponder the conclusion of the Lord, that, whatever his character may be in the eyes of his fellow-men, he cannot, as he is, enter the kingdom of God; and that, whatever the riches of the Divine mercy, no mere exercise of mercy to the old nature could introduce it into the place and enjoyments of a son of God. The mercy of God is displayed, not in passing over sin as an indifferent thing, but in providing a righteous way of pardon; not in putting a corrupt nature in the place of holiness, but in providing for the communication of a new nature. And both of these, nay all that the sinner needs, are provided in Christ. Pardon is not procured by any merit of ours, and sanctification is not the result of any cultivation or education. Both are ours by believing in Him, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctifica-

tion, and redemption. Till then, a man may do what he will, or be what he may, he cannot inherit life; for that "which is born of the flesh is flesh." This also will show the vanity of all attempted preparation and striving before coming to Christ, and may convey the assurance to the awakened sinner that, as the most aggravated guilt does not exceed the grace of God in Christ, so the most complete moral ruin, frailty and corruption need not discourage nor hinder the soul from Christ, since that which is proposed is not in some way to reform or improve the old man, but to communicate an entirely new life, and that life divine in its origin.

The believer, knowing the truth both about the flesh and the spirit, knows where his strength and his weakness lie,—his weakness in himself, and his strength in Christ. In himself he can never look for perfection, or for anything that is satisfactory; the flesh is flesh still. He can never look *there* for the ground of peace and assurance before God. He will know what he has to expect, even conflict which will never end while he is in this tabernacle; and will find in this the occasion of constant vigilance, self-denial, and self-distrust. But though there is a ceaseless conflict, there is a ceaseless victory; "for whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Christ is our life; and we may understand how the life which He communicates must ever turn to its source, and why we should set our affections on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Most blessed, indeed, is our present participation of a life which enjoys secure repose, "hid with Christ in God." But this is not the perfection of our blessedness. "When He who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory."

This life, which is now so obscured, will at last shine forth in resurrection glory—still a stream flowing from the fountain of life; but *then* a life unchecked by frailty, unclouded by sorrow, without a single element of decay restraining its vigor, without a shade of peril or uncertainty athwart its ecstasy—life crowned with glory, and the glory also Christ's—blessedness, such as the heavenly Father may pour into the cup of His Son triumphant,—all to be enjoyed in an inheritance fair as Divine wisdom and power can make the crowning testimony of His delight in the well-beloved. The crowning charm is, “we shall appear *with Him* in glory,”—glory which He not only gives, but shares.

Possessing this life, and enjoying these prospects, the believer has little to do surely with the things that are on the earth. Though he dwells in a body whose wants are to find a supply here, he will surely be careful to make no provision for the flesh, that he should fulfil it in the lusts thereof. A heart occupied with the things that are above cannot be successfully assailed by the world; for what allurements has earth to show beside the crown of glory that fadeth not away? What rival can outshine Him, the King, in His beauty? Yet when it is borne in mind that, to the every end, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, it will be understood that believers still need the admonition, “Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth;” and “mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.”

CHARACTER OF CHRISTIANITY.

THERE is nothing simply negative in the Gospel. It is not a prohibitory system. It is a gracious system, conferring positive blessing. To forgive sin may be negative; but to give righteousness is a positive and inalienable blessing. This marks the genius of the Gospel. "Whosoever believeth in him (Jesus) shall not perish;" it stops not here; "but shall have everlasting life." "That they may receive forgiveness of sins,"—but it goes on, "and an inheritance among them which are sanctified, by faith which is in me." If we are "delivered from the power of darkness," it is, by "translation into the kingdom of God's dear Son." Alas, our narrow minds and dull hearts deprive the Gospel of its glory. It is "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God:" it represents God in the gracious place of the *giver*; and sets man in his only place of possible blessing, that of a simple recipient. By faith we receive Christ (John i. 12); receiving Him, we receive from Him power to become the sons of God; we receive forgiveness of sins, abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness; we receive eternal life. Christian action follows this reception of Christ. The teaching of the Holy Ghost unfolds to us what we have received, in having received Christ. It is well to keep this principle constantly before the soul: it is not that which we *renounce*, any more than that which we *do*, which makes us Christians; but it is that which we *receive*.

And this principle runs through the Christian life: it is a life which has its affections, its sensibilities, its energies, and its activities. Our Christian life is not a system of negation, any more than is our natural life. This distin-

guishes it so forcibly from the common notion of religion. It is said, "Cease to do evil," but it is added, "Learn to do well:"—"Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good:"—"Let him that stole steal no more;" but "rather let him work with his own hands that which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth:"—"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth," but "that which is good, to the use of edifying." Hence arises the danger to Christians from misusing even the good, holy, and righteous law of God. It "is not made for the righteous." (1 Tim. i. 9.) *Their* need is, to have the life already received, nurtured by the ministry of Christ, the true and living Head, in order that the energies of that life may be called forth in its varied and appropriate activities. We have Christ himself for our standard; and it is only by the righteousness which we have in him, as our standing before God, that we can rightly estimate what is presented to us as our highest, but certain final attainment. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Hence it is, that "the one hope of our calling," which is so certain, because in accordance with the purpose of God, becomes so formative of the Christian character. To be conformed to the image of God's Son, as the first-born among many brethren, is the blessed destiny of those whom God has already justified. It is through our certainty of this that the Holy Ghost acts on our conscience and affections, not making what we shall be to depend on what we practically are, but taking the divine certainty of what we *shall be*, I mean as Christians, as the mighty moral lever, *now* to elevate our affections. And, even now, "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

WAYMARKS

IN

THE WILDERNESS.

THE SEVENTY WEEKS IN DANIEL.

IN a previous essay on "the vision of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel's interpretation of it," we briefly traced the course of the great empires, and endeavored to show that the predicted division of the fourth empire among ten kings has not yet taken place. If this conclusion is correct, it follows that the power symbolized by the little horn which came up among the ten horns, and "before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots," has not yet entered on his disastrous career. The labored and ingenious attempts to apply this symbol to popery must, in that case, be abandoned as futile. We might now be expected to proceed to explain it in harmony with the views already advanced, and to inquire into the meaning of "the time and times and the dividing of times," during which the saints of the Most High shall be given into the hands of that impious and malignant potentate, and which have commonly been understood to intimate that the papal power shall prevail for 1260 years—a period which is supposed to expire about the present time. But for reasons

which will hereafter appear, we defer the consideration of all questions relating to that power and these times until we have endeavored to ascertain the import of certain predictions regarding the course and destiny of God's ancient people, the Jews; and especially of that very explicit prediction recorded in Dan. ix.—the announcement of the angel Gabriel that seventy weeks should sum up and conclude the temporal history of the Jewish nation.

Before proceeding to the consideration of this last-mentioned prophecy, we may be allowed to offer a few remarks regarding the typical or mystical import of certain numerals in Scripture. For example, the number twelve occurs again and again in relation to the people of God in their corporate and organized capacity under all dispensations: we find *twelve* patriarchs at the head of the twelve tribes of Israel; *twelve* apostles as the leaders and representatives of the church of this dispensation; and then we find twenty-four, or twice *twelve* elders seated before the throne, as the symbol of the redeemed gathered together unto Christ. In the vision of that great city, New Jerusalem, the wall had *twelve* gates, at the gates were *twelve* angels, and on the gates the names of the *twelve* tribes were inscribed. The wall had also *twelve* foundations, and in them the names of the *twelve* apostles of the Lamb.

Again, the number forty is appropriated in Scripture to symbolize preparation for some special end or service. When Moses was *forty* years old he visited his brethren, supposing that they would understand that God was about to deliver them by his hand. The result showed that another preparation for his mission was necessary besides that which he had received at the court of Pharaoh; and he was driven to the desert of Midian, where he remained *forty* years before he was summoned by God to effect the deliver-

ance of his people. On two subsequent occasions he passed a period of *forty* days in the Mount in solemn preparation for different functions of his office. The Israelites passed *forty* years in the wilderness in preparation to enter the promised land. Not to mention other examples, the Lord passed *forty* days in the wilderness of Judea before he entered on his public ministry; and He prepared His disciples for their mission as witness of His resurrection, "by showing Himself alive after His passion, being seen of them *forty* days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."

But the most remarkable of these mystical numbers in Scripture is the numeral SEVEN. The Hebrew name from which our own word "seven" is derived, signifies "fulness" or "perfection." The use of this numeral as the symbol of perfection is too frequent and too familiar to render any exemplification of it necessary. A curious illustration of it, in the way of contrast, has been suggested in an explanation of these remarkable words in Rev. xiii. 18, "Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666,"—a thrice repeated number, which falls short of seven, the number of perfection, applied to him in whom human failure and imperfection will be most conspicuous—666—signal failure where human power and ambition shall go their utmost length to glorify the creature.

The use of this number *seven* in the measurement of time, with reference to the accomplishment of the purposes of God, is what more immediately concerns us at present. The six days of creation were crowned by the Sabbath, the *seventh* day, which God hallowed, and which completed the week. Then we find the following ordinance in the Mosaic law regarding the week of years: "Six years shalt thou sow

thy field, and six years shalt thou prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; but in the *seventh* year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land, a Sabbath for the Lord." Again, according to the law, after *seven times seven*, or forty-nine years, the fiftieth year was a jubilee, when liberty was proclaimed throughout all the land, and every man returned to his hereditary possession if it had been alienated. All these are types of the accomplishment of redemption, and every Sabbath foreshadows the glorious rest in which redemption shall be complete.

This division of time has suggested an expectation, which has prevailed in all ages, and of which traces may be found in heathen traditions, that six thousand years will sum up mortal toil and sorrow, and the *seventh* thousand will prove the era of rest and happiness. Sir Edward Denny has taken great pains to show that all the great stages of Israel's history are measured by this mystical number. Thus ten jubilees, or seventy weeks of years, that is to say, 490 years, elapsed from the exodus to the dedication of Solomon's temple; the same period, 490 years, elapsed from the dedication of the temple to the return from Babylon; and, according to the prediction of Gabriel, a like period, 490 years, sums up the temporal history of the nation. We would refer those who desire to study the whole subject of the present article more minutely, to the charts, with accompanying explanations and chronological tables, of this ingenious author.

In 1 Kings vi. 1 we read: "And it came to pass in 480 years after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, he began to build the house of the Lord." Adding ten years for the time that elapsed from the beginning to build to the actual dedication of the temple, we have the first cycle of 490 years.

Bishop Colenso would lead us over the historical records, and show us that the actual time, according to these records, is 621 years, and would exult over another proof of the inaccuracy of what we claim to be an inspired, and therefore an infallible history. Unterrified by the exultant array of figures, we enter upon a minute examination of the record, and find that *seven* times during the government of the judges, the nation, on account of its sins, fell into subjection to the surrounding heathen kings, and during these periods of subjection had no proper national existence. These seven periods of servitude amount to precisely 131 years, which subtracted from 621, leaves us 490 years. Instead of finding the record self-contradictory, we learn this important principle of God's method of reckoning the times of Israel's history—the years of their captivity are treated as blanks, and only the years of their proper national existence are reckoned.

The second cycle of 490 years extends from the dedication of the temple to the return from Babylon. The actual time is 560 years, but, according to the principle exemplified in the previous case, the 70 years of captivity in Babylon must be subtracted, and it leaves us precisely 490 years.

The third and last cycle of 490 years is that announced in the message of Gabriel, and in the interpretation of this message we must keep in view this principle of God's reckoning the time of Israel's history, and take into account only the years of their proper national existence. Before entering on its interpretation, we may say that it has been suggested that in these three cycles three distinct trials and offers of blessing were vouchsafed to the nation; and that these are referred to by our Lord in the parable of the barren fig-tree. "Behold these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree and find none. Cut it down; why cumbereth it the

ground?" Three signal illustrations of human ingratitude and divine forbearance, of God's grace and man's failure!

Daniel was a student of prophecy, and understood it in its plain and literal meaning. The degradation of the captive Jews and his exaltation at the court of their conquerors had failed to alienate his heart from his people, or to shake his confidence in the God of Israel. He understood by books that the predicted seventy years of the desolation of Jerusalem had nearly run out, and he was confident that God would fulfil his promise; but instead of sitting down in listless expectation, he was only incited to earnest prayer, for he knew that God has instituted an invariable connection between the prayers of His people and the fulfilment of His own gracious designs. In the act of prayer, he was, indeed, fulfilling a portion of the prophecy: "Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you." And it may be observed in the whole history of God's dealings with His people, that when His time to effect a deliverance or to bestow a blessing arrives, He, first of all, bestows a spirit of prayer. Before the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the disciples continued with one accord in prayer and supplication; and every season of revival from that day to the present has been preceded by special fervency of pleading among a faithful few.

Daniel prayed, and God was waiting to be gracious. "*While I was yet speaking,*" says the prophet, "even the man Gabriel, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me." Gabriel also says: "*At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth.*" This does not appear like mercy wrested from a reluctant hand by the vehemence of the supplicant. In the case of Daniel, as in the case of all His faithful ones, the blessing was in readiness. God anti-

icipates prayer and prevents us with blessings. He is able to do abundantly above all that we ask or think. In this case Daniel looked only to the close of the Babylonish captivity, but God's answer extended to the fulfilment of all the glorious things that are spoken of the chosen nation. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. Know, therefore, and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah, the Prince, shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood; and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations He shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

This cycle of "seventy weeks" embraces the whole history of the Jewish nation until God's purposes concerning them are accomplished; and it must be evident at a glance that a week here cannot mean a period of seven days of twenty-four hours. The event has clearly shown that the prophecy was not fulfilled in 490 days, or little more than a year from the time that Jerusalem was rebuilt. In seeking to understand the prophecy, we must therefore, first of all, ascertain the length of time indicated by the seventy weeks.

An explanation may readily be suggested in the popular maxim of prophetic interpretation that "a day stands for a year." But in opposition to this we venture to affirm that there cannot be found in the word of God a single passage in which a day stands for a year, in any reckoning of time, either historical or prophetic. It would, indeed, appear a strange departure from the simplicity of Scripture, and useless as strange, if the Spirit of God should arbitrarily use the word "day" when in reality "year" was intended. What, for example, would be gained in the case before us by saying four hundred and ninety days, when "four hundred and ninety years" is meant. The truth is, that the word which our translators have chosen to render weeks, means simply an aggregate of seven, and would be properly represented by the word "*heptade*," just as we use the word "*decade*," to signify an aggregate of ten when we say, "The census shows the increase of population in each *decade*," that is, in each succeeding period of ten years. The angel does not say "seventy weeks" according to our use of the word weeks, but "seventy heptades," or periods of seven years; that is, "four hundred and ninety years" "are determined upon thy people and thy holy city." And now the question remains, has all that was included in that prophecy been accomplished, and was it all accomplished in four hundred and ninety years from the going forth of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem? Both of these questions we are prepared to answer in the negative, for a negative answer to the first includes the second. The present condition of Daniel's people and his holy city is in itself a most emphatic negative, and we are left to conclude that the seventy heptades have not yet expired.

The event from which the commencement of this cycle of 490 years is to be reckoned is very definitely described,

“from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.” Yet the opinions of commentators have been divided on this point also. In the book of Ezra vii. 12, we find a decree of Artaxerxes authorizing Ezra, the priest, and all the Israelites who chose to accompany him, to go up to Jerusalem. Ezra is authorized to take all silver and gold, the free-will offerings of king and people, and to call upon the provincial treasurers for all that may be necessary to restore the worship of God in the temple, and to procure all needed sacrifices. Ezra was also invested with all authority to establish and enforce the laws of God in Judea. The design of Artaxerxes was to propitiate the favor of Jehovah, for he asks: “Why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?” In all this decree there is not a word about rebuilding Jerusalem, and Ezra, in his grateful acknowledgment of it, says: “Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing as this into the king’s heart, to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem.”

This decree regarding the temple was issued in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, and had no reference to the restoration of the city. For we find Nehemiah mourning because the city and the place of his fathers’ sepulchres were lying waste; and, in accordance with his request to be permitted to go and build Jerusalem, Artaxerxes issued another decree in the twentieth year of his reign, requiring all governors of provinces to protect Nehemiah, and directing the keeper of the King’s forest to furnish materials for the public buildings.

Dr. Prideaux, in his “Connection of the History of the Old and New Testament,” argues that the seventy weeks were accomplished at the death of Christ. “After which,” he says, “the Jews were no more to be the peculiar people of God, nor Jerusalem His holy city.” Having assumed this,

he counts backward four hundred and ninety years, and says: "The beginning, therefore, of the seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years of this prophecy, was in the month Nisan of the Jewish year, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, when Ezra had his commission." This is a striking example of the manner in which prophecy may be accommodated to a preconceived conclusion, in the face of its own most explicit language. And this is the explanation of the seventy weeks, which the greater number of subsequent expositors have adopted. Without discussing the matter at large, it is enough for us to know from the word of God that Ezra's commission, as fitted his office of priest, related to the restoration of the temple and its worship; while Nehemiah's commission, as fitted his office of governor, related to the rebuilding of the city. Knowing this, we must reckon the seventy weeks from the date of Nehemiah's commission to whatever conclusion this may lead us; in other words, the seventy weeks began in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus, as is noted in the margin of our common English Bible.

After a general statement in verse 24 that the purpose of God concerning Israel should be consummated in seventy weeks, the angel proceeds to divide the seventy weeks into three distinct periods, and to inform Daniel of the events which should transpire in each of them. "Know, therefore, and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem unto Messiah, the Prince, shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks," leaving, it will be observed, a third period of one week to make up the seventy. We have, then, 1st, seven heptades, or forty-nine years; 2d, sixty-two heptades, or four hundred and thirty-four years; 3d, one heptade, or seven years—making up four hundred and ninety years.

Of the first period of seven heptades, Daniel is informed, "the street shall be built and the wall, even in troublous times." In the margin, instead of troublous times, we have "in strait of times;" and this has been explained as meaning the shorter of the two periods just mentioned—"seven weeks and threescore and two weeks;" that is to say, the street shall be built and the wall within the first jubilee from the issuing of the decree of Artaxerxes to restore and to build Jerusalem. Sir E. Denny points out that this period—the strait of times—is a septenary period, *seven heptades*; so also is the great period of which it forms an integral part, *seventy heptades*; and suggests that the restoration of the city in the former period is designed to be a pledge of the greater blessing to be accomplished at the close of the greater period, when Jerusalem shall be established for ever, as the scene of the Redeemer's earthly glory, never again to be trodden down by the Gentiles.

To this period of seven heptades, or forty-nine years, we add threescore and two heptades, or four hundred and thirty-four years, making in all four hundred and eighty-three years from the decree to rebuild the city; and this brings us to the ministry of John the Baptist, by whom the Messiah was officially presented to Israel. After this we are told "Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself," or, as we have it in the margin, "Messiah shall be cut off, and shall have nothing." He came claiming the throne of David, and the allegiance of his people, and instead of receiving at their hands a joyful welcome to his rightful claim, he was crucified between two malefactors. Then follows a prediction of the desolation of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the stiff-necked and rebellious people, who crowned all their apostasies by crucifying their king; and the terms in which the prediction is expressed demand special attention.

“And the people of *the prince that shall come* shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.” If we ask who are here pointed out as the destroyers of the city, the common answer would be: “Titus and the Roman army.” But it will be observed that the language is not “the prince and the people.” Nothing is said of the prince having any part in the destruction of the city, but the people who destroy it are described as “the people of the prince that shall come;” not the prince who shall lead them to the siege, but the prince whose coming shall be then in the future, whose coming is subsequent to the destruction and the wars and the desolations, and whose course, when he comes, is described in the twenty-seventh verse. In other words, the prince whose course is described in that verse, is a future head of the people who destroyed Jerusalem; that is, of the Roman Empire.

Thus far the prophecy has long ago been fulfilled. After the lapse of the sixty-nine predicted weeks Messiah has been cut off; the Roman armies have destroyed the city and the temple; every thing has been swept away by the flood of wrath, and the determined desolation yet rests upon that once-favored spot. As Jesus predicted the same things before his crucifixion, “there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people; and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;” even so it has come to pass, and thus it is at this day. And yet it must be observed there is one week of the seventy to be accounted for, since we have as yet spoken only of the first period of seven weeks, and the second period of threescore and two weeks, which together make sixty-nine weeks.

We proceed, therefore, to consider the third and last division of the seventy weeks, which consist of *one heptade*, or seven years. But before doing so we must call to mind the divine rule or method of reckoning time which was exemplified in the two first great cycles of Israel's history, each of which consisted of seventy heptades, or four hundred and ninety years. The first extends from the exodus to the dedication of Solomon's temple. The actual time between these events is six hundred and twenty-one years, but the duration of seven different periods of subjection to heathen kings, amounting in all to one hundred and thirty-one years, must be deducted, and we have four hundred and ninety years of Israel's actual national existence before God. The second extends from the dedication of the temple to the return of the Jews from Babylon. The actual time between these events is five hundred and sixty years; but seventy years of captivity in Babylon must be deducted, and then we have, as before, four hundred and ninety years of Israel's national existence. In God's reckoning, the years of Israel's bondage are omitted, as though in a moral sense they had no existence.

Now applying this rule to the interpretation of the prophecy before us, when Jerusalem was destroyed, and the Jews were led away captive, after the expiring of sixty-nine of the seventy weeks, time is not reckoned—just as the Lord, when He intimates that Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, makes no note of the length of time. It has already extended over eighteen centuries, but all *that* is blank in the divine reckoning; and the week, or seven years, which are necessary to complete the cycle of four hundred and ninety years, cannot begin till Jerusalem is rebuilt, and is once more the capital of a Jewish state. When that takes

place, seven years will sum up the temporal history of that people. Regarding the character of that last week, and the condition of the Jews during that eventful period of their eventful history, we are told: "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

This heptade is divided into two periods of three years and a half, by the treacherous action of one who shall enter into alliance with the people, but who, in the midst of the week, violates his covenant, interrupts their national worship, and forces a degrading idolatry upon them. That which gives character to the whole period is their relation to this personage. He is not named or designated in the passage, but is thus abruptly introduced: "He shall confirm a covenant with many for one week." The antecedent to "he" is evidently "the prince" mentioned in the preceding verse; and who, as we have seen, is a prince of the Roman Empire, who shall yet arise. Although we have very little information regarding him in this passage, there is enough to enable us to identify him with a personage whose direful career of iniquity and whose awful doom are frequently the subject of prophecy. For example, the particulars here mentioned, that he shall form a covenant with many, and afterward abolish the sacrifice and oblation; "and," as we have it in the margin, "upon the battlements shall be the idols of the desolator," enable us to identify him with the leader described in Daniel ix., who, after the league made with him, "shall work deceitfully," and shall, at length, "pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that

maketh desolate ;” but of whom, in conclusion, it is said : “ Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.” This, again, enables us to identify him with the potentate represented by the little horn in the vision of the ram and he-goat, in Daniel viii., of whom it is said, “ Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the covenant, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down ;” who is described as “ a king of fierce countenance, understanding dark sentences ;” “ and his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power ; and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall prosper, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people,” “ but,” we are told, “ he shall be broken without hand.” This, again, enables us to identify him with the person represented by the little horn that comes up among the ten horns of the fourth beast, in Daniel vii., of whom it is said : “ And he shall speak great words against the Most High ; and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws, and they shall be given into his hands for a time and times, and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.” We might trace this same personage into the prophecies of the New Testament. For example, we might identify him with the power represented by the beast having seven heads and ten horns, in Revelation xiii., to whom the dragon gave his power : “ And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months, and he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven :” “ and all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him.” Thus, finally, we may identify him with “ that man of sin, the son

of perdition," in 2 Thess. ii., "who opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God, and that is worshipped, sitting in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God;" "that wicked one, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming; even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders." The character and career of this Antichrist must be left for more minute consideration at a future time. At present we can but refer to a few particulars which may aid us in the interpretation of the prophecy regarding the last of the seventy weeks of Israel's yet unaccomplished history.

This is by no means the only passage in which reference is made to the disastrous consequences, to the Jews, of an infamous covenant. Thus Isaiah, speaking of this last time, warns them: "And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand: when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it." Most distinctly it appears throughout the Scriptures, that their relations to Antichrist shall prove the occasion of their unspeakable woe in these last years of their temporal history. The Lord frequently refers to their awful delusion: "I am come," said He, "in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." In the prophecy immediately before us, nothing is said of the character of the first half of the week, or the condition of the people. We may find in future inquiries more ample information regarding it. For example, we may find that it is no other than the period of "a thousand two hundred and threescore days," that is, three years and a half, during which God's two witnesses prophesy, clothed in sackcloth, who are ultimately killed by

the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit. During this season of comparative peace, this treacherous ally is maturing his plans under cover of the covenant, but in the midst of the week he throws off the disguise, and is revealed in his true character.

The last half of the heptade is all darkened by his terrible and unrelenting wickedness. In the prophecies quoted above, the act of causing the sacrifice and oblation to cease is again and again mentioned, and appears prominent among the steps he takes to efface the name and the worship of the living and true God from the earth. And, again and again, the period of three years and a half—the last half of this heptade—is pointed out as the duration of his power, after he openly discloses his blasphemous policy by abolishing the temple service. In all these prophecies his policy appears to be to obliterate the last traces of veneration for the invisible Jehovah, and to substitute himself as the head of a deified humanity, to be the only object of worship. Thus, he is represented as speaking great things against the Most High; speaking marvellous things against the God of Gods; opening his mouth in blasphemy against God; or, as Paul expresses it, “he exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, and that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” This is just the culmination of the infidel tendencies of our own age, with all its exaltation of humanity, and its boast of intellectual grandeur. The godless nations after the failure of all humanly devised forms of government, over the wreck of effete monarchies, and the perished dreams of liberty in self-government, wearied and disappointed in the chase of a phantom, shall seek refuge from anarchy and misrule in a great centralized government, of which this man, to whom “Satan shall give his power, and his seat, and great

authority, *shall be the head*; and this monopoly of civil government he will endeavor to consolidate and complete, by gathering around himself the perverted religious sentiment of the age. This will be secured by the satanic power with which he shall be endowed, and the signs and lying wonders, meeting the diseased craving for the preternatural which is even now being developed throughout the civilized world, are again and again referred to in prophecy as being of the most extraordinary character. The Lord warns men that they will deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. As the professed apostles of liberty and enlightenment in a former generation, paid degrading homage to a prostitute as the representative of human reason, so this is the humbling conclusion of the boasted progress of the age—a world grown wise in its own conceit, first wondering after the beast, then worshipping the dragon, who gave him his power, and then worshipping the beast himself—the incarnation of all iniquity.

There is a necessary progress in moral degradation, and it need not surprise us if this man-worship ends, as man-worship did in earlier ages, in gross idolatry. Even the Jews, after all the lessons of their past history, and after so many ages of apparent freedom from the earlier idolatrous tendencies of their nation, shall be found bowing down before the image of the beast—the unclean spirit which had gone out of them shall return, and find his house swept and garnished, and their last state shall be worse than the first. In the prophecy immediately before us, we read: “And for the overspreading of abominations He shall make it desolate.” Most of our readers know that the word abominations is the Scriptural name for idols. In the margin we read: “And upon the battlements shall be the idols of the desolator.” This is what in the Apocalypse is styled the image of the

beast, which all men are required to worship on pain of death. The prominent and public places of Jerusalem shall be filled with these idols; and our Lord gives it as a warning sign to the faithful few of that day, that the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet shall stand in the holy place. O wretched people! O shameful delusion! and is not the degradation complete when that foul and monstrous idol stands in the place where the Shechinah shone between the cherubim, and the sanctuary is polluted with their abominable rites? And this is the end of the progress of the age!

Is not the world, then, ripe for judgment? Can the indignation longer slumber? All righteousness is crying out: "How long, O Lord, holy and true?" "Even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate," or rather, as it is in the margin, "upon the desolator." The last waves of tribulation shall pass over Jerusalem, and, as in a former age, he for whom they forsook God shall himself be the instrument of their chastisement. Under the unrelenting cruelty of this blasphemous despotism, they shall be led to that period of which the Lord says: "Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor ever shall be." But Jerusalem will not be the only scene of the awful delusion, nor will the Jews be the only sufferers in the great tribulation. The whole world is involved in both. At length spirits of evil, working miracles, will go forth to the kings of the earth to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. At the head of his countless legions, and in the very moment of his supposed triumph over Jerusalem, and when he fancies he has extinguished the last ray of Divine light on the earth, Antichrist shall meet his terrible doom—"that determined

shall be poured upon the desolator." In his overthrow by Christ, and His glorified saints, the deliverance of the faithful few shall be accomplished. By success in acts of judgments all things that offend shall be weeded out of His kingdom, which shall then be established in peace and righteousness over all the ransomed earth. Then of Jerusalem it is said: "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be called 'Forsaken;' neither shall thy land any more be termed 'Desolate:' but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married."

LIFE IN THE MIDST OF DEATH.

JOHN says of himself and all believers : " Now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be." What we shall be he immediately intimates : " We shall be like Him, for we shall see him as He is." It is not, therefore, merely true that, as to our present circumstances, " it doth not yet appear what we shall be," but in ourselves we are very unlike the sons of God, carrying about with us the body of this death from which we groan to be delivered. We are the sons of God ; and, as the same Apostle declares, " Whosoever is born of God sinneth not ;" and all will agree that, if this be true, it is not what appears in the actual life of any believer on earth. If it were so, believers would stand in no need of the assurance : " If *we* confess *our* sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The real, then, is not the apparent with the believer.

The truth is, as the Saviour distinctly teaches, " That which is born of the flesh is flesh," and can never be any thing else. It is equally true that " *that* which is born of the spirit is spirit," and can never be any thing else. So long, then, as any thing that was born of the flesh remains about the believer, we may be assured that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. Nay, Paul confesses : " In me—that is, in my flesh—dwelleth no good thing." The Scriptures continually speak of these two elements in

the believer's earthly existence—the flesh that lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; the old man that must be continually put off, and the new man which must be continually put on. The latter is also styled the inner man, or the hidden man of the heart, which is the true man—the true life of the child of God. But the other is the apparent or outer man, and to the last is unchanged. It is the corruptible which must be exchanged for incorruption; the mortal, which must give place to immortality; the vile body, which Christ at His coming will change. “And,” as it has been expressed, “although the new nature is in its essence as pure as God, from whom it is derived, and looks earnestly toward the glory of God as its promised rest, yet it lives here in weakness and incessant conflict with the evil which hems it in on every side.”

No wonder, surely, if those who are endeavoring to find peace and assurance from what they find in themselves, and who seem really to expect that that which is born of the flesh should be transformed into spirit, if they are indeed born of God, should be miserably disappointed, and tormented with endless fears and uncertainties—no wonder if they should be disheartened in the conflict, or if they should be taken off their guard, and fall into the snare of the devil. We dwell upon this point, not because we would reconcile any one to the presence of sin in this mortal body, and encourage carnal security; we have no fears that a plain testimony to the truth will have any such tendency. But we dwell upon it that believers may learn not to seek peace and strength “by looking *in* for evidences of spiritual life, but *out* at the object that imparts life”—that those who are sensible of the burden of the flesh, just in proportion to their spirituality, may be delivered from the despondency which is the frequent consequence of their mistaken introspection.

Dr. Chalmers thus addresses such believers: "To the last moment even of a most triumphant course in sanctification, you must never lose sight of Him on whom has been laid the condemnation of all your offences. The confessions that you make—and you will have to make them continually—must be over the head of the great sacrifice. You must still keep by your great High Priest, as the anchor of your soul; and never for a moment transfer your dependence from Him to your own righteousness; you must look for all your acceptance only in the Beloved; and count, for your justification before God, on nothing else than on Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

Still it becomes the believer to remember that he is risen with Christ. Nay, the one conclusion is inseparable from the other; for just in as far as he knows that he has forgiveness in the blood of Christ, he knows that he has eternal life in Christ, who not only died for us, but lives for us. He has not only secured the right to give eternal life to as many as God has given Him, but He has Himself become the source of life to them. He is our life as well as our righteousness; and every one who can say, "I am crucified with Christ," can add: "Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live *in the flesh* is a life of faith on the Son of God." These two things are inseparable—our peace and our consciousness of life; our identification with the Crucified and our oneness with the risen Christ. But it is as yet a "life which we live in the flesh," and therefore it is important that we bear in mind what the flesh is and what the life is.

It is of immense practical importance that we should know that we are risen with Christ; that we should have a lively consciousness of life, and that we can only have by looking to Christ. Our true life now is Christ; and it may well be

said, "He that is in Christ is a new creature;" but the flesh is still there, and there unchanged, with all its tendencies, worldward and sinward. But in what light must he who knows that he is risen with Christ look upon the flesh? The answer to this is the practical point to which we have desired to conduct these remarks, and that answer we give, in the language of inspiration: "In that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ. Let not sin, therefore; reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."

The flesh is there, but it is to be accounted dead, and that consequently its lusts are no longer to be our masters—its objects are no longer to be our care. The world in which it finds its proper sphere is no longer our portion. Our true life is that of the spirit; and shall that be made subservient to the ignoble ends of the flesh? Impossible! While we live in the flesh there are bodily wants which crave a supply—but these are not to be our care. "Take no thought saying what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek,) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." If even these needs are not to occupy the care of one who is risen with Christ, how much less can one who reckons himself dead "make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof," by accumulating the wealth of this world, seeking its possessions or honors, courting its favor, aiming at social position or influence, or in any way laying out life in such a way as may minister to the gratification of the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. In

short, he who is risen with Christ should know that he is done with the world—a pilgrim and stranger in it. The character of the new life may be best understood by looking at Christ in the world. It is to His image we are to be conformed; out of His fulness we receive grace for grace. Our proper place in the world, and our relation to its affairs may be best understood by looking at His, for as He is, so are we in this world.

The believer has eternal life *now*, but it is hidden with Christ in God; he is *now* a child of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be. The moral characteristics of the life may be exhibited here, through all the infirmities of this body of death, but it is life in the midst of death; it is light making its way through an opaque medium, and noticeable only by contrast, as it is light in the midst of darkness. The glory and power of that eternal life await a future and glorious manifestation. “When He who is our life shall appear, then shall He also appear with Him in glory.” Until the sun shines forth unclouded, bodies which shine only by reflected light cannot appear resplendent. When He shall appear, we shall be like Him—*then* manifestly, as *now* really the sons of God. The body of death will be changed and fashioned into the likeness of Christ’s glorious body.

It must be remembered that *that* which shall be manifested in resurrection glory is Christ’s life, or rather Christ our life; a stream from the fountain, full, strong, and joyous, unstained by sin, unchecked by frailty, unclouded by sorrow; without a single element of decay mingling in its vigor, without a shade of peril or uncertainty athwart its ecstasy; life crowned with glory and honor, immortality incarnate; the natural effulgence of a holiness which no imperfection mars; the radiance of robes washed and made

white in the blood of the Lamb; blessedness such as the everlasting Father may pour into the cup of His Son triumphant; glory such as is the meet reward of the great work of Immanuel, for it is His own glory He has given us; it is his own joy which shall be fulfilled in us.

All this is to be enjoyed in an inheritance, fair as divine wisdom and power can make the crowning testimony of His delight in the well-beloved Son, who glorified Him on the earth, and finished the work which He gave Him to do; an inheritance unfading as the love which makes it ours, eternal as the throne of God which shall be in it; an inheritance made yours, believer, by an unchallenged title in a world redeemed and enriched by all the glories of Christ's royal state, in a heavenly kingdom, where, crowned and enthroned, you shall reign with him for ever and ever. Yes, "WITH HIM." This is the crowning charm: "We shall appear *with Him* in glory"—in glory which He not only gives, but shares; and it sums up all blessedness in a sentence, when we say: "And so shall we be ever with the Lord."

If this be the truth about the believer's condition and prospects, what has he to do with the things that are on the earth? The carnal man, who knows no other portion, looks to earth for his pleasure, and finds there the objects of his ambition and pursuit; but can one who is risen with Christ make any thing short of the eternal realities of His life the object of solicitude or engrossing regard? The necessities of this mortal body demand the use of some earthly things, and the child of God cheerfully submits to the toil of providing things honest in the sight of all men, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. But having food and raiment, let us therewith be content. There can be no more flagrant inconsistency than for one who professes to have died and to be

risen with Christ to be still pursuing the pleasures of carnality, coveting its honors and striving to heap treasures for the flames. There are few worldly men so base as not to groan beneath the conviction of the vanity of all they pursue and enjoy. They are humbled to think that, after being tossed for a little while on the waves of uncertainty and disappointment, they must lie down in the oblivion of the grave. They can reason out the vanity of the world, though they cannot break the spell of its enchantment. But can a heart, filled with the hope of a heavenly inheritance, stoop to ambition so low, avarice so despicable, pleasures so debasing? Believer, you are a pilgrim and stranger here; your citizenship, your home, and your inheritance, are all heavenly.

The objects and interests of the new life are all heavenly, and the affections of the believer should be set upon the things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God—*on God*, exploring the wonders of His love and His will; *on Christ*, “whom not having seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” While men around them are careful and cumbered about the lying vanities that are soon to be dissolved, their thoughts should be occupied with the eternal realities of that heavenly hope, beside which the glories of earth will be quenched like the stars at sunrise. A heart occupied with these cannot be successfully assailed by the world. What rival can outshine the King in His beauty? What allurements has earth to show beside the crown of glory which fadeth not away?

The heir of God must pass through the world in a holy superiority to it. By faith, he dwells in a calm and holy security above its sorrows and joys, its attractions and oppositions. The desolating tempest may spread ruin amid all

the glories of the world ; disappointment and grief may lay waste its fairest hopes ; crowns may be trampled in the dust ; thrones may be overturned ; states may be convulsed ; the birthright of freemen, the legacy of heroes, may be trodden beneath the profane feet of anarchy or popular fury ; but the believer, though not untouched by the sadness, is no more affected by the loss, than if he were the inhabitant of another sphere. His treasure is hid where no convulsions can impair it, no enemies can snatch it away, any more than they could snatch the enthroned Redeemer from the Father's right hand.

Oh ! what safety ! Omnipotence its guardian, divine faithfulness its pledge ! All may be darkness and gloom around his earthly path ; a sea of trouble—billow after billow—may roll over his head ; the relations in which the tenderest affections of nature seek shelter, may all be left unto him desolate, and the gathering clouds of coming wo may clothe the whole sky with blackness ; still, looking through all the gloom, he can see “the blessed hope” undimmed, like a star upon the brow of night, of which the storms of earth cannot quench a single ray. Yes, thou afflicted, tempest-tossed, and weary ! the waves are numbered—the last rough billow will bear thee on its bosom into the haven of eternal rest, and there shall be no more sea. Through all the loud tumult of the storm there comes a voice, most distinct in its gentleness : “Behold, I come quickly !” When the gathering darkness is the blackest, it is the hour which foretells the dawn of day. Say, do not the first glimmering rays of the morning star already pierce the gloom, and tell thee, in the contrast, how sweet the rest will be after the toil—how calm the peace after the storm—how glorious the morning after night—how blessed heaven will be after earth ?

MARRIAGE.

IN the view both of God and man, a man's home is identified with himself; it reflects his character, and there we see him in his true character. Under God, the Christian is responsible for the ordering of his home according to the mind of the Lord, and for ruling it in the fear of God. Every thing about it should intimate that *there* dwells one who is crucified with Christ; nay, should leave upon the mind of all who enter it the conviction that God dwells there. While this earthly home reflects something of that heavenly home to which he hastens, it should still be evident that it is only the tent of a pilgrim here. It is easy to see how dishonoring to God, injurious to the Christian himself, fatal to his influence in the world, and disastrous to the members of the household it must be, if, with all his profession, the Christian discipline of his home is neglected, and if its furniture and arrangements, his style of living, and the general tone of his domestic intercourse, bear the stamp of worldliness.

The ordained head of the house is primarily responsible for its condition. He is responsible for the exercise of authority with which God has invested him. In a certain sense, he represents God there, not only in his rule, but also as with him it rests, under God, to provide for the household. Despicable as the man is in the eyes of his neighbors who indolently or heartlessly evades this obligation, and

throws himself a useless burden on the industry of wife and children, a Christian must guard, on the other hand, against being hampered by unseemly anxieties which imply a distrust of the providential care of a Heavenly Father; and especially must he be careful lest, under the plea of providing for his family, he should be cherishing a hurtful covetousness. How often do we find professing Christians excusing their niggardliness, and justifying their eager pursuit of worldly possessions, by a misapplication of that weighty utterance of inspiration: "But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own household, (margin—'kindred,') he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." If they would read the passage in its connection, they would find that, instead of countenancing their selfish efforts to fill their homes with luxury, or to accumulate an inheritance for their children, it declares the man to be worse than an infidel who, under any such pretext, neglects to provide for destitute widows of the Church, especially if these be of his own kindred. Those who have misapplied it may find a correction of the injurious influence upon their own habits, in a prayerful consideration of another admonition in the same epistle: "Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content. But they that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition."

The Christian does not stand alone in his responsibility for the condition of the house of which he is the ordained head. Every member of the household shares the responsibility; but especially is it shared by his wife, whom we appropriately style his partner, who, with him, in fact, makes up the united head of the family, for as to all its relations they are no more twain; and only as they are truly one, and are

walking together as heirs of the grace of life, in mutual confidence and affectionate coöperation, can we ever see a Christian's home such as we have pictured it. We propose, therefore, to follow our remarks on the Christian's home, with a consideration of marriage and of conjugal duties, in the light of Scripture.

Marriage, which was designed in the original constitution of man, received a peculiar sanction in the express ordinance of God. When Adam received Eve, a gift from the hand of God, he recognized her as indeed bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh; and God ordained that there should be a perpetual memorial of that original *oneness* in marriage; "for, for this cause," said He, "shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Strong as were the ties which bound him to the household of which he was originally a subordinate member, a time comes when even these ties must be sundered, and, in union closer and dearer than any relation of blood, with the woman of his choice, he is to become the head of another home.

The divine ordinance not only declares the sanctity of marriage, which takes precedence of all other human relations, but it plainly intimates the design of God that we should live, not in communities, but in distinct families. We cannot forbear to testify against the violation of this ordinance, in spirit if not in the very letter, by a practice, which is one of the greatest social evils of this land—the practice of husbands and wives escaping the cares of a household, and sacrificing the thousand endearments of home, by living in hotels and boarding-houses. Occasions may arise when a family must temporarily avail themselves of the accommodations of such establishments; but the husband and wife who make it their choice, from indolence or parsimony, to

escape cares, or to enjoy the so-called pleasures of society, trample upon the ordinance of God, show themselves incapable of appreciating the highest enjoyments of their relation; and, as most unworthy parents, they inflict incalculable injury upon their children, whom they deprive of all the advantages of home, and leave destitute of those hallowed associations which most of us cherish in our hearts till the latest moment of life. The best interests of society demand that it shall be considered disreputable to marry without a reasonable prospect of establishing a home; or, being married, to neglect the most strenuous efforts to maintain it.

The duties of this relation begin before marriage; and it is of the highest importance that our youth of either sex should have correct and Scriptural views of it before they take the irrevocable step. The fact that it is irrevocable may well lead them to solemn deliberation. Even in a worldly point of view, there can be no greater folly than to enter, without confirmed love and esteem, into a state of which love and esteem form at once the charm and the safeguard; and there are few greater wrongs which one human being can inflict upon another than to engage, by solemn and indissoluble vows, to love and cherish while life lasts, without knowing well to whom such a pledge is given, and on what it is based. The man who does so is as heartless as he is criminal; and the woman who does so, equally guilty, brings upon her own head a fearful retribution for her voluntary degradation of herself. Those who form such engagements on mercenary or frivolous grounds, are guilty of a mockery of sacred affection by which they attempt to deceive men, and of a deliberate perjury in which they mock God, whom they call to sanction the deceit.

It is lamentable to see the levity with which all that re-

lates to this momentous step is treated in the ordinary intercourse of life. •Parents habitually neglect any thing like a rational effort to give a proper direction to the thoughts of their children in this matter. Nay, Christian parents too often countenance the frivolity and petty dissipation of youthful associations, out of which engagements spring, which are to affect all the future happiness of their children. If at any time the subject is gravely discussed, it is to inculcate maxims of worldly prudence, and to teach them to set a higher value upon wealth, position, or influence, than upon godliness, worth, wisdom, or any quality which can insure love and esteem. In the case of daughters, the education which would fit them for intelligent companionship and the serious duties of life is rendered subordinate to the so-called accomplishments which can only aid them in making a display among the frivolous, or in gaining a short-lived triumph on festive occasions, from which all the instincts of a renewed heart would be repelled.

We shrink from giving its proper name to a union which is effected from motives of convenience, or of worldly advantage. Yet, when we speak of affection as the ruling motive in any marriage that is worthy of the name, we do not speak of an unreasoning passion, awakened by a fair face or form, or attracted by showy accomplishments and cultivated manners. As a wise man remarks: "It is a poor bond of affection to tie two hearts together by a little shred of red and white; so that their attachment is exposed to the hazards of fancy, sickness, care, time, or any thing that can destroy a pretty flower." Only well-regulated minds are capable of that love which endures because it is not bestowed until they know that its object is worthy of love.

We invite young Christians to the earnest consideration of the Scriptural view of marriage, that they may

understand their responsibility in every step that leads to it. Among other conclusions to which such a consideration of it will lead them, there is one which overshadows all others—it is that Christians may *marry only in the Lord*. The will of the Lord on this point is clearly revealed; and on a moment's reflection upon the nature and obligations of marriage, Christians must shrink from the thought of being unequally yoked with unbelievers, unless their judgment is already warped by their affection. If the will of the Lord is to be the rule of young Christians in forming this connection, it must influence them in their previous social intercourse; and they must avoid associations and correspondence which might naturally result in marriage engagements with any but those who are partakers of like precious faith with themselves. In fact, if their daily deportment is such as becomes their high vocation, the ungodly will shun their society, or, at all events, will never entertain the thought of union for life with one whose daily conversation would be a daily rebuke of their own; any more than the children of God can entertain the thought of being united with one who is an enemy of God, and from whom they must at last be separated, and separated for ever.

No view of the relations of Christ and the Church affords a higher sense of His love and our privileges than that which is presented in those passages of Scripture in which the Church is spoken of as the bride, the Lamb's wife. On the other hand, nothing invests marriage with such sacred tenderness, or so impressively enforces its mutual duties, as the fact that it is designed to be a type of the union between Christ and His Church—a union which will be perfected amid the glories of His heavenly kingdom, and which will be coëval with the glory of His throne.

It is not by a merely happy coincidence that natural things

supply apt types and emblems of spiritual things. Natural objects and relations were constituted as they are, that they might stand as types of spiritual relations and heavenly realities. The vine was created what it is, in order that the Lord who made it might say to His disciples: "I am the vine and ye are the branches." So when Paul has quoted the original institution of marriage, he adds, "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and His Church," intimating that the everlasting union of Christ and His glorious Church is the true marriage, of which the union then ordained between a man and his wife was expressly designed to be a type. A great mystery indeed! unspeakably transcending all that the heart of man could have conceived, that the lost and guilty should not only be delivered from wrath and receive eternal life, but should be taken into such endearing and unending union with the well beloved Son of God, that God should be manifest in the flesh—O great mystery of godliness—in order that such a union might be possible, and that He should have given Himself for us in order that it might be accomplished!

Adam and Eve, in the constitution of their original oneness, were designed to be a type of Christ and the Church. In the original act of creation God did not contemplate Adam alone, but in association with one who was, so to speak, the complement of his nature. "God said, Let us make man in our image, and let *them* have dominion;" and again, "God blessed *them*;" that duality makes up the man complete. So the Church is said to be "the fulness of Christ, who is the image and glory of God, as the Church is the image and glory of Christ." The manner in which the woman was brought to Adam is typical of the manner in which the existence of the Church is secured. The deep sleep which fell upon Adam, and the formation of the woman in such a

way that he could say of her, "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman because she was taken out of man;" all this was typical of that deeper darkness of which sleep is an emblem, in which the dead Christ became the source of life to the Church, which He also receives from the hands of the Father. "For," says an apostle, "we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." How will this be manifested when they appear together in resurrection glory! Even now faith realizes the union; and every believer exults in the avowal: "My beloved is mine and I am His."

There is much, indeed, in Christ's love which no type can represent. Adam saw and loved his wife as she came in the glow of perfection from the hands of the Creator. Christ loved His Church in the repulsiveness of sin, and gave Himself for her redemption. Adam loved that which was lovely; Christ loved that which had no loveliness, in order that He might make it lovely. It is true that Christ does not present His Church unto Himself until she is purified from every stain, and adorned with every grace—a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. But in that day she will owe all her perfection to Him "who hath washed us from our sins in His blood." She will be comely through His comeliness put upon her. What love was His when He gave Himself for her; "for the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross, despising the shame." Now this is the claim of Christ upon the obedience of His Church. His is not the authority of a despot, upheld by His mighty power—He who is the head is the Saviour of the Church. "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price." As His Lordship did not originate in might, it is not maintained by force or fear. "The love of Christ constraineth us." He does not lord it over a trembling vassal; but He takes

a trusting bride into His confidence, invests her with royal attributes, and places her beside Him on the throne—joint heir of all His glory and joy.

We must not farther expatiate on a theme which we could never exhaust ; and the contemplation of which could never exhaust the interest of the children of God. This is the mystical meaning of marriage, and this furnishes to believers at once their motive and example, in the discharge of conjugal relations. We have followed it out thus far, because, in addressing Christian husbands and wives, nothing could invest their relations to one another with higher sanctions, or enforce the duties they owe to one another more persuasively. The thought of it will shed a hallowing light upon the scenes of their every-day trials and enjoyments.

When marriage is regarded in its essential sacredness and dignity, as the ordinance of God and the type of the union of Christ and His Church ; when its importance to the happiness of the parties immediately concerned is considered, as well as its influence on the welfare of society, and, above all, its relation to the glory of God, few arguments will be needed to enforce the common obligation to guard its sanctity with trembling care ; and to watch against every thing that threatens its harmony. In the outset of their united life, especially, the husband and wife should be careful to avoid offences and misunderstandings, which are most likely to arise when the character of each is least understood by the other, and when both, probably, are awaking from a dream of fancied perfection in the object of their love, which is not to be found among mortals. They will early learn to avoid what experience teaches is offensive, and to cultivate whatever is attractive to the person whom, of all others, it should be their happiness to please. It is well to remember that the merest trifles may disturb the peace of every-day

life, and that in relations so intimate, it may often be said :
“ Behold how great a fire a little spark kindles !”

The question of their respective rights should rarely be mooted. Love should rather engage them in a generous rivalry as to which can make the greatest concessions. They should cherish mutual confidence by a frankness which has no secrets, and admits of no separate interests. They should seek common enjoyments in the cultivation of kindred tastes. The wife should be careful to qualify herself to be the companion of her husband ; and he should remember that she was designed to be a companion—“ a helpmeet for him.” Adam recognized the woman not as given *to* him, but as given “ to be *with* him,” his more than friend ; and every true husband will consider her whom he takes to his heart as worthy to be admitted to all its counsels. The wife who has concealments and interests apart from her husband, inflicts a greater injury upon her own honor than upon his happiness.

Both ought to pay a studious regard to the courtesies of life, which are the proper expression of affectionate respect. Rudeness of manner and habitual inattention more frequently disturb the harmony of this relation than graver faults. Nothing is either more seemly or more salutary than the perpetuation of that anxiety to please, which characterized their demeanor when they first exchanged pledges of love.

But to Christian husbands and wives, all these counsels, and many more of like importance, are summed up in the charge that they should “ walk together as heirs of the grace of life, that their prayers be not hindered.” They have ties stronger than even those which nothing but death can sunder. Their love to one another will be purified and ennobled by the pervading influence of the love of Christ,

when each sees in the other one for whom Christ died. The consciousness that they are one in Christ, and destined to be companions in His kingdom for ever, will hallow all their associations, heighten every enjoyment, and solace every grief. Yet it must be borne in mind that, in order to the attainment of these happy results, they must know and occupy the place which divine wisdom has assigned to each.

A prevailing false sentiment may revolt against it, but it stands in the Scriptures as an injunction of God—"Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands in the Lord," "be in subjection, be obedient to your own husbands." The true wife, the Christian wife, will not rebel against the unqualified utterance of the injunction, when she thinks of the submission of the Church to Christ, of which her submission to her own husband was designed to be a type—not a slavish or reluctant submission, but a cheerful obedience, which is the highest expression of her love.

This is no question of personal superiority or inferiority, for in many things woman may be man's superior. In heathen lands, when men had reached their highest refinement, it was a simple question of power; and *there* a wife was a slave. But this cannot be under the teaching of the Gospel, which declares that "in Christ there is neither male nor female; but ye are all one in Christ Jesus." This places them on a footing which vindicates the honor of the obedient wife. It is not a question of superiority or inferiority on either side, but a simple question of duty to God, about which there can be no controversy. Settled by the ordinance of Jehovah, such obedience has its foundation in the nature and fitness of things, and springs naturally from the affection and softness of her proper character. She seeks support and protection, and is formed to confide, not to rule. The submission which love and gentleness dictate, sits grace-

fully upon her, and constitutes her true power. According to a maxim of the world, "she stoops to conquer."

There are indeed masculine and imperious natures who attempt to invert the order of nature. But it would be difficult to say which is most unseemly—the wife who usurps authority over her husband, or the husband who exercises a harsh tyranny over one whom it ought to be his pride to cherish. The one is as unmanly as the other is unfeminine. In either case the conjugal relation is outraged; and the violator of God's ordinance will find that the violation brings its own retribution. When a rude woman assumes the headship of the house, a husband, from folly or fondness, from an easy disposition or sheer indifference, may yield it without a struggle; but this can never secure the happiness of either. In a home where all is disorder, and its natural head an object of pity or contempt, she is the most wretched of all, and will probably reap the bitter fruits of her own rebellion, in the lawlessness of children who will scarcely conceal their want of respect for parents who have so sadly failed in that which lies at the foundation of domestic order and happiness.

The wives of the present day would do well to remember how the holy women of old adorned themselves; even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. So the highest grace and ornament of a Christian wife is a meek and quiet spirit, by which she proves herself to be a daughter of Sarah. The submission of a wife is not to be measured by the character of the husband. There can scarcely be a greater calamity than when a Christian woman finds herself united to a weak, unreasonable, and ungodly husband. Still, however trying her position may be, she will measure her duty not by the worth or wisdom of the man, but by the will of the Lord. Whatever the man may be, he is her

husband ; and she obeys him "in the Lord," who is obeyed in her obedience even to the most unworthy. But this rule—"submit yourselves to your own husbands *in the Lord*"—marks also the limits of submission, which must cease whenever obedience would involve a dereliction of Christian principles.

There is a special tenderness in the Apostle's language. He says, not merely your husband, but "your *own* husband." Happy she to whom it is a joy to say "*my own!*" But in the most trying case, a Christian wife will not forget it ; and, amidst all the humiliations of her lot, love, hallowed by divine grace, will sustain her in a course to which she is encouraged by a motive which, to faith, contains a promise, "that if any obey not the word, they may also, without the word, be won by the conversation of the wives, while they behold your chaste conversation, coupled with fear." Yes, the Christian wife is not left without an animating motive in the self-denying course of submission, even in those cases where submission is hardest. But surely a consideration of the extent of the obligation which marriage implies, may well impress young women with a sense of the importance of knowing thoroughly into whose hands they intrust their happiness—of knowing to whom they vow subjection in the Lord, and of knowing that their love and respect for him have a foundation which will endure, when the novelty and ardor of youthful attachment shall have passed away.

When two hearts are bound together by the sweet constraints of a two-fold love in nature and in grace, it will require no struggle or controversy to settle the limits of authority on the one hand, and submission on the other. We have spoken in plain terms of the Scriptural rule of a wife's obedience ; but husbands would do well to remark, that all that is said in Scripture on this subject is addressed

to wives; there is not a word which can inflate a petty tyrant with a conceit of his authority, and the reason of submission is carried past him to the Lord. That which should occupy the Christian husband's thoughts, in the Scriptural view of this relation, is not the authority he is to exercise, but the love he owes. And truly, the standard of his love is as lofty as the standard of her subjection. It is not merely, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies," from the consideration that they are no more twain, but one, and he that loveth his wife loveth himself; but it is: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it."

With all this, it is true that there must be authority on the one hand, and submission on the other; and, alas! for those who, without any regard to the ordinance of the Lord, make it a matter of conflict for life which is to yield. Happy the home where love both rules and obeys!—where the authority of a husband is nothing but a manly love, and where the gentle love of the wife forestalls the exercise of even seeming authority! A husband's first care, in submission to the mind of the Lord, will be to secure the happiness of one who confides her earthly all to him; and his authority will never be arbitrarily exercised to thwart a wish of one whose wishes should be dearer than his own. When his authority is the excuse of the cowardly exactions and unmanly caprice of a domestic tyrant, he will find that it weighs most heavily upon his own happiness, as it casts a gloom over the scene, where the smile of love and peace should welcome him.

But what this headship really is, may be best seen in the headship of Christ, of which it is designed to be a type. "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church." What disinterestedness of love,

what self-sacrificing devotion to the happiness of a beloved one, must temper the sternness of authority which is moulded on this pattern! This is the secret of a husband's power, which binds a trusting heart to him by ties of delighted affection; and doubtless that is the most absolute control which love maintains, and which never needs to be expressed in the form of a command, or enforced by power. This is the very rule of Christ in His Church—not the fear of consequences, but “the love of Christ constraineth us.” One of the sorest effects of the curse on the temporal lot of man, is the interruption of that disinterested love, which would have secured perfect order in all our relations to one another. The absence of that love renders the husband's authority harsh, and the wife's submission irksome. The tendency of grace in the heart is to correct this, as well as the other bitter effects of the Fall. The love of Christ will overcome all hindrances which a husband's love may find in the imperfections of a wife, and the authority of Christ will sustain the respect and submission of a wife against all that there may be in the character of a husband to render submission humiliating and respect naturally impossible.

In the Epistle to the Colossians, where the Apostle charges husbands to love their wives, he adds, “And be not bitter against them;” intimating that unless love is cherished, a selfish nature will assert its power over those who are dependent on it, in perpetual irritation and fault-finding.

In general society, indifference may be a sufficient security of peace, but in the more intimate relations of life there can be no neutrality. The mere absence of love produces continual heart-burnings, and, on the part of one who is conscious of power, these will find expression in unkind looks and harsh reproofs. This is especially the case with men of weak and cowardly natures, who commonly give

vent, in their homes, to all the day's irritations, which they dared not manifest to men who were able to protect themselves from insolence. He, in such a case, is the greater sufferer, for his wife may find support under the trial in the love of Christ, but he can find nothing to save him from his own contempt, or to mitigate the bitterness of the cup which his own hand has mixed for him. And what a place does that become to him, which was once dignified with the blessed name of home! "There is a place on the earth," says a worldly moralist, "where pure joys are unknown, from which politeness is banished and has given place to selfishness, contradiction, and half-veiled insults. Remorse and inquietude, never weary of assailing, torment the inhabitants. This place is the house of a wedded pair, who have no mutual love, or even esteem." This cannot be the home of a Christian; for what a mockery would it be for the inmates of such a place to profess to be one in Christ!

A Christian will find irresistible motives of tenderness in the dependence of his family on his support and protection. In the gentleness, the clinging softness, the weakness, if you will, of his wife, he will find an argument for the most studious respect and consideration; in the words of an Apostle, "giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life." In the temporal aspect of their relations she may be weaker—

"For contemplation he and valor formed,
For softness she and sweet attractive grace;"

but in Christ they are equals. When the Christian husband looks upon his Christian wife as beloved of the Father, bought with the precious blood of Christ, a temple of the Holy Ghost, and a joint heir with Christ, he cannot fail

either in love or respect. Alas ! that all this is so frequently left out of view ; and then, not only is domestic happiness impaired, but their prayers are hindered ; for hearts so out of tune, and agitated by daily jars, cannot be united in calm repose at a throne of grace.

A Christian husband, sensible of his responsibility as the head of the wife, will seek, by grace, to acquit himself worthily of the affectionate submission which the Word of God claims for him. He will equally avoid the austerity which would chill affection, and the frivolity which would rob him of respect. It is a maxim of even worldly wisdom, "that he who would govern others must first learn to govern himself." He will cultivate natural, but, above all, spiritual gifts ; gain ordinary, but, above all, Scriptural intelligence ; not only before the world, but in the confidential retirement of his family, he will walk not as fools, but as the wise walk ; he will be the adviser, the instructor, under Christ, the head of his household, and thus secure that respect which will render obedience natural, and that love which will render it a delight. So the Apostle says, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge ;" and if this does not secure respect, it will not be won by frowns, or the free use of opprobrious and insulting epithets.

The happiness and benefits of this sacred relationship are to be enjoyed only through the loving union and coöperation of both parties. Each must be true to the obligations laid upon them ; and it is a common remark that, in unhappy marriages, the failure is rarely all on one side. Each should dwell upon their own peculiar duty. The wife, instead of watching her husband, to see where he fails in love, and standing ready to charge him with unkindness, should watch over her own spirit, to see where she fails in submission, gentleness, and grace. The husband, instead of being

jealous of his authority and exacting in his demands, should watch over his own spirit, to see where he fails in love, respectful attention, and tenderness. She may rest assured that gentleness and affectionate deference to his wishes, are the surest means to secure his deeper love. He may rest assured that his delicate consideration of her feelings, and his loving solicitude for her happiness, are the best means to gain the only obedience which a wise man can desire at the hands of one who is not his vassal, but a part of himself. Finally, both should regard the will of the Lord as supreme. This will render submission easy, which otherwise might be intolerable, and will make love permanent, which otherwise might be fickle and evanescent. As has been well said : "To love from principle, and in the power of faith, is something very different from obeying a natural instinct. Passion may lead to the formation of a union, which spiritual devotedness must afterward maintain. Hence reverence and love, which are the necessary pillars of true matrimonial peace, are enjoined as duties, rather than relied on as inherent in the relationship." "Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverences her husband."

THE PARABLES OF MATT. XIII.

DR. STANLEY, in his "Sinai and Palestine in connection with their History," says: "Every traveller in Palestine has recognized the truth of what every commentator has conjectured from the likelihood of the case—the suggestion of the imagery of the parables, by what may still be seen passing before the eye of the spectator of these scenes." After illustrating from this source some of the parables which were spoken in Judea, he continues: "From the cycle of parables in Judea we pass to those in Galilee. Of these the greater part are grouped together in the discourse from the fishing-vessel, off the beach of the plain of Genesareth. Is there any thing on the spot to suggest the images there conveyed? So I asked, as I rode along the track under the hillside by which the plain of Genesareth is approached. So I asked, at the moment seeing nothing but the steep sides of the hill, alternately of rock and grass. And when I thought of the parable of the sower, I answered, that here at least was nothing on which the divine teaching could fasten. It must have been the distant corn-fields of Samaria or Esdrelon on which his mind was dwelling. The thought had hardly occurred to me, when a slight recess in the hillside, close upon the plain, disclosed at once, in detail, and with a conjunction that I remember nowhere else in Palestine, every feature of the great parable. There was the undulating corn-field descending to the water's edge; there

was the trodden pathway running through the midst of it, with no fence or hedge to prevent the seed from falling here and there on either side of it, or upon it—itsself hard with the constant tramp of horse and mule and human feet. There was the ‘good,’ rich soil, which distinguishes the whole of that plain and its neighborhood from the bare hills elsewhere descending to the lake, and which, when there is no interruption, produce one vast mass of corn. There was the rocky ground of the hillside protruding here and there through the cornfields, or elsewhere through the grassy slopes. There were the large bushes of thorn—the ‘Nabk’—that kind of which tradition says the crown of thorns was woven, springing up, like the fruit-trees of the more inland parts, in the very midst of the waving wheat.”

In continuation, he speaks of the yawân or tares still growing among the wheat, at first sight scarcely distinguishable from it—of the birds of all kinds hovering over the rich plain—of the relics of the great fisheries, recalling the image of the net which was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind from all the various tribes which still people those lonely waters. But we needed no description by a traveller to assure us that the imagery of these parables are sketches from nature; and, though the description of the locality cannot fail to interest us, it can scarcely increase the impression of the graphic pictures, or throw additional light on the perspicuous illustrations of divine truth.

Before attempting the interpretation of these parables, we purpose making a few remarks on a subject which the Lord introduces when His disciples asked: “Why speakest thou unto them in parables?” “He answered and said unto them: Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and

he shall have more abundance, but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I unto them in parables ; because they seeing, see not, and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand." This explanation of His course has probably occasioned a difficulty to some of our readers, to whom, at the first glance, it may seem harsh and partial, and ill accordant with the usual grace and condescension of Jesus. Why wrap up the truth in dark parables ? Why make the ignorance of the people a reason for withholding knowledge ? Why, above all, hold them responsible for their ignorance of truth which was designedly withheld from them ?

Such are some of the questions which have, involuntarily, been raised in the minds of some who are not disposed to suspect either the grace or wisdom of the Lord, though they may be unable to fathom the reasons of His procedure. If it were necessary to vindicate the Lord from the charge of caprice or partiality in His treatment of the masses of the people, we might ask, first of all, whether it can be fairly said that in these parables, especially in the opening parable of the sower, with reference to which the explanation in question was given, the truth is wrapt up in such impenetrable mystery as the charge implies ? Nothing could be more simple than the structure of the parable, nothing more natural than its imagery, and, among ourselves, we know that even those who have not advanced beyond the rudiments of the knowledge of Christ, have no difficulty in understanding and applying its lessons. In point of fact, we may say that nothing but the most inveterate misunderstanding of the character and objects of the Great Teacher, could have failed to perceive at least the general drift of the parable.

Now, although a man's ignorance may not in itself be a

reason for withholding knowledge from him, it is very easy to see how his failure to learn a first lesson might render it improper or injurious to himself to communicate more advanced lessons in truth to him. Still more is it easy to see how his obstinate or wilful misconception of a person who had an important mission to fulfil, may be a good reason why that person should not take him into his confidence. The leader of a great enterprise would certainly speak of his plans in very different terms in the hearing of those who were unfriendly to it, from the terms he would use in explaining every thing to his associates in it, or to those who were to be intrusted with the execution of his plans.

But let us look at the relations of Jesus to the Jews and to His disciples, and then consider the subject of these parables as He describes it, "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," and then the reasons of His procedure will be involved in no obscurity, and liable to no suspicion of partiality or caprice. In the prophecies of the Old Testament, the coming of the Messiah, the heir of David's throne, to establish a heavenly kingdom on the ruins of earthly empire, was held out to the hopes of the faithful people of God. Jesus, the son of Mary, was announced as that Messiah, with the assurance that "the Lord God will give unto him the throne of his father, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever." We are accustomed to view His earthly life simply in its relations to that sacrifice of Himself by which He put away sin, or in its relations to our salvation. But it should be remembered that there was an aspect in which His life and ministry on earth was national, since He Himself said: "I am not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." His forerunner, in announcing His approach to the Jewish nation, proclaimed the kingdom of heaven as at hand—a proclamation which Jesus Himself

took up ; and, in short, it is evident from His whole demeanor among the Jews, that He was there, claiming their allegiance as their king, and prepared, in the event of their acknowledgment of His claims, to establish that kingdom. It is vain to ask what would have become of the plan of human salvation had they crowned instead of crucifying Him ; for nothing in all His history occurred that was not in accordance with the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. But it is nevertheless true that He offered Himself in good faith to them as their king, with every confirmation of His claims, and with all patience in His persuasions. "He came to His own, and His own received Him not."

In this national aspect of His public ministry every thing was preparatory to His public and official entry into Jerusalem, in accordance with the terms of the prophecy regarding the manner in which her king should come to her. But long before this, that which Omniscience foresaw had become evident even to human discernment. His character was misrepresented, His name reviled, even His most notable miracles were ascribed to Satanic influence. John the Baptist himself, seeing how the popular tide was setting against Him whose coming he had been honored to herald, was evidently shaken in his confidence. Jesus had publicly recognized the fact that the kingdom of heaven, which had been proclaimed from the days of John the Baptist, was suffering violence, and the violent took it by force. In other words, the leaders of the nation were conspiring against His just claims, and, like the husbandmen in the parable, were saying : "This is the heir ; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance."

In the midst of all this there was a faithful remnant who acknowledged His true character, and cleaved to Him in the face of all obloquy and hostility. He gathered them around

Him, and instructed them in the higher aspects of His mission. Especially of the twelve he could say to the Father : " I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them ; and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." Foreseeing his rejection by the Jews, and knowing that the establishment of the kingdom of which that generation showed themselves to be unworthy, was to be deferred to a day when He shall be manifested in power and great glory, He knew that the twelve had an important mission to fulfil in an intermediate dispensation of grace, during the period when the kingdom of heaven, which had been proclaimed to deaf ears, should be hidden from the world : like one of those rivers which disappear in the sands of the desert, to break forth again in increased volume, and run its destined course. This period is what He styles " the mysteries of the kingdom." A time came when it was proper that He should instruct His disciples, and prepare them for the places which they were to occupy in this dispensation. But, since His rejection by the nation could not be formal until His official entry into Jerusalem, and as He was still presenting His claims to the nation, and plying them with persuasions, and arguments, and warnings, it would plainly have been inconsistent with His position and theirs had He intimated publicly the rejection which He foresaw, or had He spoken plainly to them of a dispensation which was to be consequent upon their criminal repudiation of their rightful king. He would, in that case, have been suggesting to them the crime for which they are condemned ; and, after that, it would have been an idle mockery to urge His claims. To those who had already received Him in His true character, who were His associate in suffering, and who were to be the executors of His purpose, He might reveal the mysteries

of the kingdom. But to those who closed their eyes to the truth, and were prepared to cry, "Crucify him! crucify him!" there was a moral necessity for speaking of the mysteries in parables. The truth which these disciples had already received was the reason for communicating these further truths to them. The rejection of the previous truth by the multitude rendered them incapable of receiving these further lessons. The fact that the long-promised Messiah had come, and they refused to acknowledge Him—the fact that He had sought to gather them together under His blessed sceptre, and they would not—the fact that light had come into the world, and they had loved darkness rather than light—was the awful proof that in them was fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which the Saviour applies to them.

We have said that a time came when it was proper that He should instruct His disciples regarding the dispensation of grace which was to follow His rejection by the Jews, and in which they had an important mission to fulfil. That time is marked in the language of Matthew: "He spake many things to them *in parables.*" Bengel says: "The Evangelist here indicates a remarkable period of Christ's teaching to the people in Galilee—as Mark indicates a similar period in His teaching to the scribes and elders in Jerusalem at a later stage in His ministry: 'He *began* to speak to them in parables.'" In both cases He introduced a manner of teaching which He had not used with them before. That the parable of the sower was the first which He delivered in His public ministry is made evident by the question of the disciples: "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" The length at which we have considered the Lord's answer to that question abridges our space for the elucidation of the parables, but it renders it unnecessary to dwell upon the general scope and design of them. They are designed to

unfold to the disciples what might be expected in the course of the present dispensation, when the kingdom of heaven is out of sight, but awaiting a glorious manifestation.

The interpretation of the first parable by the Lord Himself leaves nothing to be added by any of His followers. But there is one question which the Lord leaves untouched, which may, with propriety, be considered, and which is important in as far as the answer may determine the proper application of the truth contained in the parable, which is a separate thing from the interpretation of the parable. The question is, Who is designed by the sower? and that involves the question: Does the parable apply simply to the results of the Lord's personal ministry, or to the results of the ministry of His disciples and followers in subsequent ages? The principal, if not the only reason for supposing that, by the sower who went forth to sow, the Saviour Himself is meant, is found in the Lord's interpretation of the parable of "the wheat and the tares," in which he says: "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man." But any argument founded on this which would restrict the parable to His personal ministry is answered by the fact that, in the latter parable, the import of the seed sown is altogether different from that in the former parable. In the one case the good seed is the *word* of the kingdom; in the other, the good seed is the *children* of the kingdom. None but the Lord Himself can be said to sow the seed in the latter sense, but any servant whom the Lord may choose to call is competent to sow the seed in the former sense, as, indeed, the Lord afterward charged His disciples to preach the Gospel to every creature.

If the sower who went forth to sow is the Lord Himself, and if the parable is designed to state the results of His ministry, then the parable would be historical and not pro-

phetic. But the parable is prophetic, for the Lord Himself intimates that it is designed to instruct the disciples regarding the mysteries of the kingdom which were concealed from the Jews. What reason could there be for concealing the results of the Lord's personal ministry? In fact, these results were not concealed; they were patent to all His hearers, and, not unfrequently, are the occasions of faithful and pungent testimony by Himself in His rebukes of an unbelieving nation. There might be some resemblance between the results of His ministry in various classes of His hearers, and the results of the sowing in some of the various circumstances in which the seed is represented as falling. But it will probably be granted that the parable was not and could not be completely fulfilled until the dispensation of the Spirit had commenced. The Saviour's eyes were not greeted during His humiliation with the sight of that plentiful harvest which was produced from the seed which fell upon good ground, "which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty."

The parable is prophetic, and was evidently designed to prepare His disciples for the results of their ministry, which, but for this warning, might have been inexplicable and discouraging to them. And with the warning of the many failures which they might expect of the desired fruits of their labor, the stupid insensibility of some of their hearers, the evanescent emotion and short-lived zeal of others, the un-eradicable worldliness which should so often disappoint the fairest promise—with all this, there is the encouragement of a promised success in the case of some who should glorify the Father by bringing forth much fruit, and who should be to them for a crown and a rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming. It is a prediction of the results of a faithful ministry of the word throughout the

whole of this dispensation ; and, if there was not another intimation in the word of God on the subject, it forbids the thought of a universal triumph of the Gospel in any period of it.

No one will question the prophetic character of the next parable, that, namely, of the wheat and tares. The Lord's interpretation, which supersedes any necessity for a discussion of its meaning, renders this certain. It is a general view of what was to be expected in the history of the Church, until the close of this dispensation. Two points are left untouched in the Lord's interpretation, on which His disciples might desire information ; but we can perceive His wisdom in leaving all questions on these points to be answered by the events themselves. He does not inform His disciples how soon the predicted corruption of the Church should take place ; nor what is designed by the men sleeping, of which the enemy takes advantage to sow tares in the field.

As to the first point, there is in the parable the distinct claim that all true believers, and only they, are of His planting—no others have a place in His Church except through the malignant designs of that enemy who, at every stage, seems to mar and ruin His work. He plants the good seed—or, according to his loving desire to give the Father the glory of all His work, he says, "No man cometh unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him ;" or, again, where He employs the figure used in the parable, when He announces the doom of false professors : "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." We have every reason for concluding that, on that eventful day, when the hundred and twenty, gathered together according to his injunction, received the promise of the Father, they were before God uncontaminated by the pres-

ence of a single deceiver ; for the visible token of the Spirit's presence "sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." How long that unmixed harmony, so honoring to God and so pleasing to the eye of the Lord, continued we cannot tell. But we know that at no distant date the prophecy of the parable was sadly fulfilled, and the servants of the Lord, in effect, went to Him with the question : " Whence then hath it tares ?"

The first instance of falsehood and hypocrisy in the Church that is recorded, is that of Ananias and Sapphira. And the awful doom of these two who first conspired to tempt the Spirit of the Lord, and the whole tone of Peter's address to them, reminds us of the demand of the servants in the parable : " Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up ?" Man, who so much needs grace, is ever in haste to execute judgment, and, slow to learn what spirit we are of, would at once call down fire from heaven upon the wicked. The righteous Lord teaches us the lesson of mercy and the character of this dispensation ; but at the same time He makes us know that, though He is long-suffering and not willing that any should perish, judgment will not always slumber, and a day is coming when " He will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire."

One thing, however, is plainly taught in the parable ; the corruption so early introduced into the Church will never be eradicated until the harvest, which is the end of the world. In the former parable we are taught that the preaching of the Gospel in this dispensation will never be universally successful. The sower of that incorruptible seed, the word of God, which by the Gospel is preached unto men, must still expect to see it apparently lost on the wayside, in the stony places, or among the thorns, though it will be blessed to the

accomplishment of that which God designs by it: which is not, as some idly fancy, to convert the nations, but "to take out of them a people for His name." So in this parable we are taught to expect no golden age of the Church in the absence of its Lord, but to expect precisely what we find—the tares and the wheat growing together until the harvest; and in the degeneracy of our own age, may we not ask over again: "When the Son of Man cometh shall He find faith upon the earth?"

As to the other point, What is meant by the circumstance that "while men slept his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way?" we might be disposed to think that the Lord designed to intimate that Satan should find his opportunity to corrupt the Church through the carelessness of those whose proper business it was to watch over its purity. But there is no word of reproof in the parable to these servants, as though that which they reported to their Lord was to be ascribed to their own want of vigilance or fidelity. In Mark's record of this group of parables there is one not mentioned by Matthew, in which the kingdom of heaven is said to be "as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise, night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how." In this parable, the sower's labor ends with sowing the seed; all beyond that is beyond his control, and independent of his care or his influence. There is an outward and visible instrumentality employed again when the harvest is come; but the springing up, the growth and maturity of that which he sows, is due to an invisible and divine agency. The truth contained in the parable is just that which Paul announces without a parable, regarding the seed which he sowed: "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.

So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."

In this case no blame is implied in the fact that the man slept by night, any more than that he rose by day. But it is intimated that independently of his farther care or interference, the work of the Spirit advanced, and God has all the glory. So in the other case, the fact that the enemy found his opportunity while men slept, does not imply any fault on the part of the Lord's servants, but rather points out the craft and secrecy of Satan's devices against the purity and peace of the Church. Peter demanded of Ananias, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart?" but there is surely no reason to suppose that the true answer to that question was to be found in Peter's want of vigilance. Yet the revealed craft and subtlety of the enemy enforces the admonition: "Be sober, be vigilant." The great lesson of the parable is regarding the condition of the Church down to the very close of this dispensation, and that is not obscure.

The Lord's own interpretation of the two first parables of the series should have left little uncertainty about the remaining five, which unquestionably relate to the same subject, and must be explained in consistency with that interpretation. It is therefore the more surprising that in popular expositions, of two of them at least—the parable of the mustard-seed and of leaven hid in three measures of meal—we should be taught to expect not only widespread success, but, as Trench expresses it, "we cannot consider these words, 'till the whole is leavened,' as less than a prophecy of a final complete triumph of Christianity; that it will diffuse itself through all nations, and purify and ennoble all life;" as though the birds of the air should cease to devour the seed that falls by the wayside, or the sun to scorch the plants

which have no deepness of earth, or as though the corn should flourish among the choking thorns of earthliness, or as though the Lord should be found a false witness when He foretold that the tares and wheat shall grow together until harvest.

The parable of the mustard-seed undoubtedly represents the outward prosperity and visible extension of that which was originally small and contemptible in man's eyes. But then, evidently, he is speaking of the Church as man sees it, and according to man's estimate of it; for it is this, a visible Church, a professed Christianity, which was insignificant in its beginnings. Something different from that of which the Lord says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches," or that of which Paul speaks: "As the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many, are one body, so also is Christ." The Lord predicts the outward and unexpected prosperity of that visible and professed Christianity. But it is to be observed that before He predicts its extension He has predicted its corruption; and this, surely, must be some abatement of our rejoicing, that it is a corrupted and degenerate Christianity that becomes great and influential in the world. However we may, as partisans, have exulted in the ascendancy of Christianity when it could number Roman emperors among its submissive votaries, and when its bishops took the place of honor in imperial courts, there is nothing but humiliation and sadness to us as believers to whom the honor of the Lord is dear.

Those who, in the face of the Lord's own warnings, have interpreted this parable as predicting the prevalence of Christianity and the glory of the Church in this dispensation, have always been at a loss to dispose of the fowls of the air who lodge in the branches of it. Those expositors

who have acquired their notions of the Church in the national establishments and hierarchies of the old world, and who, when they use the word, seem to intend by it the body of the clergy or ecclesiastics in distinction from the laity, or, at least, something distinct from the collective body of professed believers, explain this feature of the parable as "a prophecy of the refuge and defence that should be to all men in the Church; how that multitudes should thither make their resort, finding there protection from worldly oppression, as well as the satisfaction for all the needs and wants of their souls." What sort of defence and protection from oppression men have found in the ecclesiastical establishments which these men mean, the history of Europe and its present condition may tell—such protection as the vulture gives the lamb. The same witnesses speak as emphatically of the kind of satisfaction men receive for the wants and needs of their souls.

"The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But swollen with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing sed."

It may be that these High-Church doctors have come nearer than they know to the true interpretation of the parables.

The more evangelical expositors of these churches have more commonly, of late years, passed in silence the circumstance that "the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof," or they have treated it as introduced merely as an additional illustration of the greatness of the tree which is capable of affording such shelter. Greswell speaks of the mustard-seed expanding to the dimensions of a tree as prefiguring the enlargement of the boundaries of

the visible Church to the extent of a vast and capacious empire, "and being diffused and established among all nations under the sun, should comprise within its compass and subject to its jurisdiction an incalculable number of distinct and independent societies, all composing the tenants of one tree, and as such, making up one catholic and universal society—the congregation of the visible Church throughout the world." More generally, the growth of the tree is understood to prefigure the enlargement of the Church; frequently combining this with a symbol of Old Testament prophecy, the tree is represented as filling the whole earth, and then the birds who come and lodge in its branches are understood to prefigure the multitude of young converts flocking to its shelter.

But in all these explanations, what confusion of metaphors and what vague notions of the subject of the parables do we find? For, first, it might be asked what is it which so expands from such small beginnings? And if the answer to this is, the Church of Christ, then it might be asked: "And what is the expansion of the Church, or how does it increase but by the addition of young converts to it? If the increase of the Church is the multiplication of its members, and if its members compose the Church, then what can be meant by those 'separate and distinct societies composing the tenants of the tree'? or by young converts, like the birds lodging in the branches of it? Take away the distinct societies which compose 'the congregation of the visible Church throughout the world,' and where is the Church, the tree of which they are tenants? Or in another view of it, is this the manner in which a tree grows, by birds flying into it and being transformed into the substance of the tree? And if they are incorporated with it, how can it be said that they 'lodge in the branches thereof'?"

Nothing can be more plain than that the birds of the air,

which are distinct from the tree and foreign to it, must represent some agents distinct from the Church and foreign to it. Foreign nations seeking protection under the Assyrian empire, and the peoples of the earth, seeking to share the blessed security of Israel in the days of her coming glory, are represented by the striking emblem of the fowls of every wing dwelling under the shadow of a spreading tree. So in this parable the external prosperity of a corrupted Church attracts to its shelter those who are the unchanging enemies of the true Church. For in the connection in which this parable stands, the birds stand as the emblem of the wicked one and his agents, who, having first attempted to catch away the good seed, next corrupt the Church, and then find, in the expanded prosperity of the corrupted Church, a congenial shelter and lurking-place. The historical fulfilment of this prediction, it is, alas! too easy to trace.

The fourth parable of the series, that of the leaven which a woman hid in three measures of meal, is generally understood as teaching that the influence of the Church will gradually assimilate the whole human race to itself; or that the transforming power of the Gospel will at last make this world a Christian world. If that means that it will be a Christian world in the same sense in which these writers speak of the nations of Europe as Christian nations, it may be a question how far the world will be improved by the change. But in order to show that the Lord does not, in this parable, contradict Himself in His interpretation of the parable of the tares among the wheat, it is only necessary to point to the circumstance that the agent in depositing the leaven cannot be an emblem of Him who planted the Church or gave the Gospel to be preached. It is a woman who, in the types and allegories of Scripture, is either an emblem of the Church or of Satan's grand agent in corrupting the

truth. In the next place, three measures of meal cannot be an emblem of the whole mass of humanity, but a portion taken from the whole; and the connection in which it stands leaves it not doubtful what portion is meant. Lastly, leaven has a uniform and well-defined meaning in the word of God. There is not a single example in the Scripture in which it represents any good or excellence. But whether in the types of the Old Testament or in the most expressive figures of the New, it stands continually as 'the chosen emblem of corruption, hypocrisy, and all the evil which displays such a power to propagate and perpetuate itself in the nature of fallen man. Nothing could be more unlike the process by which truth achieves its conquests, and divine grace resists the tendencies of nature, than the operation of leaven. Nothing in nature could more strikingly represent the progress of corruption. And so, in sad harmony with all that goes before it, this parable, the last which the Lord delivered to the multitude on the shore of Genesareth, completes the mournful picture of the Church's degeneracy. Sad words they were for Jesus to utter! and sad words they are for us to read, "till the whole was leavened!" the apostasy complete and a false Church rejected and disowned by Him whose name it has so long profaned! That last point of final and complete corruption is not reached; but reviewing with candor and impartiality the history of Christianity from the days of the apostles, when the mystery of iniquity was already working, and is it not a practical commentary on these faithful premonitions of the Lord? And can we for a moment dispute the certainty of all that remains to be fulfilled? "The tares and the wheat shall grow together until the harvest." Nay, the leaven is still diffusing itself, and the whole will be leavened. The appalling results from the small beginnings of corruption, illustrate the operation of a

principle on a large scale, which calls for the vigilant and unsparing fidelity of every Christian in his more limited sphere of responsibility. "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump," is a warning which applies to every sphere of Christian responsibility, and is especially the consideration by which we are urged to a jealous watch-care of the purity of every Church. "Purge out, therefore, the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice or wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

MIRACLES NEVER CEASE.

THE regeneration of a soul dead in trespasses and sins, it has often been said, is a more marvellous display of divine power than the creation of a material world. For, in the one case, a perishable structure of unconscious matter is called into existence; in the other case, a being is produced who is not only to exist for ever as part of the body of Christ, but who is capable of fellowship with the Creator, and who will reign in associated glory with Him in heaven and over the earth. The communication of the divine life that is in Christ to every believer, the unceasing miracle by which alone the Church exists, is the perpetual proclamation of the godhead of Jesus.

In order that the work may be seen to be of God, He often selects the weakest instruments in working out His purposes of grace to sinners. The following unadorned narrative of facts is designed to show the utter insufficiency of human intellect to find out God, or to sound those depths of the word of life which can be known only by His Spirit. In the event recorded, the mighty power of God will be seen no less plainly than it was in calling the dead to come forth from a four days' burial.

There resides in Paris a gentleman, well known to many who will peruse this paper, whom for convenience we may call Mons. S——, highly distinguished in the world of letters. At the time to which this narrative refers, he was Professor

of History in the University. He is the author of a voluminous work which has gained for him a high and wide-spread reputation; and, in a country where journalism takes the foremost place in literature, he was a celebrated journalist. Like many other reflecting unbelievers, he sat in the midst of so many cross-lights of the intellect that he could see nothing distinctly in the moral world; and his dazzling sword-fence of wit and learning seemed effectually to bar all approach to him with the word of truth.

He was paying a visit at the chateau of a lady near Lyons, where he frequently met Pastor Fisch, who is affectionately remembered by many who formed his acquaintance during his late visit to the United States. One day, as Pastor Fisch was walking in the grounds of the chateau, reading in the Scriptures, he met Mons. S——, who remarked to him: "I have had a great admiration of your conduct as a Christian, and have wished to know what are the principles that seem to produce such an effect on your life." He remarked, at the same time, that he had greatly desired to become religious, and that the proof of the truth of Christianity had appeared so conclusive that he had heartily adopted it as true, and had twice tried the Roman Catholic system with great earnestness, and for many months. "But," he added, "my judgment revolted from the teaching of the Church—practically that religion is impossible—and nothing can now move me from the philosophic neutrality, with respect to all forms of belief, into which I have finally and firmly settled down. Yet, if you have any book which states the doctrines you profess, and the principles by which you live, I should be glad to read it."

"I have," replied the pastor, "an admirable treatise, written by one of the early converts to the Christian faith. I

will lend it to you. It is the letter of the apostle Paul to the Christians at Rome."

"Nonsense!" said the Professor; "I beg your pardon for the word, but I have repeatedly read it, and found it an unintelligible jargon."

"Well," was the reply, "this is the only systematic, and, at the same time, authoritative exposition of our faith; and if you really want to understand it, I would have you read the epistle again carefully."

A few days afterward they met, and, in answer to Pastor Fisch's inquiry if he had fulfilled his promise to read the book once more, Mons. S—— said: "I have, but it is perfect nonsense. I read the first chapter and found it unintelligible; the second was worse; and when I reached the third I threw the book on the ground in disgust. If any thing were wanting to show that this religion is a juggle and a delusion, that epistle of St. Paul is sufficient. Wherever it seems at all intelligible it is full of contradictions. At all events it is too difficult and abstruse for me to understand. This fact goes far to disprove your principles. A religion coming from God should be so easily understood that the most ignorant could at once comprehend it. I once thought it was good enough for old women and peasants, but now I know that it is impossible for them to understand it; for I, who have been all my life engaged in intellectual pursuits, and who have been elevated to a professor's chair in the first University of Europe, can make nothing of it. Your Bible is a thousand times more incomprehensible than our Church."

To this sally it was replied that human learning and human ignorance were both opposed to a real spiritual acquaintance with the Scriptures—the former more conspicuously than the latter—and that in any case the Spirit of God must

open the heart and understanding of man before he could receive the word of life. "This," said Pastor Fisch, "is what the Scriptures themselves teach; and I sometimes find that, under this teaching, the illiterate understand the Bible better than I do. I will give you the proof of this, if you will accompany me this morning to the workshop of the poorest and most unlettered of my flock—a poor cobbler in Lyons."

"A good joke, truly!" said the self-confident Professor; but, upon being assured that the proposal was made in earnest, "well," he added, "I shall be glad to see one of these wonderful ignoramuses, who understand the Epistle to the Romans better than you do. You may rely upon it, I shall put him to the test, as I am putting you to the test in accepting your invitation." And accordingly, the Christian pastor and the sceptic philosopher set out on a visit to the poor cobbler's stall.

On introducing the scholar to the stall and its occupants, Pastor Fisch remarked that there was but one vacant stool, and scarcely standing-room for three persons.

"For you," said the cobbler as the Pastor took his leave, "for you there is no room; but there is room for three for all that, and if the Lord be with us we shall be very good company."

"Well, my friend," said Mons. S——, when they were left alone, "Pastor Fisch tells me you profess to know something of the Scriptures. We are alone here, and I will tell no one of what may pass; so just confess that you do not understand that book; for it stands to reason that if I, an educated man and a teacher in the University, can make nothing of it, still less can you, whom I perceive to be an illiterate man."

"Ah! sir, but I have something that you have not, with all your learning," said the cobbler.

“And what is that, pray?”

“The Holy Spirit,” said the Christian solemnly, “and if you are ever brought to ask for light from Him, you too will understand the Scriptures.”

He then told, in his own simple way, the story of God’s dealings with his soul; how He had showed him that he was a ruined and helpless sinner; and how when he saw this, he was led to see in Jesus a perfect Saviour, just such as he needed; and how, in looking to Jesus, he found all his sins washed away, received a new nature, and became a temple of the Holy Ghost, who taught him the things of God out of the Scriptures.

Mons. S——, remained all that morning in conversation with his humble instructor. On entering the dining-room at the chateau at a late hour, he exclaimed to Pastor Fisch, with an emotion which he could not conceal: “I thought, sir, that you were well acquainted with the Bible, but I find that you spoke the truth when you said that your cobbler knows it far better than you do. I have had a lesson in theology to-day such as I never had before.”

In truth, the Lord had opened the proud sceptic’s heart in the cobbler’s stall. From that hour, a new light broke in upon him. The Scriptures became his study and his delight, and to those who are familiar with the ways of the Lord, it will not be surprising that the third chapter of Romans was the means of his enlightenment. The Spirit revealed to him Jesus the Son of God, the Saviour of sinners, and he was a new man. If a change as complete as that which was effected in his mind and heart had taken place in his bodily appearance, his own family would not have recognized him.

He asked Pastor Fisch how one might know that he had received the Spirit. “I have studied again,” he said, “these

three chapters of the Epistle to the Romans that once so displeased me ; but this time I did so in dependence on God for enlightenment. In the first chapter I saw how man had lost the knowledge of God and had framed a deity after his own imagination and became utterly corrupt. In the second I saw how the chosen people of God, with His revelation in their hands, had followed in the same course, and that the whole race was involved in a common ruin. In the third chapter I saw that I with the rest, high and low, ignorant and learned, was a ruined, hopeless sinner before God. That was the truth which I would not see before, and which provoked my indignation. But I saw also that Jesus Christ was indeed set forth to be a propitiation for my sins. Oh ! what wonders of love, and justice, and wisdom are there in this ! And I rejoiced to see that my sins are washed away for ever. Was it the Holy Ghost that showed me all this ?”

“Yes,” was the reply, “none else could teach you either your ruin or your salvation.”

“Then,” said he with solemn tenderness, “I too am a son of God by faith in Christ Jesus ; and because I am a son, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into my heart.”

Sitting at the feet of Jesus, he has ever since been placing himself on the lowest form, learning of the spiritual, whether among the high or the low. He is now a fellow-laborer with Pastor Fisch in the Church at Paris ; and is found unweariedly among the poor, the sick, and the dying, teaching the faith which he once scorned. His celebrated history of Spain, four volumes of which had been published before his conversion, written with the bias of an infidel, has been completed from the standpoint of a believer in Jesus Christ.

Although regarded with contemptuous pity in circles where he was once distinguished and honored, he esteems

the reproach of Christ greater riches than all that he relinquished for Him. He now understands the paradox of Paul: "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise"

THY WAY—NOT MINE.

Thy way—not mine, O Lord,
 However dark it be !
 Lead me by thine own hand ;
 Choose out the path for me.

Smooth let it be or rough,
 It will be still the best ;
 Winding or straight, it matters not,
 It leads me to thy rest.

I dare not choose my lot ;
 I would not, if I might:
 Choose thou for me, my God,
 So shall I walk aright.

The kingdom that I seek
 Is thine ; so let the way
 That leads to it be thine,
 Else surely I might stray

Take thou my cup, and it
 With joy or sorrow fill ;
 As best to thee may seem,
 Choose thou my good and ill.

Choose thou for me my friends,
 My sickness or my health
 Choose thou my cares for me,
 My poverty or wealth.

Not mine—not mine the choice,
 In things or great or small ;
 Be thou my guide, my strength,
 My wisdom, and my all.

THE CHERUBIM.

BY GEORGE DUFFIELD, D.D.

NOTE.—The writer of this article thinks it but just to himself to say, that it was prepared with no intention to publish it, in the form it now appears. The thoughts were committed to paper, concisely expressed, and the criticisms also, for his own private and future use, and not for the popular eye. They were mainly attempts to recall a train of thought more fully but extemporaneously expressed, in a meeting of his clerical brethren a short time before. At the solicitation of his beloved brother, the editor of the *WAYMARKS*, the writer yielded the copy, which was his first and only draught, without revision. In the haste of delivery, that portion of the manuscript which appears in this number was left behind, and the fact never noticed till it was too late to forward before that part of the article in No. 2 of the *WAYMARKS*, and indeed the whole number, had passed through the press. The balance appears in this number, in continuation. If the views presented shall induce in any the interested study and close examination of the Scriptures on the subject, the writer will be satisfied, whatever may be the criticism of the captious and fastidious, who exalt ornament and style above food for thought. The reader is requested to make allowance for the errata in the article in No. 2. The Hebrew scholar can correct them without aid, and as for readers not acquainted with the characters, corrections are not needed. The article was not originally prepared for popular use. Otherwise the Hebrew characters would have been wholly omitted, the more especially, because the writer had no opportunity to inspect the proof-sheets while the article was in the hands of the compositors.

JOB xxvi. 13: "By His Spirit He hath garnished the heavens." Psalm xxxiii. 6: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them, by the breath (רוּחַ spirit) of His mouth." Isaiah xxxii. 15: "Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness, be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest." The prediction looks forward to the change that is to take place in the renovated condition of the land, overrun with briars and thorns, when restored, reinhabited, and transformed by luxuriant growths of grain and timber. The agency of the Spirit is referred to here—whatever view may be taken as to any emblematic, allegorical, or spiritual import of the expressions—as the vitalizing, fructifying force in the vegetable kingdom. In Ezek. xxxvii. 6-14, the production and development of animal life are in like manner referred to the agency of the Spirit as their prime efficient cause, whatever view may be taken as to any typical, emblematic, or spiritual meaning of the prophet's language. The Spirit of God is called "the Spirit of Life," Rom. viii. 2: and it is His office to impart or produce life. John vi. 63.

Answering to this His office, is the created element employed as the means by which he operates, and which is His appropriate emblem or representative in nature, namely, the "subtle spirit" of which Newton speaks. Call it æther, electricity, electro-magnetism, or by whatever other name, it is that imponderable elastic fluid which gives impulse, or is the instrumental cause of all the changes and motions in matter, whether cosmical, chemical, or vital, and which Professor Faraday says is "the most extraordinary and universal power in nature."*

Here, then, in the very constitution of the physical uni-

* "Experimental Researches in Electricity," vol. i. p. 360.

verse, we discern the emblematic representation or "similitude" of Jehovah Elohim, the triune God. Fire, *קֶהֶן*, light, *אֵשׁ*, whence the Greek *αἴρ*, the Latin *aura*, and the English word *air*, have been derived, and spirit, *רוּחַ*, are the three great physical agents in the mechanism of the visible creation. What is their essential nature we may never be able to discover, no more than we can that of spirit or of matter. The latest researches in physical science lead to the conclusion, that what we call light, heat, electricity, may be and probably are but relations or directions of force, or in other words, the infinitesimal ultimate particles or molecules of matter, whatever they may be, in varying modes of action. The nearest approximation yet made to a definite conception of these mechanical forces of nature—heat, light, electricity—is, that they are different waves or vibrations of one universally diffused element; modifications of force pertinent to different conditions or different movements of some one all-pervading, imponderable elastic fluid, the universal interstellar PLENUM, called by the ancients *אֵתֶר*, and *αἴρ*, and æther, which last name perhaps we may preferably use, till we can get a better. If this be so, then nature has her trinity as well, upon a grand scale, in space, as she has in man, originally created the formal image or likeness of God, possessed of body, *σῶμα*, soul, *ψυχή*, and spirit, *πνεῦμα*, so named by the Apostle Paul, who describes the constituent, coöperative, diversified, moral, intellectual, and vital functions and forces in one human being.

The mechanical, chemical, and vital forces, in physical nature are mighty, and often, in some of their phenomena, inspire with wonder and even terror. The solar ray, as it is called, combines light, heat, actinic power, which scientific men think are modifications of the electricity diffused throughout nature. "In the thunder-cloud, swelling with

destruction, it resides, ready to launch its darts and shake the earth with its explosions ; in the aerial undulations, silent and unseen, it passes, giving the necessary excitement to the organisms around which it floats. The rain-drop, the earth-girdling ocean, and the singing waters of the hill-born river, hold locked this mighty force. The solid rocks, the tenacious clays which rest upon them, the superficial soils and the incoherent sands, give us evidence of the presence of this agency ; and in the organic world, whether animal or vegetable, the excitement of electrical force is always to be detected. In the solar radiations we have perhaps the prime mover of this power." ("Hunt's Poetry of Science," p. 194.)

No wonder that philosophic heathen, ignorant of the true triune God and His moral perfections, made their Jove this universally-diffused æther, and addressed him in their amazement—

O thou who, by the air's convulsive force,
 Drives in its constant circulating course ;
 Thou shining vortex of the heaven's vast sphere,
 Jove Dionysius, mighty father, hear !
 Of earth and sea thou radiating flame,
 That's changed through all, and yet in all the same,
 All generative sun !

The verses of Orpheus, taken from Apuleius, unfold their pantheistic idea.

Jove is the spirit of all nature's frame,
 Blows in the wind and blazes in the flame ;
 The deep beneath, the radiant sea above,
 The morn's reflected light, are parts of Jove.

When men lost the knowledge of the triune God, they naturally substituted and worshipped His emblem for Himself. Would that there remained nothing among those professing Christianity, yet denying the Trinity, of the same

ignorance and pantheism. Theories of the ubiquity of God, as being an infinitely diffused essence, and of His Spirit being but its physical energy, still lurk within the very precincts of the Church of God. Rejecting the plain and pointed teachings of the Scriptures as to the personalities of the Godhead, three in one, 1 John v. 7, the names originally employed by God to designate Himself—Jehovah Elohim—lose their significance. It is but a natural consequence, that His own established similitude—the Cherubim—as or like the mighty ones—should be regarded inexplicably mysterious and unintelligible. But, in view of what has been suggested in this article, may we not find an easy and satisfactory reply to the question, what were the Cherubim?

Whether they were a visible representation of Jehovah Elohim, the Triune God, made to our first parents while yet in innocence, or were first instituted upon their expulsion from Paradise, is a question we care not here to discuss. Good and learned men have advocated the idea, that when placed at the east of the garden by God, they were removed from a more central position, having been part and parcel of a system of symbolic revelations of the same general character with the typical and sacramental trees of life, and of the knowledge of good and evil. But to us it seems most probable that, regarded as a symbolic representation of God, they were adapted rather to man's fallen and sinful than to his innocent condition.

As an innocent being, created perfect in knowledge, Adam was not ignorant of the constitution of nature. Space itself, with the mighty forces operating in its PLENUM, was, itself, a fit emblem of Jehovah Elohim. Nor was this Triune God, revealing himself in the mechanical structure of creation, by means of marvellous, mighty, magnificent forces, in one essence, representative emblems of His being and operations—

an object of dread or terror; because there was no consciousness of guilt, to make innocent man fear that these potencies would be turned against him. He could readily trust Him, that their action would be so guided and regulated, as to promote his good. Innocence would not be made to suffer. Regarding the heavens, therefore, as Jehovah's throne, and earth His footstool, innocent man could read on the bright pages of creation the proofs and record of the eternal power, wisdom, and goodness of the Godhead; and that without any dread or dismay. In other words, the natural or physical government of JEHOVAH ELOHIM would be peacefully, confidently, joyfully contemplated, by innocent man, as the basis of his security, the promoter of his happiness. No sooner, however, had he sinned, and by his rebellion forfeited all favor and protection from God, and rendered himself obnoxious to punishment, both He and the mighty agencies of His government became his dread and horror. The mighty forces in nature have ever since been made, in the divine providence, the means of inflicting punishment on man for his sin. Pain, disease, suffering, death, are the legacy of woe, left by our guilty primogenitors. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." Rom. i. 18. Nature has no solace for human woe. It looks with grim visage upon guilty, fallen man. Earth has become a charnel-house. "Dying thou shalt die," is all the response man can get from nature in his flight from God. The tokens of His presence naturally excite alarm. "I was afraid—and hid myself," said guilty, naked, and fallen Adam. It has been the experience of his race. We start back, with amazement and horror, at the view of those irresistible powers, incessantly at work, in the physical universe, conscious of our utter weakness and liability to become their prey, upon

any disturbance of their marvellously adjusted equilibrium. Poetic fancy has sought to relieve our aching hearts ; but it has been by ridding the mind of the thought of that infinite, mighty, and exalted Being, who is the maker of the heavens and the earth, and substituting for His presence and agencies, spiritual beings of inferior order, with whom imagination may commune, in forest, valley, mountain, spring, lake, river, ocean, animals, trees, plants, and flowers, working their secret offices, and moulding alike the beautiful and terrible. But they are the inane creations of weak, finite minds, to hold the thoughts and heart aside from the one great, only true and living God, for whose glory all things were made, and by the word of whose power alone they are upheld.

Poor, fallen, guilty man needs another revelation of the nature, perfections, and will of God ; something clearer, brighter, and more adapted to our lost, guilty, and degraded state, than any thing we can discover in the works of creation. Whether on earth or in the heavens, nature's names or manifestations of God, His emblems throughout space, wherever traced, give no intimations of pardon for sin, or of the admissibility of free, friendly, familiar intercourse or communion with his Creator, by guilty, corrupt man. All such knowledge is sought for utterly in vain, penetrate as deeply as we may into the mysteries of nature and the structure of creation. We are indebted for it to an extraordinary, miraculous revelation ; to a manifestation of God to us made by Himself, far excelling, and totally above and beyond, the whole sphere of the created universe. It is extolled in the Eighth Psalm, and explained by the Apostle Paul in Heb. ii. 6-9. It is the Revelation which God has made of Himself, in and through the manifestation, mission, and redemption of Jesus Christ—a remedial scheme, designed to supply what the natural creation would not furnish.

It commenced with the first promise of deliverance from the thralldom and dominion of "that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the world," Rev. xii. 9, and which was implied in the predicted crushing of the power usurped by him over the race, pronounced before the eyes and in the hearing of our first and fallen parents, when God said: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it (HE) shall bruise thy head." Gen. iii. 15. Upon man's departure from Paradise, he was not banished from the gracious presence of God. The cherubim were placed at the edge or entrance of the garden, and became thenceforth the great centre of religious and holy solemnities of worship, provided, ordained and adapted by God for our guilty and fallen race. That consecrated hieroglyphic, not like any thing in creation, became the external visible manifestation of the special presence of the Triune God, of Him who, in His several personal subsistences, had pledged to the eternal Son—who was to become incarnate, and be the predicted seed of the woman—a perfect triumph over "the enemy and avenger," the destroyer of our race, and redemption from his power.

By this hieroglyphic, God taught the wonders of His gracious covenant of redemption through Jesus Christ, which He is accomplishing by the coöperative agency of the glorious Three in One. The fulness of the Godhead dwelleth now bodily in our glorious Redeemer, the God-Man, Christ Jesus. Col. ii. 9. The cherubim were a marvellous anticipative representation of this visible memorial and pledge of God, for the destruction of Satan, and the redemption of man. In a word, it proclaimed that God should appear, and live, and reign on earth, enthroned in our nature. The teachings of this hieroglyphic, in connection with the sacrificial offerings instituted by God, and pre-

sented by man before it, were in sum and substance those of the glorious gospel of the grace of God, revealing to us the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—the Triune Jehovah condescending mercifully to be our all-sufficient covenant God and Saviour.

The faces of the cherubim are spoken of as the faces of God. When Cain was banished from his abode, and condemned for his murder of Abel, to be a fugitive and vagabond on the earth, he said to God: “From *Thy* face (Hebrew, *faces*) shall I be hid.” Gen. iv. 14. When he left the parental abode, or the land where he lived in proximity to the abode of Adam, it is said: “And Cain went out from the presence (Hebrew, from the *faces*) of the Lord.” Gen. iv. 16. In the hieroglyphic cherubim we have a simple and natural explanation of the origin and significance of this singular expression, the faces of the Lord, as equivalent with His presence, or *before, in front of*, in its subsequent prepositional, idiomatic use. The cherubic faces were, as has been noticed, those of the bull, the lion, man, and the eagle. See Ezekiel’s description, chapter i. 10 and x. 14. In the enumeration, the second of the facial representations was the duplex form of the lion and human face, joined together, and forming the most prominent and impressive figure. Why, it may be here asked, were the lion, the bull, and the eagle faces combined in this hieroglyphic? and some may be ready to say, is it not too coarse and monstrous an idea that such representations of Himself should have been adopted by God? But a second thought will relieve from such impressions.

The bull, the lion, and the eagle are all powerful and ferocious creatures. The bull among the domestic, the lion among the wild animals, and the eagle among the feathered tribes, are conspicuous, and often objects of terror. They

are fitting emblems of forces that may be terrific and destructive. The mighty natural forces operating in space are such. Heat or fire, light, spirit, whether wind or electricity, causing the tempest, or let us call it æther, as already spoken of, are all of them potencies or elements, whatever they may be, which have been made from the earliest periods of human history emblems of the divine energy, and in the Scripture, often, of the different persons of the Godhead. God in nature is a terrific Being, when He marshals His mighty forces around Him. The ferocious animals used as emblems in the hieroglyphic cherubim imperfectly represent these natural and terrific forces. The fact is unquestionable that from the remotest period men have actually made these animals emblems of physical forces, and idolatrously worshipped God by them or in them. The bull was the known emblem of the intensest form of heat or fire, especially that at the orb of the sun; the lion was the emblem of the light that issues thence; and the eagle of the spirit or æther, represented sometimes in denser condition, and sometimes rarer and more subtile. It is unnecessary to quote from the ancient mythologies in proof of these positions. It abounds in them, as those acquainted with them know. These animals afforded the most frequent and illustrious emblems employed in their idolatrous worship, whether as philosophic symbols of solar forces among the worshippers of the sun, or as separate objects of the more ignorant and popular adorations.

In the cherubim, the lion and human faces were joined together; and in the description given by Ezekiel of the cherubim he saw, he says, there was "over their heads the likeness of a throne as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man upon it." Ezek. i. 26. This description corresponds with John's, in Rev. iv. 2, 3, 7, which when

compared with Isaiah vi. 1, etc., and John xii. 41, conducts us to the conclusion, that the human face-form being associated with the bestial faces, the representative emblems of the physical forces of fire, light, spirit, or æther, which are the means and channels of the Triune Jehovah's mighty energies, being, as it were, incorporated with them as the chief, prominent, controlling director of all, there was no reason for man to be dismayed or filled with dread and terror from their action. In looking on this representation of God, however, the emblematic bestial faces might inspire awe or excite alarm, the human face and form exciting love, confidence, and sympathy, appropriate to a being possessing man's own nature, and having fellow-feeling with him, there was enough to assure the mind and heart that, notwithstanding, Jehovah Elohim's operations and forces in nature, are so mighty and marvellous, yet might He be approached, adored, and confided in by fallen guilty sinners of mankind. The physical forces and government of the Lord God, terrific in their nature and manifestations sometimes, as they are, being all subordinated to and under the pacificating, harmonizing agent enthroned in human nature, and supported by them severally and conjointly, we need not fear to approach His presence and worship at His feet. Humanity sits enthroned upon the terrific powers of nature. The glorious persons and powers of the Godhead, in the energies symbolized by the terrific faces of the cherubim, all support His sway and manifest themselves coöperative at His feet. Jehovah Elohim, becoming incarnate in the person of the Son of God, subordinates to the glorious God-man, Mediator, Christ Jesus, the forces of creation. The predicted destined sovereign King of earth and heaven was exhibited borne up by, and riding, as it were, upon the cherubim. Our fallen race has thus been taught what now we know

more clearly, that there is hope, salvation, and communion with God for man. The mediatorial dominion of the Son of God, head over all things, supersedes and will raise and exalt poor ruined man to more than primitive blessedness in Eden. It was in our nature that the Apostle John, in vision, saw Him, Rev. iv. 2-7, the object of heavenly adoration, the grand centralizing and controlling authority of the universe, the Lord God Almighty, in whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Who will not join in the ecstatic acclaim—"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things; and for thy pleasure they are and were created. Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us kings and priests unto our God; and we shall reign on the earth." Amen and amen.

WAYMARKS

IN

THE WILDERNESS.

THE END AS PREDICTED IN MATT. XXIV. AND LUKE XXI.

THE four Gospels, as they are styled, are evidently not formal biographies of Jesus of Nazareth; though it is difficult to imagine how any formal biography could have afforded, either to faith or affection, such a vivid image of the proper object of both—Christ Himself—whose glory we there behold as in a mirror. This much is evident even to those who have never carefully analyzed the contents of these wonderful writings, nor spent a thought upon the distinct and specific design of each. Yet without some knowledge of that design, there is much in them that cannot be understood and appreciated, the testimony they bear to the Lord will often be misapprehended, and in some particulars they will appear to conflict with one another. The subject is too extensive to be discussed in a few introductory remarks, but we cannot profitably enter upon the consideration of the prophecies recorded in the two chapters mentioned in the heading of this article, without noticing the distinct character and specific design of the two gospels in which they are found.

Without being acquainted with the history of the Gospel by Matthew, a superficial acquaintance with the book itself might suggest that it exhibits Jesus as the Messiah sent to the Jews, or, as He expresses it, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The first verse of the book shows this—"the book of the generations of Jesus, the Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham," and then follows the genealogy of Joseph, the husband of Mary and the reputed father of Jesus, who, according to Jewish law, was his rightful heir. The whole book is designed to prove to the Jews that this was the Messiah, the rightful heir of David's throne and the promised seed of Abraham. The evangelist constantly points out how the predictions of the ancient prophets were fulfilled in His life and character; and shows that He who appeared among them in such humiliation was fully attested by God, possessed every characteristic mark, and was equipped with all the power and resources of the Messiah, at once entitled to occupy the throne and to accomplish all the glorious things that were predicted of His reign, provided His own, to whom He came, had received Him. This Gospel, therefore, which also contains the history of their rejection of Him, furnishes the most ample grounds of their condemnation. But even as regards that nation, we may rest assured that it has another object besides showing the justice of their condemnation.

Doubtless, it contains the evidence of the Messiahship of Jesus, on the ground of which many of the Jews to whom it was addressed believed on Him. But throughout the book, and especially in the last chapters to which our present subject at once leads us, there are predictions and revelations which could have no direct application to the Jews of that day, and yet we may rest assured they are made with a practical design. It would be easy to show that the pre-

dictions and revelations of which we speak relate to the very period embraced in the last of the seventy weeks of Daniel, which was considered at large in a previous essay ; and, considering the peculiar aspect of the character and official work of Christ which this evangelist gives, the nature of the evidence which he has collected, and then the scope of the predictions referred to, we cannot resist the conviction that, beyond all its uses to the Jews to whom it was first addressed, and all the instruction it has furnished the Church of Christ in every age, this gospel has an eye especially to the faithful Jews in that eventful heptade, who shall receive the testimony of Jesus, and for which many of them shall suffer martyrdom.

Luke, "the beloved physician," was the companion of the Apostle Paul in his apostolic labors among the Gentiles, and the Gospel written by him is precisely what was needed in their field of joint labor and testimony. It exhibits Jesus as the Christ indeed, by infallible proofs ; but then it presents Him as the centre of a much wider circle than that in which Matthew specially presents Him, in His relations to man as man. Matthew traces this genealogy through David up to Abraham, to prove His legal claim to the throne, and to show that He is the heir of the promise ; but Luke, beyond this, traces back his descent to "Adam which was the Son of God," and shows Him as the seed of the woman who shall bruise the head of the serpent—the second Adam who was to conquer where the first failed, and to deliver us from the guilt and ruin in which we were involved through the fall of our first parents. The peculiar aspect of Christ's life, character, and doctrine which Luke presents, will be found to be in accordance with the design which is indicated in the opening passages of the book.

Without enlarging on the subject, we suggest that all

that is peculiar in either of these two Gospels is explained by this view of the specific design of each. This accounts for the omission by one of what the other relates in full ; and for the aspect in which each presents the incidents and discourses which they both record. When this explanation is overlooked, their records, as we have remarked, will sometimes appear to conflict with one another, and more frequently both will be in some measure unintelligible. We shall find it absolutely necessary to keep this in view in our consideration of the chapters before us, and it is a consequence of overlooking it that so many labored and ingenious efforts to harmonize them have proved unsatisfactory in their results.

On the grounds we have stated, it would be of little importance to the interpretation and application of these predictions, whether we regarded them as two discourses delivered on distinct occasions, or as different versions of the same discourse ; each evangelist recording the portion of it which came within the proper scope of his own treatise, and omitting the parts did not immediately concern those for whom he wrote. But with all the points of similarity both in the discourses and the questions to which Jesus replied, we are constrained to think that they are distinct discourses delivered on different occasions and at separate places. *In Luke* the Lord was standing in the temple, when some spoke of its splendor, as it appeared to a near spectator, adorned with goodly stones and gifts ; and He predicted that ere long it would be so completely laid in ruins that not one stone would be left upon another. *In Matthew* the Lord had left the temple, and from the Mount of Olives which overlooked the temple, the disciples pointed out to Him its vast extent, as though that rendered his prediction incredible ; but He only repeated the prediction : “ Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not

be thrown down." The disciples being familiar with the Old Testament, naturally connected the predicted desolation with what the prophets had foretold of the last tribulation of Jerusalem, which is to usher in the glories of Messiah's kingdom. In Luke we find them asking: "When shall these things be? and what sign shall there be when these things shall come to pass?" In Matthew we find that the Lord's reply in the temple had not removed their perplexity, but had suggested other inquiries; for they ask: "When shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" In His reply to their former question He had spoken of "the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory," and it was about this that they now desired further information. But it is evident that on both occasions they were associating the grand consummation with the destruction of the temple which He had predicted.

In both discourses, therefore, the first object of the Lord was to correct this erroneous impression; and so far, and only so far, the discourses are alike. The disciples, ignorant at that time of the history of the present dispensation, were intent upon the accomplishment of the predicted glory of His kingdom. The Lord foresaw how they would long for His appearing amid the bitter trials that awaited them in His absence; He also foresaw that amid the commotions which should precede the impending destruction of the city and the sanctuary, many pretenders would take advantage of the excitement of the public mind to advance the most blasphemous claims; and He knew that the ardent longings of those who loved His appearing would expose them to the arts of such deceivers. He therefore warns them: "Take heed that ye be not deceived; for many deceivers shall come in my name, saying, 'I am Christ; and the time draweth

near.' Go ye not therefore after them. But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified : for these things must first come to pass : but the end is not by and by." They were not to regard these as the precursors of the judgments which were to usher in His glorious appearing ; for, beyond the destruction of that temple, He foresaw, not the peace and blessedness of the kingdom of God, but a period in which the nations of the earth, unsubdued by the gospel of peace, shall continue to devour one another ; and He knew that through ever-deepening trials a sin-stricken world shall reach the point where signs from heaven shall speak to a waiting Church of the accomplishment of her hopes. "Then," said He unto them, "nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences : and fearful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven." Thus far the two discourses are substantially, almost verbally, identical, but from this point, though they conduct us to the same great issue, the coming of the Son of Man, they reach it by very distinct paths.

We must, therefore, consider them separately ; and, since it stands first in the order of time, we shall first follow the discourse in Luke, which, according to the general design of the book, is designed for the comfort and direction of the Church of Christ as distinguished from believing Israelites. The Lord knew that the infant Church would encounter the world's hatred, and that guilty Jerusalem before its overthrow would be the scene of sanguinary persecution of His followers. For this He prepares their minds, (verses 12-19 :) "But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony.

Settle it, therefore, in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men, for my name's sake. But there shall not a hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls."

The time of the persecution here described must be carefully noted—"before all these," that is, before the appearance of false Christs, and the wars and commotions which He had foretold would precede the impending destruction of the temple. The description itself is a vivid picture of the persecutions which began soon after the memorable day of Pentecost, in which Peter and John bore testimony in the power of the Holy Ghost before the great council of the Jewish nation; Stephen, James, and many others sealed their testimony with their blood; and Paul testified before kings, and even in Cæsar's palace. But the Church was divinely supported through all these sufferings which produced the most blessed results; while the sufferers possessed their souls in patience, calmly relying on the promise of their Lord. Even from the most cruel death, they could look triumphantly to a living Lord and a blessed resurrection.

While the followers of Christ were suffering from the hands which crucified Him, the destruction of the blood-stained Jerusalem was drawing near; and the Lord, anticipating the horrors of its doom, gave His disciples a warning sign by which they might escape from the siege and the subsequent slaughter, (verses 20-24:) "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in

Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them which are in the countries enter therein. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days, for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

We know it as a historical fact that when the Roman army was about to invest Jerusalem, the disciples of Christ, obedient to this warning, fled, and found refuge in Pella, a town beyond Jordan, and, so far as is known, not one of them perished in the siege. The Church of Christ having gone, as Lot went out of Sodom, the days of vengeance settled down on the doomed city. We need not detail the horrors of the siege, of which Josephus gives a sickening picture; nor the prodigious slaughter of the inhabitants; nor tell how the survivors were led captive among all nations, where their descendants remain scattered, as the involuntary witnesses of the truth of Him whom their fathers crucified. The destruction of the city and temple was so complete that one of their own number pitifully demanded: "Where is our beautiful city in which God dwelt? It is rooted up from the foundations, and the only monument that is left is the camp of its destroyers still pitched on its ruins." Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of the Lord, which also echoes the prophecy in Daniel: "And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood."

In Daniel, an interval is clearly marked between the sixtieth and the seventieth week, in which it is said of the

destroyed city: "And unto the end of the war desolations are determined." No intimation is given of the length of this interval, but it is filled with desolation. The Lord marks the same interval, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;" but here in like manner there is nothing to show whether it should be one year or two thousand years. He had previously intimated the general character of these times of desolation: "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences, and fearful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven." And now, having referred to the fulfilling of the times of the Gentiles, He resumes his enumeration of the signs of the last times, at verse 25: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." Nothing is said in this discourse of the place which Jerusalem shall occupy amid these closing tribulations, because the predictions in this discourse are addressed to the Church, and designed for her comfort and guidance. After a general description of the fearful signs, and the terror and the convulsion of nature, the Lord continues: "And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

The Lord is addressing the disciples, and through them the Church directly, but in this last announcement He does not employ the second person of the pronoun; He does not say to His Church: "Then shall *ye see*." He says "then *shall they see* the Son of Man coming in a cloud." The reason of this change of person may be found in the subsequent

verses, (v. 28 :) "And when these things begin to come to pass then look up, and lift up your hands; for your redemption draweth nigh. And He spake to them a parable: Behold the fig-tree and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. And take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged, with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

In the closing admonition, we learn that the faithful and watching disciples shall escape all these calamities, in the midst of which men's hearts shall fail them for fear. And if we ask how shall they escape them, then we are taught that while these vials of wrath are being poured out upon the world, the Church shall stand before the Son of Man. According to Paul's testimony, "we shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord." The disciples are therefore called to rejoice when they see these things begin to come to pass. It is only the beginning of them they shall witness; and they are assured that though the storm from which they shall be sheltered is certain and terrible, it will be brief. We are not told its precise duration, but we are assured that the generation which witnesses its commencement shall witness its close. In Luke we have no account of the state of Jerusalem during

these last calamities and signs, because the discourse, as we have said, is addressed to the Church, which shall be removed before all these things come to pass. And thus we learn why the Lord says, "then shall *they* see the Son of Man coming on a cloud," an event which shall come like a snare upon all them that dwell upon the earth. The redeemed will not be the spectators of it, but the associates of His triumph—"When He who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory"—or as we have it in Zechariah: "And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." Upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth it will come as an awful surprise. But the expectation of the Church is not to stand amid a trembling world, and see the Lord coming in flaming fire, but to be caught up to meet Him in the air, and to come with Him to share His victory and His crown.

In turning to the discourse in Matt. xxiv., we must bear in mind that it is addressed to different persons, or rather to the disciples as representatives of a different class. We have already noticed that the first four verses are the same in both discourses. In both the disciples are warned against the pretenders who should take advantage of the popular excitement preceding the overthrow of Jerusalem. And they were taught that the impending destruction was not the predicted crisis at which the Lord shall appear in glory; but, beyond that, there was a period during which the weary earth shall still groan under the calamities of war, famine, and pestilence, and the close of which shall be distinguished by startling prodigies and supernatural signs. In the discourse recorded by Luke, the Lord turns back from this point to follow His Church through its early persecutions, and to warn them how they might escape the horrors of the siege of Jerusalem. But in the discourse recorded

by Matthew there is no allusion to that first persecution of the Church, which preceded all that is spoken of in the four introductory verses. But, having spoken of the wars, famine, and pestilence which afflict the world's close, and the earthquakes in divers places, He adds: "All these are but the beginning of sorrows." The Church in Luke was admonished to rejoice when they saw the beginning, and was encouraged by the hope of escaping all these things. But the persons for whom the discourse in Matthew is designed shall be exposed to them; and therefore in Matthew we have many particulars of the troubles which Luke merely mentions in the most general terms, (v. 9.) "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

Here is a time of persecution and trial, but how different in every respect from that described in the former discourse! The persecution in Luke is predicted as taking place before the siege of Jerusalem, and before the rumors of war and commotions and the appearance of those pretenders who took advantage of the popular excitement preceding the siege. The description in that Gospel precisely suits the persecutions recorded in the acts of the apostles—in its character, circumstances, and blessed results. For it is eminently true of the persecution of the infant Church that persecution turned to them for a testimony, and, as it has been expressed, "the blood of the martyrs proved the seed of the Church." With what power did the Lord speak through the persecuted in the presence of kings, councils, and assemblies of

the people? And amidst the desertion of friends, in the loss of all things dear, and the endurance of all things terrible—in the very hour and article of the most cruel death, they displayed a spirit for which the world's word 'heroism' is a poor expression.

The persecution predicted in Matthew occurs at a very different time. The sufferings of those concerned in it begin just where the sufferings of the Church close. Instead of saying, "Before all these things," and turning back to the history of the Church before the siege of Jerusalem, the Lord speaks of the beginning of sorrows which gather over the world's close, carrying us forward to these things from which the Church shall be accounted worthy to escape. While the infant Church was only purified and invigorated by the storm, here we see distraction, alienation, mutual betrayal, and apostasy. Instead of a Church triumphing in felt security in the very jaws of danger, we have here only assurance to the individual believer, the few faithful among the many faithless: "But he that shall endure unto the end shall be saved."

There is, indeed, a faithful remnant amidst all the treachery and defections of that time, for whom the Lord even then has an important work, (v. 14 :) "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. When ye, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel, the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth let him understand,) then let them which be in Judea flee unto the mountains; let him which is on the house-top not come down to take any thing out of his house: neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days. But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath-day: for then

shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time ; no, nor ever shall be."

It would scarcely be considered as straining a word if we were to find a proof that those for whom the admonitions in this passage are intended were not the apostles or Christians of the first age, in the expression, "whoso readeth let him understand," whether it was spoken by the Lord, or is a clause inserted under the direction of the Spirit. Nor is it without interest to observe how the Lord prepares comfort and counsel for a remnant in that remote age which the Church is to hand down to them, like those prophets of old who knew that not unto themselves, but to us, they did minister the things that are made available for our counsel and consolation. It might appear to be straining words to say that the preaching of this Gospel of the kingdom is something distinct from preaching the Gospel of the grace of God in this dispensation. Yet it is not unworthy of notice that the precise phrase "Gospel of the kingdom" does not occur, except with reference to the proclamation that the kingdom of God was at hand, by John the Baptist, or by the Lord and His Apostles during His public ministry. It is not without interest to be assured that this same proclamation shall be resumed when Elias comes to restore all things, before the glorious appearing of the King ; and to know that the final proclamation will not, like the former, be confined to the towns and villages of Judea, but shall extend to all nations. As in the days of the Apostles, when persecution scattered the disciples, they went everywhere preaching the Word, so at last the dispersion of these few from Jerusalem will be the means by which this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached among all nations. For it is to be observed that this is the reason given for their hasty flight—"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation," etc.

The Lord has work for them to do, and therefore they must escape from danger and death, in which otherwise they might have been permitted to gain the martyr's crown. When their mission is accomplished, all will be over; then shall the end come.

It is passing strange that the warning sign of flight given to these faithful witnesses amid the apostasy and the persecutions which immediately precede the end, should ever have been confounded with the warning given to the Church in the previous discourse, as though they could possibly refer to the same event. No circumstances could be more distinct from each other than the circumstances of these two flights. In the former discourse the Church was warned to flee when they saw Jerusalem compassed about with armies, in order that they might escape the horrors of the siege and the carnage in which it closed, or the captivity into which the survivors were led. But in this there is no thought of a siege or any of its terrible consequences. The signal for flight is not the investment of the city, but the erection of the idol of the desolater in the holy places. Attempts have been made to explain the abomination of desolation as referring to the standards of the Roman army, with their idolatrous emblems, but it cannot be pretended that these are the abominations of desolation spoken of by Daniel, the prophet. And if it were granted that the expression might be applied to the Roman standards, still the sign in the former discourse refers to the commencement of the siege when flight might be both desirable and practicable; but the Roman standards could only approach the holy place after the siege was at an end and the city in the hands of an insolent and unsparring conqueror. It was then too late to think of flight.

In Daniel, the last heptade of Israel's temporal history is thus characterized: "And he (that is, the Prince that shall

come) shall confirm a covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, (*margin*,) and upon the battlements shall be the idols of the desolater,) even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolater." In Luke, there is no reference to the events of this week, because the Church is there addressed, and it shall be removed from the earth before they transpire. But in the discourse recorded in Matthew, we find ourselves dealing with the very events of that eventful heptade.

In Daniel, we find the seven years divided into two periods by the action of the prince, who, in the middle of the week, treacherously violated his covenant. Of the condition of the Jews, during the first three years and a half, we have no description in Daniel, except that we may conclude that they enjoyed some measure of peace and liberty of worship so long as the prince saw meet to conceal his designs beneath the mask of friendship. In the Apocalypse, we have very distinct reference to this division of the seven years. Regarding the first half, the Lord says: "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sack-cloth." That is, three years and a half. Thus, when the Church is caught up to meet the Lord in the air, another class of witnesses are provided for a new exigency; and we know that many among the tribes of Israel shall receive their testimony of Jesus, and suffer persecution and martyrdom for the truth. This first half of the week—the thousand two hundred and threescore days of the two witnesses—is the period of the persecution, treachery, and apostasy of which the Lord warns the faithful Jews. At the close of that period, we are told: "And when they shall have fin-

ished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." This is the first overt act by which the potentate symbolized by the beast appears in his true character. Hitherto he had endeavored to accomplish his ends by flatteries. Now he throws off all disguise, sets aside the national worship of the Jews, and erects an image of himself which all are required to worship under the penalty of death for disobedience. Thus, in the words of Paul, "he exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." We are told that "power was given unto him to continue forty and two months"—the last half of the seven years.

The apostate Jews shall bow down before the image of the beast—the idol of the desolater. Idol-worship stands prominent in the Old Testament descriptions of the crowning guilt and misery of the Jews. The Lord spoke a parable of a man out of whom the unclean spirit went, and afterward taking to himself seven spirits, he returned, and the last state of that man was worse than the first. "*Even so shall it be with this wicked generation.*" That people so prone to idolatry, in past ages, shall yet be dragged into the lowest and besotted of all idolatries. From this pollution believing Jews are warned to flee, so soon as this idol stands in the holy place, and, scattered over the earth, they will preach the Gospel of the kingdom for a witness among all nations.

The period which succeeds, in the Lord's description of it, is precisely the forty and two months of Antichrist's blasphemous career. The false christs and false prophets, "showing great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect," corresponds with the Apocalyptic description of the false prophet, "who doeth great won,

ders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by means of the miraeles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." The description of the sufferings of that time has no adequate fulfilment in the horrors of the siege of Jerusalem. The Lord not only said that there had been no such time of tribulation "since the beginning of the world to this time," but he adds, "no, nor ever shall be;" consequently, this must be the very time spoken of in Dan. xii. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great power that standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time. And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Accordingly the Lord says, (v. 29 :) "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Thus, at that time, Daniel's people shall be delivered.

The incidents here described, are those given in the discourse recorded by Luke, only that, in accordance with the design of the Gospel by Matthew, every thing here is viewed in its relations to the Jews. The preliminary signs are the same as those given by Joel, as introducing the day when the Lord shall utter His voice from Jerusalem. When the sign of the Son of Man appears in heaven, we are told "then

shall all the tribes of the earth (more correctly, of the land) mourn," which corresponds with Zechariah: "In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon, in the Valley of Megiddon; and the land shall mourn, every family apart." Again, we are told that, after the coming of the Son of Man, "He shall send out His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather His elect (the chosen of Israel) from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other." This gathering is celebrated by the prophets under every variety of image, and, from the parallel passages that crowd upon us, it is difficult to select. Thus saith the Lord by Isaiah: "Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people, and they shall bring my sons in their arms, and my daughters shall be carried on their shoulders." "And so," to use the words of Paul, "all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."

There are many important points in these discourses, which must be omitted in this general view, which is offered rather as pointing the way to their true exposition, than as the exposition itself. This object may be further promoted by a recapitulation, first, of the course of the Church, as predicted in Luke. The Lord warns His disciples that the then impending desolation of the temple was not to usher in the millennial glory; for after the destruction of the city and sanctuary, there remained a period of bitter conflict and sorrow, ending in judgment upon an ungodly world. After this general warning, He turns back to the early days of the Church, and teaches them to expect a season of severe persecution, in which Jews and Gentiles would make common

cause against them. In this trial of their faith, he promises to uphold them, and assures them of the blessed results of it. The fulfilment of all this is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. By the persecution of the Church, the Jews filled up the measure of their iniquity, and God brought the Roman army against Jerusalem. The disciples, following the warning of the Lord in this discourse, escaped the horrors of the siege and the carnage in which it ended. The city was laid in ruins, the inhabitants were slaughtered, and the remnant carried into captivity; and from that time to the present, Jerusalem has been trodden down of the Gentiles, and will continue to be so until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. Then the judgments and signs of the last days will begin their course. The beginning of them will be the time of the Church's deliverance." The Lord will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught together in clouds, and so shall we be ever with the Lord." They shall thus escape all these things that shall come to pass. And, while the hearts of men are failing them for fear of the threatening of judgments that gather over the earth, she shall stand secure in the presence of her Lord. When He comes forth to execute judgment, those who have thus been gathered to Him shall come with Him—the sharers of the glory on which a guilty world shall look with terror and dismay.

Next we briefly recapitulate the predicted dealings of God with believing Jews as distinct from the Church, as recorded in Matthew. Even in Israel's most degenerate days, there were a few "Israelites indeed," the children of Abraham by faith as well as by blood, who are kept constantly in view by the prophets. From the day of Pentecost to the

day of our gathering together unto Him, the chosen of Israel are merged in the Church, where there is neither Jew nor Gentile. But, on the removal of the Church, the reorganization of a Jewish state, and the reestablishment of their national worship in the temple at Jerusalem, they will again be seen in their proper national character. Their trials begin precisely where the trials of the Church end, at a time of which the Lord says, in Luke, "When these things begin to come to pass," and in Matthew, "All these are the beginning of sorrow." This time extends over seven years, as we learn in Daniel. During the first three years and a half, those Jews who receive the testimony of Jesus will suffer persecution, but, instead of the blessed results of the persecution predicted in Luke, it will be followed by alienation, treachery, and apostasy, though a faithful few will endure to the end.

At the end of three years and a half, Antichrist will throw off the mask of friendship, under which he shall first seek to compass his blasphemous designs. He will violently abolish the temple service, assume the prerogatives of Deity, and claim to be the only object of worship among men. Believers are warned to flee from his power and the pollution of his reign, so soon as they see his image set up in the holy place, and, in their dispersion, proclaim everywhere the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. The career of this monster of iniquity will extend over the last three years and a half of Israel's temporal history, during which the Jews will debase themselves by worshipping him, and shall endure unexampled affliction under his merciless despotism. The wrath of God will fall heavily upon the earth, which shall then have arrived at the culmination of all its ungodliness and guilt. And just when men are in the full tide of iniquity they will be startled by the awful signs which are the imme-

diatc precursors of the appearing of the long-rejected Messiah. In the extremity of anguish, remorse, and terror, the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall behold His approach. "For His feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem in the East;" the spot from which He ascended when a cloud received Him out of the sight of His disciples, will be that which His feet shall touch when He alights from the cloud-chariot. He will make a speedy and awful end of Antichrist and his adherents, and will there gather His scattered ones with the saved at Jerusalem. Those who fled to escape the corruption of idolatry—all the faithful ones, wherever scattered—shall be brought to share the joy, when it shall be said: "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem, for the Lord hath comforted His people. He hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."

THE MISSION OF JESUS TO THE JEWISH NATION.

THE great purpose of God in the salvation of man, the true position of the Church of Christ, and, we may add, the true scope and meaning of the Scriptures, whether of the Old or the New Testament, cannot be understood, unless the proper place of Israel and their relations to the whole scheme of grace be known and recognized. The history of that people is not a mere chapter in the unfolding of the plan, as though they had arisen, served a temporary purpose, and then passed away. From the first, God had His chosen people in view. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." So that, as has been remarked, "even the profane history of nations centres around it." In all ages God made good His assurance: "I will bless them that bless thee." Universal empire could not be given to a Gentile monarch, until Israel had forfeited all their privileges, as at a later day we are informed, "through them full salvation is come unto the Gentiles." And we know that, so far from God's purposes concerning Israel being accomplished, and that nation, being finally cast aside as having served its purpose, all Israel shall be saved, and shall occupy the most important place in the age to come, as the objects of God's especial favor, and the channel of blessings to all the earth.

But we desire at present to direct attention more particularly to the mission of Jesus, at His first coming to that people as their Messiah, the promised seed of Abraham and of David. There are very many passages in the history of His earthly life which are utterly confounding and inexplicable, and, in fact, the whole character of His public ministry will be misapprehended, if we fail to recognize His peculiar relations to His own nation. These relations are made very prominent in the prophetic announcements of His birth. Thus, the Angel said to Mary: "The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever." He was born King of the Jews; and in this character He was welcomed by the faithful of that day, who were waiting for the consolation of Israel.

Before he entered upon His public ministry, His messengers went before Him, proclaiming the kingdom of God as nigh at hand, a proclamation which He Himself takes up in His personal ministrations; and when He sent forth His apostles to the towns and villages of Judea, it was to make the same proclamation, charging them strictly to confine their mission to Judea, on the ground that "He was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." He appeared as the rightful heir of David's throne, claiming the allegiance of His own people. God, who had so often in the past found occasion, in Israel's ingratitude, to magnify the riches of His forbearance, was visiting them again with mercy, according to this promise; and the crowning proof of this grace furnished the crowning proof of their unworthiness. He who knew the end from the beginning was not taken by surprise when they finally rejected Him; nevertheless, He offered Himself to them in good faith as their King, failing in no tenderness of persuasion, and in no faithfulness of warning. He was revealed in grace and power as fully equipped for the estab-

lishment of His kingdom, and the bestowment of all its promised blessedness. His miracles of help and healing, which had no limits except in the preparation of the people to receive the blessing, attested His ability to remove the curse and destroy the works of the Devil. And from first to last it will be found that all His public teaching and His mighty works have this aspect of His mission continually in view; nor does He speak a single word or perform a single act that is inconsistent with it. He does indeed privately instruct His disciples regarding His anticipated rejection, and privately gives them instructions which might prepare them for the place they were to occupy in a dispensation which was to follow. But to the Jews He presents Himself in one attitude, and says not a word which would impair their responsibility in dealing with His claims upon their allegiance, until after His formal entry into Jerusalem, in accordance with the predictions of their Scriptures, as their King, and after their formal and public rejection of Him, He testified: "The kingdom shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits of it." Up to this time, if He spoke any thing in the hearing of the Jews which implied their rejection of Him, or related to a subsequent dispensation of grace, it was in parables, which sometimes he explained to His disciples in private.

The most convincing proof of the correctness of this view of the national relations and design of our Lord's earthly ministry, may be found in the record we have of the manner in which, in three instances, He extended His grace to those who were not of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, instances which might have been expected to furnish a refutation of our position. The cases to which we refer are those of the woman of Samaria, the centurion whose servant He healed, and the Syrophenician woman, out of whose daughter

He cast a demon. Amidst all else that is remarkable and instructive in the record of these cases, this is not to be overlooked, that in every one of them there is a recognition of Israel's place and calling, before these foreigners can receive a blessing through Israel's King.

The woman of Samaria, by the questions she proposed to Him who sat on Jacob's well, wearied with His journey, evinced a preparation of heart to renounce the God-dishonoring claims of her people, and to acquiesce in the sovereign purpose of Jehovah in the calling of Israel. And her subsequent recognition of Jesus as the Messiah, attested her acquiescence in His claim that "salvation is of the Jews." In the case of the centurion, there is a recognition of the calling of Israel, and an acquiescence in the sovereign choice of Jehovah, at least equally marked. For the ground upon which the centurion's claims upon the compassion of the Lord were based, is thus stated by those who came to plead for him: "He is worthy for whom he should do this, for he loveth our nation, and hath built us a synagogue." The whole bearing of the man expresses his own humble sense of his true place, in relation to the King of Israel.

But the most remarkable instance of all is that of the woman of Canaan, who came out of the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, seeking help for her daughter, who was grievously vexed with a devil. We cannot for a moment doubt that when Jesus retired, grieved and worn, from the petty persecutions of the leaders of His own nation, His heart yearned to meet that afflicted mother, whose sorrow and whose faith His omniscience discerned afar off. And whatever may be said of His purpose to try her faith, there is something inexplicable in the restraint of His wonted tenderness; and something altogether inconsistent with His whole character, in the seeming harshness and even cruelty of His treatment,

which is not redeemed even by the gracious issue of it, if you view that trial as arbitrary, and not absolutely necessary in His official position.

Look at her position and at His. He the King of the Jews; she the representative of a race which had been the most bitter and unrelenting of the enemies of God's chosen people and of God. She appeals to Him as the Son of David; but what can the Son of David have to do with the accursed race of Canaan? It is in reply to the entreaties of His Apostles that He says: "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." And when, having heard this avowal, she renews her plea, by the very act assenting to His true claims, He replies, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs;" she hears in this not a personal insult, outraging her misery, but a meet vindication of the God of Israel from the lips of her King, addressed to her only as the representative of a race upon whom the just sentence of God rests. In her reply she too vindicates God, and in all humility takes her proper place as the recipient of a blessing which the true heirs of it were rejecting, wasting their bread. Every barrier to the free flow of His pent-up compassion was removed; and without dishonor to the God of Israel, or inconsistency with His proper mission, the word of grace can now be uttered: "O woman, great is thy faith! be it unto thee even as thou wilt!" We have but glanced at a truth which will be found to furnish a key to much that is otherwise mysterious in the life and teaching of Jesus. "He came to his own, and his own received him not." Sublime climax of Divine Mercy! Sad climax of human ingratitude! After all that was past, the kingdom of God was preached, and the violent took it by force, the wicked husbandmen said: "This is the heir: come let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours." This is the summing up of the mission of Jesus to the Jewish nation.

ON THE EPISTLES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES IN ASIA.

INTRODUCTORY EXPOSITION OF REV. I. 1-6.

It is important, in attempting to interpret the Epistles, addressed by the Lord Jesus Christ, our great Redeemer, to the seven Churches of Asia, to consider certain preliminary questions having a bearing on their import. The author, design, occasion, and circumstances, of a communication, in any case, must not be overlooked, if we would fully understand its meaning. The consideration of these in their present application, will lead to interesting and valuable truth.

The book in which these Epistles are found is entitled, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." It claims, therefore, to be from the highest source, and, as such, to deserve our unbounded confidence. Other infallible communications have been made by Him who is emphatically "the light" and "the truth," "the faithful and true witness." It is but one among many—properly speaking, *a* Revelation—yet by common consent, it has been regarded *the* Revelation pre-eminently, the last, the greatest, and the most wonderful.

The question of its authenticity has been long and often agitated. No Book, in the whole volume of the Scriptures, has been so pertinaciously subjected to severe scrutiny. Yet has it survived every attack made upon it, and is acknowledged, at this day, as it has been in ages past, and by

the general voice of the Church of God, to be an authentic revelation of the mind and will of Jesus Christ. The internal and external evidence establish its divine authenticity so demonstratively, that, as Archdeacon Woodhouse has shown, "bringing this prophetic book to the test proposed by Michaelis—by far the most formidable opponent of its claims to a divine origin—we shall be obliged to confess its indubitable right to that place in the canon of sacred Scripture, which the ancient Fathers of the Church assigned to it, and which the reformers in the Protestant Churches have, with mature deliberation, confirmed."*

The same evidence proves it to be the genuine production of the Apostle John, whose name it bears. From Ignatius, Papias, and Polycarp, the last of the contemporaries of the Apostle, who saw and conversed with him, down through "the honored names of Justin Martyr, the narrator of the Lyonesse martyrdoms, Irenæus, Melito, Theophilus, Apollonius, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian," of the first two centuries of the Christian era, and subsequently, an unbroken chain of evidence has been preserved, proving its penman to have been the beloved disciple of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The same evidence establishes its origin to have been in the 849th year of Rome, or the 96th year of the Christian era. Domitian, the Roman Emperor, and the last of the twelve Cæsars, was the great political ruler and head of the world, at that time civilized and known. His supremacy was absolute and universal, and he was then engaged in a bitter persecution of the Christians in his empire. A loftier Prince than this proud sovereign—one who claims a much wider dominion—was looking, with deep interest and solicitude, upon the affairs of this world. He had died to redeem

* Woodhouse's Review of St. John, p. 133.

it to God. It had been given Him by the great God of heaven and earth, the Father Almighty, as His possession. He had left here the memorials of His presence, and of the claims He had asserted to the universal sovereignty of earth. He had unfolded the general scheme of His conquests, and predicted the final result of the war, which he had proclaimed, and was waging, against the princes and kings of earth, and all who rebel against the authority conferred on Him by God, His Father. He had commissioned his Apostles "to go into all the earth and preach His Gospel," that is, announce the good news of the coming of His glorious kingdom. Having done so, He had ascended to heaven, returned to His seat at the right hand of God the Father, assumed the providential management of this and all other worlds, and was, and still is prosecuting the great plan of Heaven for destroying, in this world, the dominion of the devil, and establishing His own most glorious reign upon the ruins of the kingdoms and dynasties of earth.

John, the beloved disciple, yet lingered among men. Far advanced in years, he had outlived his apostolic contemporaries, and was the last of the living witnesses whom the Lord Christ had chosen for Himself. This honored servant of the Prince of the kings of the earth, notwithstanding his great age, was suffering as an exile on a barren island, condemned, according to the early traditionary history, to work in the mines. In this he was but partaking of the afflictions and persecutions under which the Christian Churches were then suffering. The proud monarch of the Roman world accounted it sedition to assert and advocate the claims of Jesus Christ to the supremacy of earth, and to the honors and worship due to God. It is not at all surprising, therefore, under such circumstances, that He, who had often sent His prophets, and made revelations of His will concerning

the interests of His Church, and the affairs of those kingdoms and sovereigns that persecuted it, should manifest His care for His own cause and people, and communicate sufficient of His mind and will, and of the scheme of His providence, to inspire them with hope and confidence as to the result of their tribulations, and to minister to their consolation and patience in the endurance of their tribulations.

It has been the way of Providence, from the beginning, to keep His Church apprised of those great events, in the movements and history of nations, which have a direct and serious bearing on its interests. He that lived, and toiled, and suffered, and died on earth, to secure the salvation of His Church and the establishment of His kingdom, has not been so etherealized by the process of His resurrection and ascension into heaven, as to lose or intermit, in the least degree, His wakeful solicitude and watchful care in reference to them.

In the title of this book, which is comprehended in the first and second verses, its authorship, its design, the manner of its communication, and the person employed to communicate it to the Churches, are all distinctly stated. The Lord Jesus Christ revealed to John the Apostle, by the ministry of an angel, and for the benefit of His servants, a view of "things which must come to pass in a short time." The idea is not, as Dr. Hammond, and others with him, have thought, that the events predicted in this book should all transpire within a short period. For the word translated "come to pass"—*yiverai*—means, strictly and properly, be born, begin to be, or arise. At no distant period from that in which the revelation was made to John, should the scheme of Providence, which Jesus Christ, by His angel, disclosed to him, begin to unfold itself. So important in themselves are the contents of this book, and so admirable and happy should it be

in its influence and results on those who pondered them, that the Apostle appends to the very title a note of commendation to such: "Blessed is he who readeth, and they who hear the words of the prophecy, and who keep the things which are written therein, for the time is near," (v. 3.) This judgment is directly the reverse of that of many, both ministers and private professors of religion, who account this book a mysterious and perplexing part of Scripture, and suffer it to pass neglected, without study and often without even being read. It was the practice of the primitive Church, when copies of this and other books of Scripture were scarce, to have them publicly read, for the benefit of those who could not possess them for their own private perusal, a practice that should never have been allowed to fall into disuse. To encourage the reading and study of the book, John affirms that a blessing should attend it. It will comfort the afflicted, enlighten the ignorant, encourage in tribulation, inspire with hope, and prepare Christians, who are called in this life to suffer for the sake of Jesus Christ, to endure manfully to the end. It pointed not wholly to a far distant period, but close even upon the time of those then living on the earth, in the Apostle's days, would the wondrous scenes of divine Providence, described in this book, begin to be developed. At no period since can it be said that there were not things predicted in this book whose accomplishment would be near. It is so even now; events predicted in it are at this time transpiring, and others remain close at hand to be accomplished. There is no book, therefore, so invaluable to the entire Church; for it is the key by which the mysteries of Providence in every age may be unlocked.

In the fourth verse we have the superscription or address of the epistles and book generally "to the seven churches in

Asia." The Asia here named is not the entire continent thus designated; nor Asia Minor in its widest extent, including Cilicia and other districts beyond Taurus; nor Asia Minor in its lesser extent, embracing only the provinces within the Taurus; but Lydian Asia, or as it was called in the Apostles' days, Proconsular Asia, extending along the coast from Pergamos to Caria, and thence inland to the Phrygian frontier.* For it is within this range of country that the churches named are situated. Of these Ephesus was chief.

Why the number of seven churches was selected from the rest we shall have occasion in a future lecture more particularly to inquire. The salutation is in the ordinary apostolic style, breathing a prayer that all the blessings of divine grace, so essential to their peace and happiness, might be imparted to them, (v. 4 to 5.)

The ever blessed Trinity are distinctly recognized as the great source of all these divine and gracious blessings. The eternal Father is designated as He "which is and which was and which is to come," a periphrasis for the Eternal, which was not only common among the Hebrews, but which is found in certain verses of Orpheus, alluded to by Plato, the Greek philosopher, and cited by Daubuz.†

*Ζεὺς πρῶτος γενετο, Ζεὺς ἕξαιτο Αρχικέραννος
Ζεὺς κεφαλῇ, Ζεὺς μεσσα, Διὸς ὁ ἐν πάντα τέτυκται.*

The third person of the Godhead is designated by the phrase "the seven spirits which are before His throne." The number seven was the emblem of fulness and perfection, and the One Holy Spirit in his various offices is here described as sevenfold on this account. The second person is described last, because in the vision which John had He

* Acts xvi. 6.

† De legibus, iv. p. 73.

was the principal personage, of whose person and character a much fuller description was reserved. A threefold title is given to Him.

In designating Him the Apostle calls Him, first, "the faithful and true witness," intending to assure the readers and hearers of the prophecy of this book that His word is entitled to the fullest and most implicit confidence. He is so styled prophetically by Isaiah,* and such He was in reality, during His entire mortal life, even to His last dying moments. A second title is, "the first begotten of the dead," of like import with "the first fruits from the dead,"† denoting the fact that He both rose from the dead and became the pledge of the resurrection of all that die in faith. A third title is "the Prince or Ruler of the kings of the earth," denoting Him as the great almighty providential Governor among the nations, and more especially the destined Sovereign of this world, who, with His tributary kings and princes, should maintain the glorious reign of heaven over it. These titles describe the blessed Redeemer in a threefold respect—in His suffering state, having taken upon Him the form of a servant, and come as "the faithful and true witness," to testify what God had directed Him; in His triumphant state, having by his resurrection obtained the victory over sin and death, and risen, "the first fruits," or "first born from the dead," the pledge of victory for all his faithful followers; and in His exalted state, as crowned "Prince of the kings of the earth." In the two first characters He has finished His work. In the last He is yet to be made manifest, and it forms the great burden of this book.

To this description is added the Doxology, or glorification, which, not unfrequently in the apostolic epistles, suc-

* lv. 4.

† 1 Cor. xv. 23.

ceeds the salutation. It is worthy of remark, however, that it is mainly, if not exclusively, addressed to the Son, as the great Author of and Agent in the vision which John had. Three topics pertaining to His work are selected as the matter of praise. The first is the love He bore to mankind. It was this that kept and sustained Him in the execution of His great commission, the redemption of His people; the second is the ablution of our sins, which, by the shedding of His precious blood, He has produced; and the third, His consecrating or establishing them in a sacerdotal kingdom. "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests (literally a kingdom of priests) to God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." The promise and prediction of a kingdom prepared for the servants of Jesus Christ, who are destined to live and reign with Him for ever, may be traced in some form or other, from the very beginning to the end of the sacred Scriptures. See Ex. xix. 5; Is. lxi. 6; Matt. xxv. 34; Luke xii. 32; 2 Tim. ii. 12; 1 Cor. iv. vi. 2, 3; 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9.

Let us learn, 1. The veritable existence of Jesus Christ and the certainty of His personal visible appearance in this world.

2. That those who suffer for His sake are compensated with fuller, richer consolations and manifestations of Himself.

3. The value and importance attached to this portion of the sacred Scriptures.

4. The confidence with which an interest in Christ is here asserted, and the grateful emotions felt and expressed toward Him.

PARABLES IN MATT. XIII.

THE HIDDEN TREASURE—THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE, AND THE FISHING-NET.

THE popular interpretation of the parables of "the mustard-seed" and "the leaven hid in three measures of meal" is accommodated to the popular expectation of the triumph of the Church in the absence of her Lord, and the gradual transformation of the world which "lieth in the wicked one," into a Christian world by the preaching of the Gospel. Yet, if for the present we leave these two parables out of view, it is impossible to reconcile such an expectation with the plain interpretation of the parables of "the sower" and "the tares among the wheat," about which it would seem there can be little controversy. For as to the first of these, it is all but unanimously acknowledged that the view it presents of the varied results of preaching the Gospel has been verified in all ages. Even those expositors who regard "the sower who went forth to sow" as the Son of Man, in accordance with the Lord's own interpretation of the sower in another parable, do not intend to limit the application of the parable to the period of His personal ministry on earth, but mean to intimate that He is, in reality, the sower still, while He employs His servants as the instruments in accomplishing His work. They also regard the variety of situations in which the seed falls as descriptive of the reception with which the word meets among different classes of hear-

ers, and they point out nothing in the parable which limits its application to any age, and do not suggest that there is so much as a hint that a time will come when that which is represented by the seed that fell by the wayside, that which fell on stony ground and that which fell among thorns, will not be found in the humbling experience of every faithful minister of the Word.

But still more conclusive is the lesson of "the tares among the wheat." It is universally acknowledged that this parable pointed to a time when the Church of Christ should be corrupted by the introduction of false brethren, and that the prediction was fulfilled at a very early period of the Church's history, even under the eye of the Apostles themselves. Their epistles to the Churches afford abundant proof of this. Whenever this prediction was fulfilled, this much is certain, that, from that time till the end of the world, it shall never again be completely purged, and at last the purgation shall be effected, not by the power of the word or the instrumentality of those who are called to watch over its purity, but by the direct interposition of the Lord, and the infliction of judgment on those who are represented by the tares which shall be bound in bundles and burned.

In harmony with these plain predictions, we have claimed that, while the growth of the tree from the mustard-seed prefigures the wonderful prosperity of the visible Church from its outwardly insignificant commencement, it is only the expansion and prosperity of a Church previously corrupted, which in its prosperity becomes the resort and lurking-place of the enemies of the true Church, who in vain attempted to destroy it. If the expansion of the visible Church is that which is meant by the growth of the tree, then we claim that the history of its progress thus far substantiates our view of its condition. And we may justly claim that no future ex-

pansion of that which is incurably corrupt can, in any measure, meet the anticipations of those who are looking for a temporal millennium. If the maturity of that tree represents the glorious expansion of a Church which shall fill the earth with blessing, then it must be something very different from that which now claims to be the Church, or that which calls itself the religious world; and in that case we must conclude that the seed has not yet germinated.

We have claimed also that in harmony with the explicit predictions of the Lord, the parable of "the leaven hid in three measures of meal" cannot represent the pervading and transforming influence of divine truth, operating either in the Church or in the world. For if in any such sense either the Church or the world should be wholly leavened, then the view of the state of affairs in the Church till the end of the world represented by the tares and wheat growing together until harvest, would be proved to be erroneous. Since the Lord cannot be mistaken as to the result, and as in all His teaching He must be consistent with Himself, we are shut up to the conclusion that leaven here, as in every other part of Scripture, means not truth, but corruption, and that its slow but sure progress until the whole is leavened, only intimates at large what an Apostle intimates in a more limited sphere, when he warns the Churches of the sure results of tolerated error, either doctrinal or practical—"a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

In as far as the disciples understood these parables as teaching them the results they were to expect from a ministry in which they were to suffer the loss of all things, the impression upon their minds must have been discouraging to the last degree. Yet it would have been unworthy of the Lord if He had permitted His servants to go forth unwarned of what they might expect in His service, or to go

cherishing fond anticipations of success which were never to be realized. Nothing is more striking than the Lord's fidelity with His disciples as to all the consequences of discipleship and the results of their most disinterested labors in this world. They are first of all summoned to forsake all that they have—to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Him. They had only to look at His course to know what theirs should be. Nothing which they can ever be called to endure need surprise them in such a service, and nothing could be more unlike following Him than a career of prosperity, honor, and triumph on earth. The history of Christianity shows that just in proportion as they have followed closely in His footsteps, they have needed all the support which can be derived from the assurances of all-sufficient grace amid the trials of which He warned them, and every smile of prosperity has been the price of some treachery to Him or some conformity to the world that hates Him.

When the faithful servant, going forth bearing precious seed, meets the discouragement of inattention on the part of so large a proportion of his hearers—when he sees those who did run well hindered, or that which at first promised an abundant harvest choked by the cares or the pleasures of life—when he sees the proofs not only of continued corruption, but growing degeneracy in the churches—when he looks over the whole field within which in different ages the trophies of the Gospel have been won, and sees how darkness broods over many regions which were once illumined by the light of a pure Gospel—and when at the close of eighteen centuries, he reckons up the humbling results of this dispensation of God's marvellous grace, his soul may be cast down within him, yet, when he turns to the Scriptures, he must own that this is precisely what the Lord taught us to expect. The fact itself is no less sad, but the effect is

very different from what it would have been if we had been led to expect a different issue, or had even been left without a warning of the truth.

While the Lord is faithful in His warnings of what His true servants may expect in this world, He is also very gracious and kind in the consolations with which He always accompanies His warnings. These consolations in the main carry our thoughts forward to a triumph which is yet to be achieved, a rest which is hereafter to be enjoyed, and a glory which is in sure reserve for us. But the consolation is not all drawn from the future, though its full realization is to be found in the future. It is, for example, a blessed truth that we are now the sons of God, though the manifestation of the sons of God and the enjoyment of their inheritance is yet future. It is a blessed truth that we are now kept by the power of God through faith, and we know that far more is He that is for us than all that can be against us, though that for which we are kept is a salvation yet to be revealed. We know and believe the love God hath to us, and it is blessed to know that the love which spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, will with Him also freely give us all things; blessed to know that we are now held and sheltered in the embrace of everlasting and unchanging love which will at last set us beside Christ upon the throne of His glory. But it is noticeable that the consolations as well as the warnings all tend to keep our affections estranged from earth, and forbid us in any way to identify our hopes with the seen and the perishing. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are unseen are eternal." In harmony with this is the

consolation which our Lord provided as an antidote to the discouragement with which His weak ones might have looked upon the sad prospect He had presented of the results of their ministry and the course of the dispensation in which that ministry was to be exercised.

The parables which we have thus far considered were spoken in the hearing of the multitude off the shore of the sea of Galilee. But after He had sent the multitude away, and had gone into the house with His disciples, He spoke two parables which were designed to assure them that, in the midst of all apparent failures and disappointments, there was an object on the earth on which His heart was set with devoted affection, and a purpose of love to be accomplished which He could never abandon.

The first of these is thus expressed: "Again, the kingdom of God is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found he hideth; and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field." According to the common interpretation of this parable, the treasure is supposed to mean salvation, and the act of the man selling all that he has, and buying the field, is supposed to represent the manner in which a sinner obtains salvation. To this interpretation we object that, however men may have differed as to the meaning of the phrase kingdom of God, there is no interpretation of it which would justify this application of it, and no use of the phrase elsewhere which countenances the supposition that the kingdom of God is like any aspect of a sinner's conversion. But if the parable was designed to show how a sinner obtains salvation, then surely of all the others it ought to have been spoken in the hearing of the multitude, rather than in the retirement of the house, with those who were already His disciples.

We find a still weightier objection in the circumstance

that the treasure is represented as hid in a field when it is found by the man, and that he buys, not the treasure, but the field which contains it. The weightiest objection of all, and one that of itself is fatal to the interpretation in question, is the consideration that the sinner does not purchase salvation with his goods or money—he has nothing to pay, but what things were gain to him these the believer counts loss for Christ. If in one passage he seems to be invited to buy, it is in a very different way from that in which the man in the parable buys; for the invitation to come and buy is addressed to him that hath no money, and is therefore only a more emphatic way of saying, “receive without money and without price.” The grace of God bringeth salvation. Not to multiply objections unnecessarily, we object to this interpretation, finally, because the last thing a sinner does, or is required to do, when he receives salvation, is to hide it. “Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not be set on a candlestick?”

In proceeding to inquire into the meaning of this parable, we observe, first of all, a certain correspondence between it and that which follows it, inasmuch as in both we find something of great value, represented in the one case by the treasure hid in a field, and in the other case by a pearl of great price; and in the one case as well as in the other, a man is represented as selling all that he hath, to buy that object upon which he has set his heart. In the ordinary interpretation, this desirable possession for which the man gives all that he has, is supposed to be salvation, which a sinner is supposed to secure at the sacrifice of every thing else. But there is a difference in the parables which must not be overlooked. In the first we are told, “The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field,” with reference to which a man acts in the manner described. In the second, the

kingdom of heaven is like, not to one pearl of great price, but "unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls." Now, in the ordinary interpretation, no explanation of this difference can be attempted.

In the parable more immediately before us, "the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field." It will be an important step toward a solution of the parable if we can satisfactorily determine what is meant by "the field." In an allegorical or figurative discourse, it would evidently lead to endless perplexities and uncertainties if a metaphor employed in one part of the discourse bore an entirely different meaning from what it had borne in another part; if, for example, in the series of parables before us, the fowls meant Satan and his agents in one place, and the children of God in another place. It is apparent also, from the manner in which the Lord addresses His disciples when He proceeds to explain the preceding parables, that He intended the interpretations which He gave as examples to His disciples in the interpretation of all similar discourses. When, therefore, we find the Lord saying, almost with the same breath with which He uttered this parable, "The field is the world," can we suppose that here He uses the same figure in a very different sense? On the contrary, we regard this as a key put into our hands to open this allegory also. The field in which the treasure was hid is the world. The treasure hid in the field represents something of the highest value connected with this world, and concealed from view; and this, whatever it may be, is some aspect of the kingdom of heaven, which was not only unseen by carnal eyes when He who afterward purchased it found it, but which remains in safe concealment until the time comes when the Purchaser shall take possession of His own. After that time we cannot suppose that what He so highly values will be left in oblivion.

Who is the finder of the treasure? the purchaser of the field? Every believer will disclaim all thoughts of applying this figure to himself, as though he sought and found salvation, and bought it for himself. When we have observed that it is the field which the man purchases, for joy of the treasure he has found there, and have determined that the field is the world, our reply to the question is at once anticipated. Every believing heart at once recognizes Him who "being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant; and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

They speak of the sinner buying salvation! The miserable bankrupt who owes ten thousand talents, and has nothing to pay; the poor beggar, blind and naked, and standing in need of every thing, sacrificing every thing, selling all that he has to purchase pardon and peace, a place among the sons of God, a crown of glory, a heavenly inheritance—poor beggar, insolent as poor! But here is One who has something to give—wealth boundless as the glory of Godhead, and of it all He "emptied Himself," and gave it willingly, paying it down in poverty, shame, and sorrow, which only He could endure who had first borne so great a weight of glory. And for what did He pay it? We are too much accustomed to confine our views of God's gracious purpose in Redemption, to the salvation of souls. Not that we can overrate the value of the soul, or the preciousness of the Church in His esteem, or the dearness of the redeemed to the heart of the Redeemer. On all of these points our highest conceptions come unspeakably short of the reality. But then in a certain selfish occupation with ourselves, we lose sight of

the great object which lies beyond all this, and to which even the salvation of souls is but as a means to an end—the glory of God, which shall find its highest manifestation in the completion of that purpose to which all is now leading, though carnal eyes cannot see it, even the establishment of His glorious and everlasting kingdom, when, as the result of His self-sacrificing consecration to the will of the Father, in which He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, that which faith now knows will be openly displayed: “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that is above every name; that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that JESUS CHRIST IS LORD, to the glory of God the Father.”

This is what Omniscience saw in this world, which creature eyes could not see. This is what still lies concealed: the mysteries of the kingdom of God, veiled from carnal eyes, but which it is given to faith to know; kept in safe concealment until He whose right it is shall come to take possession of His purchase, and unveil the concealed treasure, manifesting its glory to adoring eyes. This manifestation is deferred, as Paul teaches us, till “the redemption of the purchased possession.” It is His now by right of purchase, whoever may usurp it, or falsely claim a title to it; it will be His then in visible occupation, delivered out of the hands of the usurper, and taken possession of in a way that will make it the very centre of radiance, from which the fulness of divine glory shall stream over a refulgent universe. This is what the Lord presents to His disciples, and through them to us, as the antidote to the sadness and discouragement which might otherwise fill the hearts of those who love Him, in the contemplation of all the failures and

disappointments which for the present we must encounter in the field which is the world. In the midst of human perversity and ungodliness, we may still be left to ask, "Who hath believed our report?" or we may see the tares almost overshadowing the wheat in the field, or the professing Church expanding in worldly prosperity, but bringing forth scanty fruits of the Spirit; or we may mourn over a degeneracy that seems to intimate that very soon the whole will be leavened; but in the midst of all this we know that the world is Christ's, and contains His hidden treasure. The purpose of God cannot be thwarted, the enemy cannot steal away the garnered wealth, and very soon the Royal Owner will come, and make good His claim against all rivals. To us, meanwhile, it is given to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it." In the former parable, the subject of comparison was the kingdom itself—the kingdom in mystery, of which this world is the sphere. But here the subject of comparison is not the thing purchased, but the Purchaser and His conduct in a given case; in other words, the Lord Himself, who is the King of that kingdom, though He does now appear in His royal state. In the former parable, we found a general, and, if we may so speak, the grander aspect of redemption; in this we have a particular aspect of it, for He is not now seen buying a field for sake of the treasure it contained, but buying an object of great value in His esteem. This one pearl is not the one excellent thing placed in contrast with many other things that are utterly worthless; but only a pearl of great price in comparison with many goodly pearls, the priceless among the precious, the

dearest among many beloved. On the supposition that the pearl of great price is salvation, or the gospel as the means of salvation, or any thing connected with salvation, which a sinner is said to seek, or for which he is said to give all that he has, it is difficult to conceive how this feature of the parable is to be explained. If they explain it of the Gospel, which the believer chooses out of all religious systems, then we say the Gospel is not the best among many goodly systems, but truth in contrast with falsehood, light in contrast with darkness. If they explain it of the hope set before us in the Gospel, chosen in preference to all other things which hold out the promise of happiness, then we say this blessed hope is not the best, as compared with other hopes which are still good; it is the only reality in contrast with bitter deceits, which only delude to destroy.

We cannot but revert to the insolent conceit that the sinner seeks after a Saviour, chooses Him, and buys salvation with his goods. The pretension is monstrous, that an insignificant creature, still more that a guilty creature should choose God; that a heart that is at enmity against God should seek after Him, as though the order of another parable were reversed, and the sheep that had gone astray sought after the Shepherd until it found Him; that a ruined, condemned, hell-deserving sinner sold all that he had and purchased salvation. Some one may interpose with the claim, But does not the Lord say: "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple"? Yet it is surely one thing to forsake ruin and wrath, delusions and pollution, from which grace delivers us, that we may enjoy the blessings of a free salvation, and altogether a different thing to pay a fitting ransom for the soul, and purchase salvation with a price of our own. We do not say of a perishing wretch, snatched by brave, strong

arms from a wreck, that he purchased the life-boat with the wreck which he abandoned. We do not say of a perishing wretch, snatched by brave, strong arms from the devouring flames, that he hired and remunerated the heroism of his deliverers with the home which he left to its ashes. And why will men speak as though they purchased salvation with the destruction they left behind, or the favor of God with the heritage of wrath from which they are delivered, or that they bought bliss with misery, or heaven with hell? Believers can tell whether they chose God or He chose them—whether they were the seekers or the sought after—the purchasers or the purchased.

In that merchantman seeking goodly pearls, we see the great Lover of souls in an antecedent view of His character, like the man in the parable, who had a hundred sheep, all the objects of his tender regard, but who, when one went astray, left the ninety and nine safe in green pastures, while he went after the wanderer. In that pearl of great price we see the Church in Christ's estimate of it. Among all the other objects of His divine regard—all goodly pearls—this one is selected by His especial love, as the very jewel of His crown. By what displays of His love did he win it for Himself? "He who was rich for our sakes became poor, that we, through His poverty, might be made rich." And whatever might be told of the estimation in which He held all other objects of His holy love, of this it is said, in distinction from all the rest, "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 might be holy and without blemish," THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE. And this is the antidote which He has provided for the sadness and discouragement

ment of her heart, amid all the failures and disappointments of the present—the assurance of her preciousness in His eyes, the assurance of His love, which passeth knowledge.

The last parable of the series is usually designated “the parable of the draw-net;” perhaps it might more appropriately be named, “the parable of the final separation of good and bad,” for, both in the parable itself, where the use of the net is evidently a mere preliminary to the principal transaction in view, and in the terms of the Lord’s explanation, in which the preliminary action is entirely lost sight of, it is evidently this solemn view of that judicial act, in which the kingdom of heaven shall be established, that is the subject of comparison. “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from amongst the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” To the hearers of the Lord this imagery must have been very familiar and impressive. Greswell, who seems entirely to fail in the interpretation, very well describes the material circumstances of the parable: “The sagene was not an ordinary fishing-net, nor was the use of the sagene with a view to any ordinary cast or draught of fish. It was much too large for common occasions; nor was the intention of using it to take only a part of the fish to be found in a particular quarter, but, if possible, to take all, to let none escape, to sweep a stream or pool through the whole of its extent, and consequently of all its contents.”

The description of the net and its uses might satisfy any one but a minister of a national church that the Church of

Christ is not the subject of this parable. In the popular interpretation of it, however, almost every thing in the imagery is applied to the Church—the fisher, the net, and the fish that are caught in it—as though in the parables of Scripture, which, even in a human point of view, are so remarkable for their appropriateness and consistency, any such preposterous confusion could be found, as a fisherman fishing with himself as a net, and catching himself as a fish. This is even worse than making believers the birds which fly into the tree, and at the same time considering the tree an emblem of the Church, which is composed of these same believers. There is no instance of the use of similar imagery in Scripture from which we may derive any aid in the interpretation of this, unless we may take a hint from the Lord's call to some of His Apostles: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." In that case the means used was the preaching of the Gospel, but in that case the appropriate figure would be the ordinary casting-net, and not the *sagene* of this parable. It is to be observed in the case before us, that the agent in casting the net is purposely kept out of view, so that we cannot suppose it to be designed to teach any such lesson as the parable of the sower, regarding the ordinary results of a Gospel ministry. If we understand it as relating to the Gospel at all, it must be to its general tendency and influence in the world, from the time it was first preached, and which, in a certain sense, incloses all men within a responsibility which they cannot escape. And it is a solemn view of the relations of men at large to the Gospel, which, for the most part, they despise, that there is a responsibility which they cannot cast off. It does not leave them as it found them. And thus encompassed, they are, so to speak, dragged along to a day of final decision, when to have

believed or to have rejected it will make all the difference there is between heaven and hell.

But in another view of it the drag-net, which sweeps all before it, may represent rather what the world would call inexorable fate, and what we would call the purpose of God advancing irresistibly to its consummation, in which all mankind will meet their doom or their deliverance. No failure of the professing Church, no hostility of its avowed enemies, neither indifference nor opposition, can retard it for a moment. His counsel shall stand, and He will do all His pleasure. "When it is full," when the purpose of God, embracing all men and advancing irresistibly through all the period of God's long-suffering and man's ingratitude, shall have reached the point of accomplishment, then He who appears in the gracious character of the sower of seed, He who in grace redeemed a lost world to be the scene of His glorious reign, He who loved the Church and gave Himself for it, will appear in a new character—as the Administrator of judgment—as He was announced by John the Baptist, "whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." This final act of discrimination and judgment, as introductory to the establishment of His glorious kingdom, is frequently and variously described in the Word of God; but whatever the description, this is always the result of it—a final separation of the two classes of mankind, whether found within or without the visible Church; when one class shall be welcomed to the joy of His kingdom, and the other overwhelmed with destruction from His presence—the removal of all that are opposed to His righteous sceptre by judgments as terrible as they are certain, so that the purged world may be a fitting seat of His empire, with not one left to mar the peace and harmony of His reign. The angels,

it will be remembered, are always represented as His agents in the accomplishment of this solemn work, as in the Lord's interpretation of a preceding parable, where we are told: "The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." The peculiar truth in this parable, as distinguished from the others of the series is, that they relate to the Church and a professed Christianity; but this to all men who come within the range of Gospel influences. The act of judgment among His professed followers is that which is described in the passage just quoted; and the neglecters of the Gospel might congratulate themselves (as they often do) on the fact that, making no profession, they are not exposed to that terrible doom. But the parable before us cuts off all such miserable evasions of responsibility. Since, according to the uniform testimony of Scripture, "there is none righteous, no, not one," the word "just," in this and all similar connections, can mean only "the just by faith." The word wicked, in contrast with it, must include all unbelievers. "He that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him." The wrath so long suspended will then be executed, and unbelievers and hypocrites, amid all the varieties of aggravation in their guilt and condemnation, will yet be involved in a common doom. Neither in this place nor elsewhere is there any of the details of the sinner's doom, in which the distorted fancies of men so strangely revel. The silence of an unutterable horror rests upon it; but surely it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God. "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," the anguish of insupportable woe, the impotent fury of a desperate soul armed against itself in still more insupportable self-reproach.

FILIAL DUTIES.

THE importance of the subject of this essay may claim for it earnest consideration wherever the highest interests of mankind are discussed, and after the example of the Master and the practice of inspired writers, no public teacher can regard it as beneath the place which he occupies, however honored or influential it may be, to address himself to the young. Following the highest example, we purpose not to speak about the duties of children in a general and abstract way, but to speak to children of the duties they owe to their parents, and as in doing so we shall have the prevailing tendency of this age, as well as the natural insubordination of the human heart, in opposition to the views we maintain, we would at once carry the matter up to the Fountain-head of all authority, by quoting as a comprehensive summary of all that needs to be said, a passage from Paul's epistle to the Colossians: "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord." This is not the address of the unknown friend who pens these lines to you in love; it is not even the address of the Apostle Paul; but God Himself speaks to you by Paul, and there is no one, old or young, who may dispute His authority or question the propriety of what He requires.

It is proper to say that the word "children" in this passage does not mean children in the sense of persons young in years, but children at any age in their relation to their par-

ents; in other words, it means sons and daughters. As the relation of a son or a daughter to a father and mother does not cease till death dissolves it, so filial duty never ceases till the objects of it are beyond the reach of our love and respect. Even then their memory will be cherished with a tenderness which will render their counsels more sacred than ever, and we may warn our young friends that every present neglect of filial duty will be remembered with bitter self-reproach when death shall deprive them of the opportunity to repair it. The acts of duty change as parents and children advance in years; but the duty itself is permanent. A time comes, for example, when parents and their children find friends in one another, and mutually exchange confidence and counsel; or, happier still, a time may come when parents and children will recognize their common brotherhood in Christ; but it cannot be supposed that this will lessen either the love or the respect which children owe to their parents. A time may also come when the growing infirmities of parents will afford the loving child an opportunity of repaying, in some measure, the tender care with which they watched over his helpless years; but these infirmities, instead of lessening, will infuse an element of tenderness into the reverence with which their hoary hairs, as well as their relationship, will inspire a well-regulated mind.

Still it is evident that the charge, "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord," was first to the young who were under the care and control of their parents. It occurs in a letter that was addressed to the Church at Colosse, and was intended to be read in the public assembly of the Church. The Apostle must therefore have expected that the young would be present in that assembly, and the young whom he thus addressed evidently belonged to the Church. In an epistle to the Church at

Ephesus, he writes to the young who were members of that Church, also: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." Since there were children in the churches of that day, you, children of this day, may learn that you too need a Saviour and are welcome to Christ. If it were not so, the Lord would not have charged your parents to bring you up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

It cannot, with propriety, be said that you are more welcome to Christ than older sinners, for He came to save even the chief of them. But when Jesus lived on earth He took care to show that the young were as welcome as any. When the people brought their young children to Him, His disciples, in their pride of heart, reprov'd these parents, because they thought that the Son of God could not stoop to notice little children. "When Jesus saw this He was much displeas'd." This shows what a friend you have in Jesus; for meek and gentle as He always was, He was much displeas'd with those who forbade little children to be brought to Him. Never does Jesus appear more lovely than when He took them in His arms and put His hands on them and blessed them; and though you cannot now feel His hands on your head, nor hear His voice when He speaks the blessing, He is as able and as willing to bless you as ever.

At another time the disciples disputed among themselves which of them should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. When this dispute arose, they were on their way to Capernaum, where the home of Jesus then was. He did not overlook the youth of that city. There were, perhaps, some young disciples who thought Capernaum a lonely place when Jesus was not there, and it was a glad day to them when He came back. So when He arrived at home, and His disciples were seated around Him, He called one of these boys to Him and set him in the midst of them, and took

him in His arms, and taught them that all who were saved, whether old or young, were saved by the free love of God, and not by their wisdom, nor for their own worth, and said: "Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." This was the way in which He settled the dispute among the disciples. At that same time He said to them: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones (like the boy He held in His arms) that believe on me, for I say unto you, their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven." So you see there were young believers in Capernaum, and that boy was one of them; proud, silly men might despise them, but God did not. In old times only the highest princes and greatest favorites were allowed to come at all times into the presence of the king; and to say that a man always beheld the face of the king was just to say that he was one of the highest princes. So angels that always behold the face of the Father just means the greatest of all the angels. The Lord, therefore, means to say that young believers are so dear to God, that he sends the very highest among the angels to minister to them. Does not this show that you must be welcome to Christ, who came not to save men because they are old or wise, but because they are lost, whether old or young? You are welcome to Christ just because you are lost.

Do not believe those who tell you that you will go to heaven if you are good. You have not been good; you are a sinner, a lost sinner, and it is too late to speak to one who is lost about going to heaven if he is good; you are going to hell as sure as there is a God, unless mercy prevents you. Even if you could be perfectly good for ever after this, you are already sinners, and therefore you are already condemned. We call you sinners to come to Christ

who has died for our sins, and on that account can forgive sin. But you are not only guilty and need pardon as sinners, you cannot make yourself good, and they deceive you to tell you so. The word of God tells us that he that is in Christ is a new creature ; and so as you cannot make yourself good, we invite you to come to Christ, and He will make you a new creature ; He will make you like Himself ; He will give you a heart to love God, and will make you just what God would have you to be. You have often tried to be good, but temptation came and you failed, or you forgot God and every thing good, in your thoughtlessness. Now, Jesus knows all your trials and all your weakness, your thoughtlessness and how apt you are to forget ; He knows how easily you are drawn into evil, and how trifles drive thoughts of God from your heart ; He knows the influence of young companions, and that the example of many who are older than you lead you wrong ; He knows all about the good resolutions which you have made and broken ; and He comes and says to every one that trusts Him, however weak and easily lead away you may be : " My grace is sufficient for thee." We may often seem to forget that we were once young, but there is One at the right hand of God who never forgets that He was once a boy and a youth in Nazareth. And you may be sure that He who said, " Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones which believe on me," will not Himself despise you ; He will help you as readily as He will help those who in the pride of manhood neglect you. He will always have an encouraging word and a helping hand ; you shall be more than conquerors through Him that loved you. God will send the highest of His angels to wait upon you. But remember you are lost without Christ, lost for ever.

Believing in Christ, you will love God truly, and will listen to all His words. Among other things, hear Him say :

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord.” God says this, and tells you that this is well-pleasing to Him. Those here addressed are children who know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge; and what higher motive can you have than that it is well-pleasing to Him? God says it is right that you should obey them, and your own conscience tells you it is right. When you disobey them, something within tells you it is wrong. You never saw another child disobey or insult its father or mother without feeling what a shame it was.

Yes, it is right; you have often seen an infant in its mother’s arms, and you know how soon the poor, helpless thing would perish if its parents did not care for it. You have seen how tenderly they watch over it by day and by night. The father toils all day long for the comfort of his children; the mother, who is often weak and weary with the cares of the day, many a time loses her sleep to watch over her babe all night. What love they show if the baby is sick! They will do any thing to relieve its pain, and seem often to suffer more than the child does. How earnestly they pray to God for it! They can hardly be persuaded to leave the little sufferer long enough to take food or sleep, though other kind friends may offer to watch over it while they are gone. They cannot sleep for thinking of its sufferings. It is told of King David that when one of his children was sick, he fasted and lay all night, praying for the life of the child, and when his nobles went in to raise him up, he would not; neither did he eat bread. Now a parent’s heart is the same, whether he is a king or a poor man. No one can ever tell all the love and anxiety that parents have for their little helpless children.

Now, what would you think if an infant that has been so loved and cared for, should grow up to grieve and break the

heart that has loved him so? I once saw a wretched boy strike his mother, and I thought it would have been better for him if he had thrust his hand into a burning furnace than to have done that great sin. You were once a helpless infant, and your parents toiled for you and watched over you many a sleepless night, just because they loved you. When you became stronger, their care over you did not cease. Whenever you were out of their sight, they were very anxious, for they knew that you had not learned where danger lay, and that in your thoughtlessness you might rush into danger or into sin. They then began to exercise their authority over you, and they did it for your good. You cannot tell what is best for you, and so God has placed you under the care of those who love you more wisely than you love yourself. Their wisdom must guide you; till you become wise, they must teach you what is the will of God. Now is it not right that you should obey them, who not only have power over you, but who have wisdom which you cannot have for many years to come, and who love you so that your happiness is dearer to them than their own; who suffer when you suffer, and who are filled with shame and grief when you do wrong?

It is not only right in itself, but God has charged you to obey them. You are not to obey them sullenly as a slave obeys his master, whom he hates but fears. You are to obey them because you love them, and desire to please those who love you so well, and because God commands you to do so. He has promised great blessings to those who honor their father and their mother. And in the law which God gave to the Jews, it is written: "Cursed is he that setteth light by his father or his mother." And He commanded that a stubborn and rebellious son, when other means failed, should be taken before the judges, and then the law declares

“all the men of his city shall stone him with stones till he die.” So great an evil is disobedience to parents in the sight of God. So great an evil is it to a nation, that a son who would not obey his parents, and despised the law of God, was not suffered to live to become a curse to society.

You are told to obey your parents in the Lord ; which is as much as to say that if you love Him you will obey them, and if you disobey them you disobey Him. It will be in vain that you call Him Lord if you slight them ; for the truth is, that God has clothed them with His authority. They are to act for God over you. You remember that Jesus said all the law is contained in these two commandments, the first is, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and mind, and soul, and strength,” and the second is : “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Now, your love and obedience to your parents does not belong to the second part of the law. Your love of them is a part of your love of God : in obeying them, you honor God, in disobeying them, you rebel against God.

Nothing places your duty to your parents in so strong or so lovely a light as the example of Jesus. He was the Son of God, and He became the Son of Man also. But when He became a man, in order that He might be the Saviour of sinners, He appeared in the world a helpless infant, depending like any other infant upon His mother’s care. He knew all the time that He was the Son of God, but yet, because the law of God said, “Obey your parents,” He was subject to Joseph and Mary. About His twelfth year He went up to Jerusalem with them, and though so young, he astonished the great doctors of the law by His wisdom ; but after that, He went down again with them to Nazareth, and was subject to them until His thirtieth year, when He went out to do the work of His heavenly Father. Does not this show

how sacred the authority of parents is? And when you are called to obey your parents in the Lord, you have His example, in the path of duty; you can see His footprints before you.

What more can be said to show you it is right? You know that it is right. Nature itself teaches you. The highest claims of love unite with the most sacred claims of authority. God shows you how He views it by pronouncing blessings on those who honor father and mother, and a curse on those who despise them. Nay, remember that by the law of God a disobedient son, if he would not yield, was stoned to death as a wretch not fit to live. Your parents stand to you in God's place; when you obey them you honor Him. Then remember that He who was with God, and who was God, and who made all things, when He became man, was subject to Joseph the carpenter, and Mary, because they stood to Him in the place of earthly parents. And can you for a moment think of disobeying your parents, or of failing to love and honor them?

You see upon what the authority of your parents rests. Not only does every tie of love and gratitude bind you to honor your greatest earthly benefactors, but the authority of God and all the love you owe Him bind you to obey them. If you obey them on these grounds, you will not think it enough to seem to obey them. In the sight of God there is no obedience, unless in your heart you submit to them, and give up your own will to theirs. You will obey them at once and cheerfully, however much their judgment may be contrary to your wishes. You will not only remember that they know better than you what is best for you, but you will bow to the authority of Jehovah, and all the love you owe to Him will be added to all that you owe to them under God. The question of your subjection to them will

be settled in your mind at once and for ever; so that you will obey them without hesitating or debating, although you may not at the time see the reason of what they require of you.

All men here have their faults, and your parents are not perfect. But if you love them as you ought, and know your own place, your eyes will be the last to see their faults, and even if your eyes see faults, your tongue will never publish them. It is a sad thing that there are ungodly and cruel parents in the world. I trust my young readers do not know such parents. But even in the case of those children who have harsh or wicked parents, the duty does not cease. A child's obedience does not depend on the character of the parent. God does not say: "Obey your parents if they are kind and good." He says: "Obey your parents in the Lord." It may often be that there are powerful trials to a Christian child who has ungodly parents, but in the very worst case a dutiful child will obey in the Lord, and honor the Lord by a patient and meek submission. There is only one case in which it ceases to be a duty to obey, and that is when to obey would be to commit a crime or a sin. The case, however, must be very clear before a Christian child would urge duty to God as a reason for refusing to obey a parent. Sometimes conceit or selfishness might make this an excuse for the neglect of every-day duty, like those Pharisees who excused themselves for refusing to support their needy parents, on the pretence that their property was all given to the service of God; and thus, as Jesus said, these hypocrites made the commandment of God of no effect by their traditions.

You must not think it unkind when your parents refuse to gratify all your natural wishes and appetites, which so often lead you into sin and danger. You have seen very young children greatly disappointed because their parents would

not allow them to eat all the rich food and sweetmeats they wanted. These children did not understand that to eat such things would be hurtful to them, or they had not learned yet to govern their appetites. They would eat even if you told them that it would make them sick. Now surely it was kind in their parents to prevent them injuring themselves. The parent has in this way to govern the child until the child knows enough to govern himself. You would think it very cruel if a mother should sit by and allow a child to poison itself because it does not know any better. It is just in the same way that parents must forbid larger children many things that they wish. You may not at present see the reason of it, any more than the little child understood why its mother would not allow it to eat sweetmeats or poison. You can see, however, that it would be far easier for your parents to let you have your own way, if there was not a good reason for forbidding it. It is their love for you that forbids you.

Those of you who have Christian parents know, from what you read in your Bibles, that it is their duty, first of all, to subdue nature in themselves, and to deny themselves, though it may cost them a painful struggle. By their own natural feelings they might like as well as their neighbors to be rich and great and fashionable, but the grace of God teaches them that they should not set their hearts on such things, but on the things that are above, where Jesus is. Now if it is sinful and hurtful for them to seek these vanities, do you think that if they love you they will encourage you in these things? God charges them to bring you up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and so they must endeavor to subdue nature in you, and that will often cost both them and you a painful struggle. They will have to deny you many things, because the Word of God shows that it would be sin-

ful and hurtful to you if you should enjoy it. If there is any thing for which you will be grateful to your parents in after-life, it will be that they did not allow you to have your own way in such things, which you will then see to be foolish and sinful, though you may not think it so at present.

There is scarcely any duty so painful to a parent as to chastise a child. The Word of God says, "He that spareth the rod hateth the child," and it is to be feared that there are some parents who are too selfish to punish their children when they need punishment, and in this way many children are ruined for time and eternity. There is nothing in which those of us who have grown to manhood see the love of our parents more plainly, and nothing for which we respect them more, than for their correction of our faults, though at the time we perhaps felt very differently. We did not know then that the punishment they inflicted was far more painful to them than to us. I trust that the children I address rarely need punishment, but you may be assured that a Christian parent never more tenderly loves his child than when he corrects your faults, or denies your wishes.

True filial love and duty not only obey promptly, but do not wait for a positive command. A Christian child will study a parent's wishes, and even in little matters will pay a studious respect to their views and judgment. Even when parents are not present, you will say to yourself, "Would my father or my mother approve of this?" and if you think they would disapprove, that would have as much weight as if they were present and forbade it. If you slight and neglect their wishes, a day will come when every little neglect will rise up and reproach you, and that, too, when you can no longer make up for it by redoubled attention. Some of us could tell you how, a quarter of a century after we have buried our parents, some boyish folly or waywardness, to

say nothing of graver offences, will spring up in memory and sting us to the heart like an adder.

Show your confidence in your parents' love, and your respect for their judgment by making them your friends and counsellors. From how many errors would it save you if you entered on no scheme on which you could not ask a parent's advice, and in which you could not expect a parent's approval! As you pass through life you will find that advice is cheap and plentiful, but for the most part it is worthless. For you need not hope to find counsellors whose love for you and whose interest in your happiness will render their advice as safe or as well considered as that of your father or your mother.

As you advance in years your filial duty will gradually advance from a mere submission to your parents' will to an active desire to promote their happiness. While you will have an unflinching support amid the calamities of life in your mutual love and sympathy, the thought of the gratification it will afford them will be a main element of your enjoyment in every success. A time will come when the arms that toiled for you and protected you will lose their vigor, and when the mind that cared for you and counselled you will begin to fall into a second childhood. When that time comes, whose hand but yours should steady the tottering footsteps of age? Who, with patient tenderness, will bear the infirmities, and perhaps the querulousness of declining years, if not you, who can recall the days when that now faded eye watched over your inexperience and waywardness? There are few things more lovely on earth than filial piety watching over a parent's declining years, when to disease and bodily infirmities there may be added a weak fretfulness, which no attention can satisfy, and an exacting caprice which repays every kindness with undeserved reproaches, but which

finds in all that, only the proofs of a weakness which needs the more to be comforted.

I cannot forbear to break through the reserve that may ordinarily be proper in such relations as those of a writer to his readers ; reserve, I mean, on all that is personal to himself, and inscribe on these pages a memorial of grateful love in recording an example worthy of universal imitation. I recall the image of one whose age was not more venerable for the remembered virtues of a godly and beneficent life, than for the chastened graces of a Christian character in the midst of long-continued suffering, and the childlike gentleness, which augmented while it softened the veneration which gathered around his hoary head. I recall by his side the image of one, whose youth and beauty might have seemed more at home in far other scenes, though they could nowhere appear more noble and attractive than there by the side of a father weighed down with suffering, which no hand could so skilfully soothe as hers. I see her through years of patient but cheerful toil, foregoing all the attractions of youthful and congenial society for the companionship of a frail old man, and doing all, not with the air of one who was conscious of martyrdom or even of some meritorious effort, but as the spontaneous outgoing of a heart that could not do otherwise, and that bore much because it loved much ; spending the years of youth's prime in ministering to his comfort ; happier far when he leaned upon her arm his trembling hand, than the child of folly was in the giddy whirl of the dance, when encircling eyes of alternate envy and admiration marked the moment of beauty's most intoxicating triumph ; at last devoting to the couch of his lingering sickness the hours which others, her equals, found too short for the so-called pleasures of young and joyous life ; preferring to the smile of universal admiration, which waited to

greet her, the languid smile of enjoyment or approbation which love's assiduity might at length kindle on one solitary countenance pallid with pain; more than repaid by his dying benediction for the exhaustion of the vigor of her own young life, in soothing the protracted sufferings in which his last sands of life ran out. Happy father in the love of such a daughter! Happy daughter in the remembrance of that father's blessing! Both blessed of God, blessed your memory on earth, blessed, eternally blessed your meeting in heaven! And though no marble commemorates such virtue, there is still that in it which ranks with the constancy of martyrs at the stake, and which, it may be, will scarcely come short of a martyr's crown, there where it will be known how the love of a Heavenly Father was finding expression in that love of an earthly father; and where He whose grace sustained it all will say: "You did it unto me."

Perhaps the occasions of such devotion may be rare; at all events, the instances of it are. Yet if you are privileged, in the maturity of your own years, to look upon the forms bowed down with age of those who lavished upon you the treasures of parental love, when you could neither appreciate nor return it—surely you will permit them to have no want which you can supply; their comfort must take precedence of your own, and you will allow no one to take your place by the side of their feebleness or the couch of their suffering. You can never indeed repay the benefits you have received from them; but you can make the return which is most grateful to their hearts, when your unwearied assiduity testifies that their love has not been thrown away. To minister to their comfort and supply their wants is not only a duty which nature prompts; it is one which God in His word most solemnly enjoins. "If any widow have children

or nephews, let them learn first to show piety at home and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable to God." It may be well to remember that it is in the neglect of such provision for those of his kindred, that a man is said to have denied the faith and to be worse than an infidel.

ABIDE WITH ME.

JOHN 14: 23.

ABIDE with me. Fast falls the eventide ;
The darkness thickens ; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh ! abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day ;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away ;
Change and decay in all around I see :
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me !

Not a brief glance I beg, a passing word,
But as Thou dwelt with Thy disciples, Lord—
Familiar, condescending, patient, free,
Come not to sojourn, but abide with me.

Come not in glory, as the King of kings,
But in thy grace, with healing in Thy wings ;
Tears for all woes, a heart for every plea ;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

And when my soul, released from earth, shall soar
To realms of bliss, where I shall weep no more,
O wondrous thought ! O glorious ecstasy !
For ever, Lord, I shall abide with Thee !

THE OBJECT OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH IDENTICAL WITH THAT OF THE CHRISTIAN.

ABRAHAM'S faith! the subject is not an attractive one to the mass of professing Christians, who cherish a certain disdain for what they consider abstract theological speculations, and are ready to remind us that this is an intensely practical age; a phrase which may perhaps be interpreted to mean an intensely selfish and a very superficial age—may we not add a self-satisfied and self-righteous age? With all its wisdom, however, it is never more mistaken than when it quotes the words of James, "faith without works is dead," to mean that there can be living works without faith; and thereupon talks of its duties and its labors, to the neglect of that without which all works are dead works, without which it is impossible to please God, by which the just shall live, and through which we are saved. Their sneer is disarmed and rebuked by the prominence which is given to faith, and the frequent discussions of Abraham's faith in the New Testament. We cannot doubt the importance, we may say the practical importance, of a correct understanding of the character and object of the faith of him who is described as "the Father of us all," "the Father of all them that believe," expressions which are commonly regarded as referring, in a general way, to the patriarch's simple and unhesitating trust in God and His word, as exemplified in a variety of trying incidents of his life, without any very explicit reference to the object of that faith by which he was justified before God.

All Christians acknowledge that, from the day that the purpose of man's redemption was told to man's destroyer, "it" (the seed of the woman) "shall bruise thy head," there has been a gradual unfolding of that purpose, in the revelations which God has vouchsafed to man. They all acknowledge, too, that through this promised Saviour alone can the salvation of any be accomplished. But if perceived at all, it is at the best very dimly perceived, that the faith of the saints of all ages has indeed rested in Him, and that they, as well as believers of a later age, are justified by that faith. If we claim in general terms that, from Abel downward, no sinner has found forgiveness, except in virtue of that blood which cleanseth from all sin; that, when God set forth Christ Jesus to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood, the great transaction had a certain retrospective efficacy, "to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God," all this they will concede; but then they have an impression that, so far as Old Testament saints are concerned, the efficacy of the propitiation consisted in the Divine foreknowledge of it as a sufficient ground for showing mercy to them, though they themselves were ignorant of it. Even those who are clear and positive in the conclusion that now God is just when He justifies those who believe in Jesus and those only, and that the propitiation becomes available and operative only through faith in His blood, even they do not seem to recognize the same necessity in the case of those who lived before Christ had actually put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. They seem to think that the expression, "the just shall live by faith," has a very different as well as a much more extensive significance, when it is transferred to an epistle of Paul, from what it bore when it was originally uttered by the prophet Habakkuk.

The erroneous or obscure notions, regarding the faith of

ancient saints, which prevail amongst us, and which abridge the comfort and edification which are to be derived from their recorded example, and which exercise a reflex influence in rendering the nature and object of our own faith and its relations to the Christian life obscure, may be traced to various sources. The chief of them probably is a failure to distinguish between the nation which God chose as the centre of His earthly government, and the individuals out of that nation who were not of the circumcision only, but who also walked in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham which he had, being yet uncircumcised; and a failure at the same time to discern the true nature and objects of the law which was given to that nation, which could not give and was never designed to give life. On this and some other sources of the misconception in question we do not now intend to dwell. But there is one source of error which we desire to point out, in the rendering of certain words and phrases in our English Bibles, the consideration of which may lead to the conclusion that the faith of Abraham was not only in its general aspect identical with our own, as implying a simple trust in God and in His word, but that in its immediate object it was identical with ours, "who by Him do believe in God that raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory."

In the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, the Spirit of God, by an humbling view of what fallen man is, leads us to the humbling conclusion that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." As sinners all are subject to the righteous condemnation of God, who, though rich in mercy, cannot be unjust, so that He *will not* defeat the claims of justice; and the sinner cannot. There can no longer be any question of obedience to the revealed will of God. Obedience, if the sinner could render it, would not now meet the claims of justice. If the sinner is to meet the

claims of insulted justice, he must perish beneath its curse ; for it now demands not his obedience, but his death. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight."

Here God, who is rich in mercy, interposed, not to defeat the claims of justice, but to satisfy them. The righteousness of God, without the law, was manifested. He set forth Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood, who has actually, nay, infinitely, satisfied every claim of justice against the sinner ; so that now God is just when He justifies him who believes in Jesus, because He then declares, not that the believer is innocent, but that Christ has satisfied every claim against him. Still, it must be observed that all this implies the sinner's faith in His blood, or that he believes in Jesus ; for that is the only ground on which God can be just, and justify the ungodly. If the sinner rests his cause on some other ground, then, so far as he is concerned, what can that propitiation avail, or what to him is the declaration of this righteousness of God, which he contradicts and contemns ? "Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law."

All this is very clear with reference to us who live subsequent to this declaration of "the righteousness of God." But here is Abraham, the father of all them that believed—how was he justified ? He was a sinner—for all have sinned—and consequently his obedience could not satisfy the claims of justice and deliver him from condemnation. The Apostle demands, "What shall we then say, that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found ?" or rather, as will be generally conceded, it should be read, What hath Abraham our father found as pertaining to the flesh ? that is, What did the fleshly ordinance and his obedience to it avail ? Whatever it availed, it certainly had nothing to do with his

justification before God. For if circumcision, or any other ordinance, were made the condition of his justification, so soon as he complied with the condition, he established a rightful claim upon God. Having rendered the stipulated service, the stipulated reward was due to him. For as the Apostle argues: "To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness." In which of these two positions do we find Abraham? If he earned the blessing by obedience, it was not a mere favor; if he received it as a mere favor, his obedience was not the ground of it.

"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory." But it is certain that Abraham had nothing of which to glory "before God." In His sight he was a sinner, and could make good no claim. It was no longer a question of His obedience, but of meeting the consequences of his disobedience. Righteousness of his own he had none, and he could be justified only by submitting himself to "the righteousness of God." "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." His blessedness was not that of a sinless man, whose works could challenge the approval of a righteous God, but that of the man whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sin is covered, to whom the Lord will not impute sin—the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works.

Still, the precise and immediate object of Abraham's faith remains to be determined. What Paul says of the retrospective efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ, may satisfy us of the ground upon which God rested his justification: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in His

blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God." From the foundation of the world, no sinner has been pardoned, save on the ground of that sacrifice by which the justice of God is as signally vindicated as His mercy is gloriously displayed. But the question still arises, Did Abraham recognize the ground of his forgiveness? Christ has answered every claim of justice; but then, according to the doctrine of this passage, this becomes a propitiation to us only through faith in His blood. It cannot vindicate the justice of God in justifying us, unless as we believe in Jesus. When now a man is justified by faith, it is faith that rests in Christ and His sacrifice for sin; a faith which completely excludes boasting; and it is in view of this the Apostle says: "*Therefore* we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." Now the question is, Was this the faith of Abraham? If not, the whole argument falls to the ground, and the conclusion is swept away.

The Apostle, in speaking of the ground of Abraham's justification, appeals to the Scripture: "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." The object of his faith, as stated in this passage, is "God," a name which is applied equally to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and consequently it does not point out any distinction in these three as the immediate object of faith. Current opinion seems to regard Abraham as dealing directly with the Father, without any reference to a mediator; or at least without any direct faith in the One Mediator between God and man, Abraham, in common with all the ancient saints, may be understood, in a general way, to have believed God's promise of a coming Saviour, or rather, beyond all who had preceded him, Abraham laid hold with a firmer grasp upon that promise, more distinctly and emphatically revealed to

him. But it is one thing to believe a promise concerning a Saviour, and another thing to believe in the Saviour promised; and what we aim to determine is, did the faith of Abraham actually embrace that Saviour to whom believers now cleave?

The passage which Paul quotes is found in Gen. xv. 6; and on turning to the original record we find that it is slightly altered in translating from the Hebrew into Greek: "And he believed in the LORD, and he counted it to him for righteousness." One reason for the alteration may be that the Greek language has no adequate representative of the Divine name which Paul renders "God," and which our English translators have rendered THE LORD. The Hebrew word is that which in English letters is written "*Jehovah*," but for which, as in the case before us, our translators very frequently substituted "the LORD," though lord is no translation of it. *Jehovah* or Jahveh, or, according to the form more recently advocated, Yahveh, has commonly been explained as meaning "*the existing one*." It is not used in Scripture as a mere synonym of the word rendered "God," and in tracing its use accurately, the conclusion has often been reached that it is equivalent to the manifested Godhead—the Redeemer. More recent criticism* leads to the conclusion that the word *Yahveh* is the third person singular, future, of an old form of the verb "to be," which as a noun or name would signify, "HE WHO WILL BE," expressing from the first the great promise of a coming Deliverer, as it is appropriated by the Lord Himself: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which was and is and is to come—the Almighty."

* See a paper in the "Bibliotheca Sacra" for January, 1857, or a popular presentation of the subject in a tract entitled, "*Yahveh* Christ, or the Memorial Name." By Alexander MacWhorter. Boston: Gould & Lincoln.

But leaving the consideration of this blessed name for the present, we direct attention to its combination with another name in Gen. xv., from which Paul quotes. The first verse of the chapter is: "After these things **THE WORD OF THE LORD** came unto Abraham in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." On a cursory perusal, if the question were asked, Who came to Abraham? the answer would probably be, "*The Lord*," and the phrase "the word of the Lord" would not be regarded as the designation of a person, but merely as intimating that His voice was heard. Yet, in the strict grammatical construction, it will be observed that it was "the word of the Lord" who came, and whom in the second verse Abraham addresses as "Lord God." Again, in the fourth verse, "the word of the Lord came unto him," and in the fifth verse, "he (that is, the word of the Lord) brought him forth abroad." To the English reader it is important to know that, in this designation, "the word of **THE LORD**," **LORD** is substituted for the Hebrew name "Jehovah" or "Yahveh," and that in the Hebrew the preposition is wanting, so that we read it, "The Word Jehovah came unto Abraham," etc.

Similar expressions occur in connections which must have perplexed the reader of our English Bible. We refer to the designation, "the angel of the Lord." In Exodus iii., where we have the account of the Lord's interview with Moses in Horeb, we are told: "And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush." Yet he who is introduced as "the angel of the Lord," is in a subsequent verse styled "the Lord," and says of Himself, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," and claims for Himself, as His name for ever, the ancient name of prom-

ise, now in some sense fulfilled, "Jehovah or Yahveh." In the expression, "the angel of the Lord," we have as before the preposition "of" inserted, and the name, the LORD, substituted for Jehovah, so that here also we read correctly, "the Angel Jehovah;" the Messenger, the Sent, the Angel of the Covenant, another name of Him who came to Abraham, saying: "I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward."

Leaving the reader to trace these and kindred names through the Old Testament — and in doing so he will find new light and interest shed on many a page—we return to Gen. xv. "*The Word Jehovah* came to Abraham." It can scarcely be doubtful who this is, who now and on other occasions appears to His servants, when it is remembered that "no man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." Nor will the Christian reader be at a loss for indisputable authority for the application of this name to Him in whom we trust. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This is He of whom also it is said, with reference to His humiliation, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," and of whom again it is said, in a vision of His approaching triumph: "And He was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, and His name was called THE WORD OF GOD."

Can it be doubtful who it was who revealed Himself to Abraham as his shield and exceeding great reward, with affluent promise of future blessing, and regarding whom it is said: "And he *believed in the Lord* and He counted it to him for righteousness." This is no other than He of whom it is now said to the ransomed sinner: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." The Word was not then indeed made flesh, but then "in the beginning was the Word," and from the beginning we perceive Him whose delights

were with the sons of men, presenting Himself to their faith, revealed as their shield and exceeding great reward. Abraham and the believer of this day find rest and refuge in the same Deliverer, as from the same safe hiding-place they, in effect, cry out together: Behold, O God our shield, and look upon us in the face of thine anointed!

The faith of Abraham embraced the same person as the faith of the Christian, though He was not yet known by the blessed name of Jesus. But it may still be asked: Had Abraham faith in His blood? Abraham could by no means anticipate the wonderful particulars of the way by which the incarnate Word accomplished our redemption. But we are warranted in saying that Abraham did anticipate the incarnation of Jehovah, in whom he believed; for in the days of His humiliation Jesus said to the Jews: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: he saw it and was glad." Typical sacrifices were the means by which Divine Wisdom chose to teach the great lesson of "the putting away of sin by the sacrifice of Himself," and to keep that fundamental truth vividly before the minds of His people of old; and we may not suppose that means so chosen altogether failed of their object. The mass of formal worshippers looked no farther than the type; but the called of God offered these sacrifices in faith, looking to that which they signified, and received by anticipation the remission of sins—they were counted righteous. So the Apostle says of Christ: "He is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Nothing short of this could have met the case of Abraham as a sinner. No obedience could avail for his justification; the time for that was past; he was a sinner, and what he needed was deliverance

from condemnation, which the death of the Mediator alone could effect. This he found when, renouncing all his own doing, he believed in Him that justifies the ungodly—he believed in Him, and He counted it to him for righteousness.

Abraham was illustrious among the ancient examples of faith; but there was nothing singular in the object of his faith. Under this name of Jehovah or Yahveh, HE WHO WILL BE, the Word Jehovah, the Angel Jehovah, we find the same Deliverer constantly revealing Himself to faith, and faith constantly reposing in Him, from the days of man's fall. When the first-born of Eve saw the light, she, rejoicing in the thought that the promise was fulfilled, and the seed given who should bruise the Serpent's head, called her child Cain—*gotten or obtained*—for she said: "I have gotten the Man Jehovah," which is the strict rendering of the phrase which in our Bible reads: "I have gotten a man from the Lord." When long after, when her hopes of Cain were blighted, and another generation began to succeed the immediate children of Eve, men rose to a more correct view of the promise; but still they cleaved to the hope of the coming One. And in the days of Enos we are told, "Men began to call upon the name Jehovah or Yahveh, He who will be," the very form in which faith shall find its latest utterance; "for whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved." This is He of whom Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, as he foresaw His coming glory: "Behold! the Lord (Jehovah) cometh, with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all."

We cannot trace this name through the ages during which it has been the rallying-point of faith and hope; but, as we have said, it will prove a most profitable study to trace it through the Old Testament, upon almost every page of which the understanding of this name will shed fresh

light. From the earliest ages it was the name in which believers embodied their confidence in a coming Deliverer; but a time came in which it was not all promise. When, in fulfilment of His promise, and as foreshadowing a future and greater redemption, He took Israel by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, this was the very character in which He made Himself known to them, and this the name in which He sustained His peculiar relations to them—Yahveh, He who will be, the promised Deliverer, to whose coming hope had looked, now actually present, to lead the people like a flock. The ignorance of a malignant enemy of our faith, who wears the robes and usurps the name of a bishop, has tortured the gracious announcement of this fact into an argument against the infallible truth of Scripture: "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am Jehovah: and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob by the name of God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them." The shallow malignant turns back to find the word "Jehovah" in the record of the lives of these patriarchs, in order to show a contradiction of this word of God: "By my name Jehovah was I not known to them." As though, if these Scriptures had been a fabrication, the fabricators could have overlooked so obvious a blunder, and left it to be detected by Bishop Colenso three thousand years afterward! Upon that name men had called from the days of Enos; but the hope they expressed had now a begun fulfilment. In that very character the Almighty stood in relation to His chosen people. Thenceforth this is His name for ever, and this is His memorial unto all generations, until the promise shall have its complete fulfilment, when "He who shall be" Jehovah, "He that shall come," will come, and will not tarry.

If all the saints of old, as well as Abraham, trusted in the

same Person in whom we also trust, it will not be questioned that, however various their degrees of intelligence may have been, they all in some measure discerned in Him the promised propitiation and sacrifice for sin. Nothing short of this could appease the conscience of a sinner—nothing short of this can justify the ungodly. This, in fact, is the only righteousness that could be by faith, and it is the only righteousness a sinner can obtain. We may add that only sinners can receive it. Holy angels cannot be justified by faith, for that would imply that another had taken their place in obedience and service, and so had freed them from doing the will of God, the very thought of which is monstrous and unrighteous. But when obedience is out of the question, and sinners are perishing under the terrible penalty of sin, and a divine substitute endures the penalty, satisfies the claims of justice against them, and so delivers them from wrath, and restores them to the favor of God, this is what sheds its highest lustre on the perfections of God. This is the righteousness which is of God by faith, the righteousness which was imputed to Abraham. To this the faith of all ages has looked and rested satisfied. This is the very righteousness which sinners still need, and which is presented to our faith in the Gospel, which testifies that He died for our sins, according to the Scripture, and that He rose again—the Gospel which proclaims Christ the propitiation through faith in His blood. No sinner ever has found, and no sinner ever can find, pardon, and peace, and eternal life, save in believing on Him.

There is a joy in the clear discovery that the faith of all ages is one—one in nature and one in its object; and that object is Christ. Our faith brings the old and the new names together, when we rejoice in Jehovah Jesus—the Lord Jesus Christ our God and Saviour. But we rejoice with them when they say: In the Lord alone have we right-

eousness and strength. And a day is coming when the faith of all ages will share a common triumph, when He will swallow up death in victory, and Jehovah God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth; for Jehovah hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day: "Lo! this is our God; we have waited for Him and He will save us. This is Jehovah; we have waited for Him; we will be glad, and rejoice in His salvation." Then, too, the faith of all ages, past, present, and future, will find unison of utterance, when every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

HYMN.

Who is this in silence bending
 O'er a dark sepulchral cave—
 Sympathetic sorrow blending
 With the tears around that grave?
 Christ, the Lord, is standing by,
 At the tomb of Bethany.

When the pangs of trial seize us,
 When the waves of sorrow roll,
 I will lay my head on Jesus—
 Pillow of the troubled soul!
 Surely none can feel like thee,
 Weeping One of Bethany!

"Jesus wept!"—and still in glory
 He can mark each mourner's tear,
 Loving to retrace the story
 Of the hearts he solaced here.
 Lord, if I am called to die,
 Let me think of Bethany!

"Jesus wept!"—that tear of sorrow
 Is a legacy of love:
 Yesterday, to-day, to-morrow,
 He the same doth ever prove.
 Thou art all in all to me,
 Living One of Bethany!

GEORGE MÜLLER.

MANY of our readers have been comforted and instructed by the account of facts relating to the Orphan Houses at Bristol, which have been erected and sustained manifestly in answer to the prayers of Mr. Müller and those associated with him in his labor of love. The volume in which these facts are communicated to readers on this side of the Atlantic, is compiled, for the most part, from the narratives which Mr. Müller has published from time to time. We may remark in passing that with all the excellencies of that volume, we cannot but regret that Mr. Müller's testimony to the truth of the coming and kingdom of the Lord, the blessed hope that cheers him in his toil, should have been suppressed.

The narratives, which may be called annual reports, have been continued since the work in question was published. The twenty-fourth report, that for 1863, is before us, and a few facts gathered from it may be of interest, especially to those who are already acquainted with that work of the Lord. The houses now built give accommodation for 1150 orphans, and it need not be surprising if Mr. Müller's faith should be expanded to the design of increasing it, so that he may be able to receive 2000 orphans. Two years ago he intimated this design, and gave his reasons for aiming at it, though it involves an expenditure of \$250,000. And within these two years over \$63,000 have been contributed for this

express object, in addition to the large sums that have been given for the support of the three orphan houses already built, and to the other Christian enterprises in which Mr. Müller is engaged.

During the quarter of a century through which this work of the Lord has been in progress, Mr. Müller has received, or, as he would rather say, the Lord has been pleased to give him \$1,250,000—a million and a quarter. He has received as much as \$40,000 in one donation, and the contributions range from this down to the widow's mite. "But," he remarks, "all these donations, whether farthings and halfpence, or hundreds and thousands of pounds, are the result of prayer to God and the exercise of faith; for the hearts of all, rich and poor, are in the hands of our heavenly Father, and He is pleased to listen to the supplications of His children who call upon Him in believing prayer." That there is still abundant scope for expanded labor in this field will appear from a fact stated in the report: "Though I have received during the last five years and a half no less than 1021 orphans, and within the last fourteen months alone 441, applications continue to be made. We have not been able to hold out any hope for even the twentieth part of the boys who, within the last three years, have been applied for."

WAYMARKS

IN

THE WILDERNESS.

THE BOOK WITH SEVEN SEALS.

THE Lord Himself divides the matter of the Apocalypse into three distinct heads, when He says to John: "Write the things, 1, which thou hast seen, 2, the things which are, and 3, the things which shall be after these." The first head includes what John had seen in the vision, recorded in the first chapter of the book, revealing the Lord's tender care of the Church, and claiming His supremacy in it. The second includes the epistles to the seven churches, contained in the second and third chapters of the book, revealing the condition and prospects of the Church under the existing dispensation. The third, which is the truly prophetic part, extends onward from the fourth chapter, and reveals all that shall take place after an apostate Church is set aside, until the purpose of God is accomplished, and His kingdom established on the earth. At the commencement of the chapter, the scene is transferred from earth to heaven, and the seer is summoned by the trumpet voice: "Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be after these."

This fourth chapter contains a description of the august

scene which was immediately presented to the vision of the seer—the throne of God placed there for the administration of His great acts of judgment and government, supported by all His power and glory. But in distinction from any previous view of that throne, it is now seen surrounded by twenty-four thrones, occupied by twenty-four elders symbols of the redeemed, gathered, as they themselves say, “out of every kindred and tongue, and people and nation.” The first great preliminary act is one of universal homage and adoration; ascribing all to Him that sits upon the throne, acknowledging His supremacy, and recognizing His glory as the ultimate and worthy end of all.

The fifth chapter is the actual commencement of the proceedings for which the throne was placed there, and to which the great act of worship is a fitting preliminary. “And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne, a book, written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.” When we consider the manner in which this book is introduced, the summons of the angel, “Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?” the inability of all creatures to meet the summons, the grief of the seer when he thought the book could not be opened or read, the interposition of the Son of God Himself to undertake the task for which all creatures were incompetent, the joy and exultation of the supporters of the throne of God, of the twenty-four elders, symbols of the redeemed, of the angels who surround the throne—a joy which extends throughout the whole universe of God, and is accompanied with new and more exalted acts of praise “to Him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb;” and when, in addition to this, we observe that all which follows of terrible judgment until the purpose of God is accomplished, is the direct result of the loosing of the seals and the unroll-

ing of the book ; it must be evident that an understanding of what this symbol—the book and the loosing of the seals—represents, is in fact an understanding of the whole Apocalypse.

Probably no reader of these pages needs to be informed that the word “book,” as it occurs in Scripture, does not mean precisely what it means in ordinary use among us, since the art of printing has been introduced, and it has become the practice to bind the printed sheets in the form in which they now stand in our libraries. The word which is translated “book” is the name of the inner rind of the papyrus, anciently used in writing, and which, when written, was rolled together, as we are now accustomed to roll up maps. The word “book,” to a reader of English, suggests a printed and bound volume, which contains some literary composition. As the word is used in Scripture, it not only refers to a writing put up in a very different form, a scroll, but it must not be understood as limited to formal literary compositions or treatises on any subject. It is also used to signify a letter, as in Rev. i. 11: “What thou seest write in a *book*, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia.” It is the word used in the Septuagint translation of 2 Sam. xi. 14: “And it came to pass in the morning that David wrote a *letter* to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah.” It is also used to signify documents, or legal instruments of any kind, as in Matt. xix. 7: “They say unto Him, Why did Moses, then, command to give a *writing* of divorcement, and to put her away?” It is the word which is used in the Septuagint for the instrument which Jeremiah subscribed when he purchased a field from his cousin Hanameel, Jer. xxxii. 10, “And I subscribed *the evidence*,” or, as it is in the margin: “I wrote in *the book*.” Metaphorically, God is represented as having the names of the heirs

of eternal life inscribed in a roll—"the book of life;" and to have a record of the actions of men in the books of judgment.

The book in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne was sealed with seven seals. The use of seals attached to letters or documents is very ancient, and had a two-fold use. 1. The seal authenticated the document; as the seal of a monarch gave the force of a royal decree to any instrument to which it was affixed. So we read in 1 Kings xxi. 8, that Jezebel wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal. So Ahasuerus gave authority to Esther and Mordecai, Esther viii. 8: "Write ye also for the Jews as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring; for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with his ring, may no man reverse." 2. The seal was used for the sake of privacy and security until a letter came into the hands of the person for whom it was intended, or until the time came when an instrument was to take effect; as when the prophet is directed, Dan. xii. 4: "But thou, O Daniel! shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end." We see both of these uses combined in the case of the instrument already referred to in Jer. xxxii., and of which we shall presently speak more particularly. In the case of a letter or legal instrument duly attested and secured by a seal, to break the seal would evidently be equivalent to divulging its contents, or giving legal effect to it. The use of *seven* seals in the case of the book in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne, will at once be understood as expressing the completeness both of the attestation and security of the document.

It is not necessary to say that the book in this case is symbolical, as well as the seals and all that is done with reference to the book and its seals. Now we come to the

question: Of what is the book a symbol? By some commentators it has been explained as a book "containing the revelation in the subsequent chapters, to the end of the description of the opening of the seventh seal;" in which case it would not be symbolical at all, but merely the original manuscript from which John copied. Such a scroll would have been strangely out of place in that great symbolic vision; and it is difficult to reconcile such a view with the mighty preparation for opening it, the vast power required, the grief of John when he thought no one could open it, and the joy of all the universe, and especially of the redeemed, when the Lamb undertook it. Such a view is inconsistent with the time and place of the vision. John indeed saw it eighteen hundred years ago; but the time of the vision itself is "after these things;" and the place is in heaven, after the true Church has been caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and is seen in His presence under the symbol of twenty-four elders. Again, as these seven seals are opened, we do not find that certain portions of the book are read or exposed to St. John's view, that he may copy it, but certain events take place, of which John is the witness. He was not summoned to come up that he might hear or read of the things that shall take place, but to see in vision "the things that must be after these." The opening of the seals, therefore, is a symbolic act representing that He who breaks the seals is carrying the progress of events towards the consummation, when all the seven shall have been loosed.

Other commentators regard the book as "an emblem of the secret decrees and purposes of God relative to future events;" and regard the unworthiness of all mere creatures to open it as representing their "inability to obtain the least insight into the deep things of God;" and think

that the Lion of the tribe of Judah, undertaking to loose the seals of the book, represents the Lord Jesus Christ as "alone worthy to declare the purposes of God to mankind." This explanation differs little from the preceding, except in modes of expression, and is liable to the same objections. For in this also the important circumstance is overlooked, that while the time when John had the vision was eighteen hundred years ago, and the vision was designed to be a revelation of things then future; yet John is, so to speak, carried forward in spirit, and the time implied in the vision itself is not the time when John received the revelation, but the time when the things symbolically represented occur. The Lamb taking the book, therefore, and proceeding to break the seals, must, as we have said, be symbolical of His doing all that is necessary to be done, in order to the accomplishment of that of which the book is a symbolical pledge, whatever it may be.

As the book is seen in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne, it might at once be suggested that it must be an emblem of the decree or purpose of God, or of some covenant or engagement to which the divine faithfulness is pledged. This, however, would be too vague and general an answer to be satisfactory. The time and the circumstances are all marked and peculiar. The *time* is marked—"after these"—after the true Church has been removed from the hour of temptation that is coming on all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth—after the apostate Church has been rejected and disowned, according to the warning of the Lord: "I will spew thee out of my mouth." The *circumstances* are marked; a throne is placed in heaven, evidently not for the dispensation of mercy specially, though the rainbow is still round about it; but for the administration of government and judgment; for out of it issued

lightnings and thunderings and voices, its supporters and agents unite in ascribing holiness to the Lord God Almighty, and all around it unite in recognizing His supremacy, and extolling His majesty. We should expect the proceedings to magnify His insulted supremacy, and manifest His righteous judgments against all who gainsay His will. The purpose or covenant, of which the book is the emblem, is evidently one to the execution of which these judgments are to contribute. It is one also in some way relating to the great plan of redemption, since only the Lamb can carry it into execution; since the redeemed have so deep an interest in its accomplishment, for John wept much at the thought that no one was found worthy to loose the seals; and since amidst the universal joy when the Lamb undertakes it, the twenty-four elders, symbolical of the redeemed standing before the Son of Man, are prominent in the celebration of redeeming love, and see in the Lamb's undertaking, the immediate assurance of their triumph, "we shall reign on the earth."

All these circumstances, in their combined and concentrated import, appear to give great definiteness to the purpose or engagement of which the book is the emblem, which, sealed with seven seals to indicate its perfect validity and security, is held in the right hand of the Divine faithfulness, but is at once resigned into the hands of Him who is symbolically described as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the root of David, and who at the same time is seen in the midst of the throne, a Lamb as it had been slain, possessed both of the right and the might to carry it into successful execution. But before proceeding further, we turn back to seek an illustration of the symbols in the recorded customs and action of a past economy.

When the children of Israel came into the promised land,

and it was divided among them, according to the direction of Jehovah, every tribe was restricted to its own inheritance. The land was still the Lord's, and could not be permanently alienated. Whatever land was sold returned to its original owner every fiftieth year, which was the year of jubilee or redemption. But in the mean time, if the original owner or a kinsman chose to pay the value of the produce of the years remaining until the jubilee, the law required that the purchaser should relinquish it. If, then, in any circumstances, a man was under the necessity of parting with his land, it would be natural that he should go to his next of kin, who had the right of redemption, and propose to him to purchase it directly. We have an instance of this in Jeremiah xxxii. The city of Jerusalem was besieged by the army of the King of Babylon; and we may suppose that the usual concomitants of a siege, a scarcity of food, pressed upon the inhabitants. Hanameel came to Jeremiah, who was then a prisoner for the truth's sake, and proposed to him that he should purchase a field which belonged to the family in Anathoth; "for," he said, "the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine, buy it for thyself." Jeremiah was the heir next in succession to Hanameel, and, therefore, if Hanameel had sold it to a third party Jeremiah would have had the right to redeem it, so that it should not pass to another family of another tribe.

But at that moment Jerusalem was besieged; and as Anathoth was within a distance of three miles from the city, the field in question was doubtless in the hands of the Chaldeans. We must remember also that Jeremiah was at that time imprisoned for his fidelity in delivering the prophecy that the resistance of the Jews would be fruitless, that the city would fall, and that the King of Judah would be led cap-

tive into Babylon. In these circumstances the field in Anathoth could be worth nothing to Jeremiah. Yet, in obedience to the word of Jehovah, the prophet bought the field with all legal solemnity, and directed that the sealed title and evidence of purchase should be deposited in an earthen vessel, and buried in the ground for preservation against a future day; as a practical proof of Jeremiah's confidence in the promise of Jehovah that the Jews should return from captivity, when the purchase made in such singular circumstances, might be claimed, and the title so deposited might be made good.

In the prophet's account of the transaction, he is careful to mention the minute punctuality with which every legal form was observed, and the exactness with which evidence was taken, so that the title could not be disputed. The evidence was subscribed, and the money paid in the presence of witnesses, and the record was sealed according to the law and custom. A copy was kept open for reference, but the deed itself was solemnly sealed until the time when it might be needed to prove the validity of Jeremiah's claim to the property. When that time came, all that remained to be done was to break the seal and exhibit the document.

The prophet thus relates the manner in which he disposed of these deeds: "And I gave the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch, the son of Neriah, the son of Maasseiah, in the sight of Hanameel, mine uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed the book of the purchase, before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison. And I charged Baruch before them, saying: Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. For, thus saith the

Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land."

The whole transaction is impressive; the prophet, imprisoned for predicting the captivity of the Jews, gives this emphatic testimony of his confidence in the promise of God, and leaves also this proof to a coming generation, who, on their return, might be constrained to acknowledge God's hand alike in the judgment which overtook their fathers in their sin, and the mercy which overtook themselves in their misery and degradation. But its chief value to us is, that it foreshadows and illustrates a transaction of far higher significance, and a deliverance unspeakably more joyful. We have a very clear exemplification of the law and custom of the Jews in the conveyance of property. When a property was purchased by one who had the right of redemption, the evidence of the purchase, constituting an actual title-deed, was duly subscribed and formally sealed, until the time arrived when the purchase might take effect. In the case before us, the property which Jeremiah purchased was at that time occupied by the besieging army; and as the predicted conquest and captivity of the Jews would render possession impracticable for many years, measures were taken for the safe custody of the instrument, until the restoration of the Jews as a free people to their own land. Then all that would be necessary to establish the claim of the purchaser or his heirs, and to obtain possession of the field, would be to produce the document, and break the seal.

The application of all this to the symbolical book sealed with seven seals, might safely be left to the Christian reader; who cannot fail to remember how He who was seen in the midst of the throne as a Lamb that had been slain, had at once redeemed His people with His blood, and purchased

with that dear ransom price the inheritance which He will share with them. That which is held against that day in the right hand of the divine faithfulness, is the evidence of that purchase subscribed and sealed—the title to the inheritance—the new covenant in His blood. The day to which the long hopes of so many ages had turned—the redemption of the purchased possession—was in vision at hand. And who but He was worthy to perform all that remained to be done, to wrest it from the hands of the usurper, to purge it from all its pollutions, to rid it of all things that offend, and introduce the joint heirs with Himself into its actual enjoyment.

On the supposition that John knew the symbolical import of that book, and the breaking of its seven seals, we can well understand his poignant grief when no one in heaven, in earth, or under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. Equally intelligible is the joy of the redeemed, falling down before the Lamb, with the garnered prayers of the saints of all ages, ascending now like clouds of incense, on the eve of their fulfilment. Most noticeable is the ground upon which, in that new song, they proclaim the Lamb to be worthy to carry that title into effect. "For Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us kings and priests unto God." And most noticeable also is their vivid anticipation of the result of that enterprise in which He was now engaging, and which was to give effect to all the rest. "And we shall reign on the earth." Yes, over the earth which man's sin forfeited, which Satan had so long usurped, where He who now undertakes its deliverance was crucified in weakness, but in dying conquered; the scene too of the shame and suffering of His Church, now about to share His glory; the creation which

has so long groaned and travailed in pain, now about to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

And not they alone, but the myriads of angels encircling that throne, in whose presence there is joy over one sinner that repenteth, enter into all the exultation and triumph of that hour. Nay, all creatures, in sympathy with the joy of the Redeemer and the redeemed, break into the chorus : " Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever." Yes, one in the purpose of redemption, the Father and the Son are one in the praises of eternity ; and fitting it is now that this song should be sung, when these great acts of judgment are about to be executed by the Lamb, in accordance with the testimony of the Lord, " The Father hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, *because He is the Son of Man ;*" " and hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." So the Lamb is joined with Him that sitteth on the throne in the universal anthem ; and thus at last it shall be seen that God hath highly exalted Him, that " at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of those in heaven and those on earth, and those under the earth ; and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

The subject is an attractive one, but we must for the present relinquish it, with the desire that candid readers will examine all that follows in connection with these suggestions, and observe that what takes place on the opening of each successive seal is not the reading of another and another portion of a manuscript describing the events ; but the great events themselves transpire in symbolical vision, until, after the seventh seal is broken, after the seventh trumpet

has sounded, and after the seventh angel has poured out his vial, a great voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "IT IS DONE;" and on the final crash of ruin, and Babylon's terrible destruction, the conqueror and His conquering train come forth to take "the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost part of the earth for His possession." Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.

NOTE.

Dr. Seyffarth thus describes the papyrus scrolls: "The aquatic plant called papyrus, that is, the royal or noble plant, has now entirely disappeared from Egypt, and is found only in Sicily, Syria, and in botanic gardens. From a root of the thickness of an arm shoot up long stalks from two to four inches thick, which grow to a height from eight to sixteen feet. The head or crown of this straight, trilateral shaft, which tapers but slightly towards the top, is formed by a great number of short branches, from the upper part of each of which three long and very narrow leaves are suspended. Underneath the thin green rind or shell there is, from the root to the crown, a white pith, through which run threads or woody fibres, which pierce it longitudinally. This pith, which resembles that of several trees, especially of the elder, is the material of which the paper of the ancients was prepared. When we examine an Egyptian papyrus, by holding it against the light, we discover that the woody fibres run horizontally, as well as vertically, and that the two layers are cemented together by means of gum. In order to produce a roll of papyrus, the following processes were found necessary: First, the green rind or bark of several stalks was peeled off; thereupon the stalks were cut into cylinders of equal length, and these were then, by means of a very sharp knife, divided into very thin strips, slices or ribbons. Of these strips a number were now laid vertically against each other, so that each overlapped the other by the twelfth part of an inch. After the first layer had been moistened with gum-water, another layer of such strips was in like manner laid horizontally across it; and then both layers were pressed, dried, and polished. Thus one leaf of paper was completed. By joining together several leaves, and uniting their edges with gum, a roll of papyrus, or what we would call a book, is produced, of any required length. That I have correctly described the process

will become evident upon the examination of any papyrus; and I have placed this beyond all doubt, by myself producing from papyrus-stalks, obtained in botanical gardens, a great number of papyri, exactly like those of the ancient Egyptians, and those found in Herculaneum. No paper in the world is as durable as this. In many museums we find rolls that are more than three thousand years old, and which can still be unrolled and rolled up without the least injury." (Seyffarth's Chronology, etc., p. 26.)

The above extract, though it has no bearing on the subject of the article, may be of interest as a matter of general information. He adds that the Egyptian ink "was pulverized charcoal mixed with gum; hence their writing has remained black and glossy down to the present day."

LECTURES ON THE EPISTLES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.

BY GEORGE DUFFIELD, D.D.

LECTURE I.—INTRODUCTORY EXPOSITION OF REV. i. 1-6.

It is no uncommon thing for a writer, when his mind is full of the subject on which he is about to treat, to intimate it very soon after his introductory remarks. No one can read this book of Revelation, without perceiving that the grand event, which forms the climax of the whole, is the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This coming is an event of universal expectation among Christians, whatever may be their views as to its nature or chronological period. It is to form the crowning development and display of God's providential scheme, for the rescue of this world from the usurpation and thralldom of the devil. The Apostles proclaimed and expected it themselves; they zealously urged it on the thoughts and hearts of all who embraced the Christian faith. The Saviour Himself, during His sojourn in this world, had frequently and solemnly predicted His return. It was made the grand epoch or date of joyous expectation and triumph, when, and not till when, His friends and followers should be fully invested with the rich and glorious rewards of grace which He had promised. All eyes and all hearts were directed toward it, as the grand and signal event which was to usher in that glorious state of things, when the reign of heaven should be established

on earth, filling it with peace, joy, and holiness, and consummating all the great schemes of providence which God had been prosecuting for the redemption of this world and the salvation of men.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Apostle John, having received a Divine revelation as to the great outline of providence and events, in this world, which should prepare the way for and introduce the great day of Christ's coming, should have stated it in the strong and impassioned language with which, at His dictation, he commences the Epistle to the seven churches of Asia, verse 7: "Behold! He cometh with clouds."

Our object in these Lectures is to unfold the rich doctrinal and practical instruction found in the letters to the seven churches, and not so immediately to direct attention to the subject of prophecy. Incidentally, and for the better apprehension and understanding of the former, it will become necessary to glance our eyes often along the vista in the prophet's view when he penned this wonderful book. He evidently, in this verse, describes an event yet future. Whatever may be its attendant circumstances, and whatever may be the method of interpretation adopted for the exposition of this language, whether the allegorical or the grammatico-historical, it will not be disputed by any that the facts connected with Christ's coming will be of the most striking and eventful character. It will be distinguished or "signalized by a tremendous and universal inflection, palpable to mankind as the work of Heaven." The Apostle's language can, on no principles of just interpretation, be understood to mean less, whether it be regarded as symbolical or literal.

By symbolical language we do not mean merely tropical language, or language which, according to rhetorical rules, expresses something different from the exact literal meaning

of the words, as when, by the figure of speech called metaphor, we call a man a lion, or an ox, or an ass, by reason of some resemblance in point of courage, stupidity, or obstinacy, that may be traced between him and those animals; or when, by another figure of speech called synecdoche, we use the name of a part to denote the whole, as when we say so many head of men or cattle. The tropes of speech are appropriate to all sorts of persons, and almost every style of composition. We call the use of them *figurative* language; not that, by the use of such language, it is at all implied that there is no reality in the scenes or things referred to. Tropical language is the language of feeling, which attempts a more vivid description of real scenes and objects than would or could be given by literal, unadorned expressions. This is the language especially of poetry; and the prophetic writings of the Scriptures, which are generally poetical, abound in the use of all the different tropes of speech. We shall err most egregiously, and only display ignorance, if we therefore presume or aver that prophecy, in general, deals in extravagant language, and deny the literal historical character of the events and scenes thus rhetorically described.

Such figurative language, however, greatly differs from what is called symbolical. Symbols are visible outward things, (not words,) objects, or acts, either real or supposed to be real, which are made the signs or representations of the thoughts intended to be conveyed. They were originally employed as the simplest style of writing, the figure of a man, an ox, a lion, the sun, moon, stars, and the like, severally representing some ideas intended to be expressed on some other subject, according to some assumed analogy. The real object was called the sign or symbol, and the picture of the object the hieroglyphic. Thus, to take the illustration presented in the text, a cloud or clouds is an object

in nature, and is used in different meanings, according to the subject spoken of. When spoken of God and of Christ it sometimes is a symbol of glory, and power, and majesty, and at others of immense and accompanying armies and hosts. Should we sketch a cloud with a pencil, to express the same ideas the picture would form the hieroglyphic. Much of the language of this book of Revelation is symbolical. It relates a vast variety of scenes, which were presented to the mind of the Apostle as pictorial or scenic representations. Under these symbolical objects, in their various forms, combinations, and successions, the Spirit of prophecy has concealed important and wonderful truths, to discover and understand which we must attend to the meaning which, in the Scriptures, is assigned to the several symbols employed. This sort of language or style of writing was common to Oriental nations and others in their infancy. It is indeed the language of signs, the most early and natural method, adopted by children, to express their own thoughts. As a language of fixed and definite import, not liable to the fluctuation of living languages, God has seen it fit to direct the prophets to leave much of their prophetic writings in it. It does not, therefore, follow that there is no reality in the scenes and objects which these symbols represent. Whether the language of the text may or may not be regarded as symbolical, the truth, or fact, or event declared is unquestionably one and the same—the coming of the Lord. But whether that coming, as referred to here by John, is to be understood as a mere allegorical or spiritually analogous event, will depend on this circumstance; whether his language be symbolical or a plain statement of events as they shall visibly and literally occur. This must be carefully determined. It is not a sufficient reason for the allegorical interpretation, for us to say that the passage is found in a book, which

evidently abounds in the use of symbolical language; for there is much in it which is written in the ordinary style. If the coming of Christ here described is to be understood symbolically, then shall we be at a loss to determine whether the words denote a mere interposition of providence, as many allegorical interpreters affirm, such as the destruction of the city of Jerusalem, an event supposed (by those who antedate the Apocalypse during the reign of Nero) to be near at hand, and to be the event referred to; or whether it denotes some spiritual manifestation, as do the followers of Swedenborg—the more extravagant yet more consistent spiritualists. An appeal to other passages in the Scriptures, where the subject of Christ's coming is spoken of in the same terms, is the only proper method of determining the meaning of this. In Psalm xviii. 11, God is spoken of as bowing the heavens, and coming down; as riding upon flame, and flying on the wings of the wind; as making darkness His pavilion, and throwing around Him the thick clouds of the skies, at His coming to judge the world. There is no reason, from the psalm itself, why we should interpret this as a mere extravagant poetical description of a thunder-storm; but, on the contrary, it best comports with the general design and import of the psalm, to understand it as a description of the veritable appearance of the great Almighty Creator, when He shall come to judge the nations of the earth. When He descended visibly on Mount Sinai, to proclaim His Law, it was literally, visibly, sensibly in the midst of smoke and darkness, clouds and tempest, thunder and lightning, with blasts of trumpet, and voice of words, and mountains trembling to their base, and earth shaking, and terrible displays of power and majesty. These were all actual, veritable occurrences. What has once already occurred, may occur again, and why not under circumstances

even more grand and terrific? Accordingly the Scriptures forewarn us that the great Ancient of days will, in due season, display Himself from His throne of fiery flame, whose wheels are burning fire, before whose presence a fiery stream shall issue and come forth, while thousand thousands minister unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before Him. Dan. vii. 9, 10. The Lord, in allusion to this, saith the prophet Nahum, hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet; i. 3. And our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has assured us that all the tribes of the earth shall mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory. Matt. xxiv. 30; xxvi. 64.

This description of His coming to judge the nations, as given by Himself, corresponds exactly with the account as given in this verse; and if one is symbolical, to be spiritually and allegorically interpreted, so must the other be. Indeed, if the scriptural account of Christ's coming to judge the world, as given in this and kindred passages, is to be taken symbolically, then is there no evidence whatever in the Bible that there will ever be a day or period of His miraculous interposition and visible coming. We have thus far considered the language of the text as that of John, but it may be, and most probably is, that of Jesus Christ Himself, which was addressed to John, at the commencement of the Revelation, and which first arrested his attention, and apprised him of the great and leading theme; for the following verse coming in such close connection, and being undeniably the words of Christ, would render it highly probable: "I am Alpha and Omega." These are the names of the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, and this form of speech was common among the Hebrews, to express the idea of first and last. The Lord God here speaking is

Jesus Christ, for Rev. i. 17, and xxii. 13 leave the matter beyond a doubt, that these things are truly said of Him. The words "which is," etc., are but a translation of the Hebrew word Jehovah, which was the term employed emphatically and exclusively, to denote the eternal self-existent God. The Jews never uttered it; such was the reverence they had for it. No stronger language could possibly be employed. No titles more grand, and lofty, and exclusive, to denote the eternal, self-existent Supreme Deity, can be imagined than those which our Lord Jesus Christ here appropriates to Himself, as descriptive of His person. The double "Amen," which follows the announcement of His coming, gives it all the solemnity and assurance of an oath; and as coming from the lips of Christ, if the language be regarded as His, or as coming from John, it denotes the certainty of the event beyond all possibility of failure or of doubt.

In the next context the Apostle describes the person of Christ as He appeared to him. This will form the subject of another Lecture. In the mean time let us learn—

1. The true and undeniable Deity of Jesus Christ—He is called the Lord God—Eternal self-existence is affirmed of Him.
2. Let us learn the reality and certainty of His future coming. Acts i. 9.
3. His second coming will be an event which will be fraught with terror and distress to the whole world.
4. The coming of Christ will be an event of universal notoriety and observation.
5. The sight of Christ at His coming will cause anguish to all that have neglected and maltreated Him here.

JESUS AS A WORKER OF MIRACLES.

THE gospels, as we have elsewhere remarked, cannot be understood as forming a complete biography of Jesus. We find in them rather a grouping together of His words and works in such a way as to illustrate some aspect of His personal or official character, or to prove some truth in suberviency to the specific object of the writer, though without overlooking the unfolding of the nature and purpose of the life of Jesus, from His birth at Bethlehem to His ascent from the Mount of Olives. In accordance with the object of the several writers, important incidents are omitted by one which are narrated with much minuteness of detail by another, and each presents the incidents he records in an aspect suited to the design he has in view, or according to the point from which he views them.

In the gospel according to Matthew, for example, we trace through the whole book the design to present Jesus to the Jews as their Messiah. He states the legal proof of His claims to the throne of David; cites the facts of His supernatural attestation, and points out the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy in the circumstances of His life, in the peculiar features of His character and mission, in the words He speaks, in the deeds he performs, and in all that befalls Him from His birth to His ascension. Still it is not a mere formal argument or proof *that He is the Messiah*, but, at the same time, an exhibition of *what he is as the Messiah*.

For men might form a conception of the Messiah erroneous in every particular, and the proof that Jesus is the Messiah would leave these vain dreamers to conclude that He is the Messiah of their erroneous imagination. This is no hypothesis, but a case that has often occurred: for example, in the case of those who are said to have "believed in His name, when they saw the miracles which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men." We find Matthew, therefore, grouping the doctrines taught and the works performed by Jesus and the things which happened to Him, in such a way as to present distinct aspects of His character, until he stands before us the Messiah, the Saviour, completely revealed.

Thus omitting many incidents in the earlier days of the Lord's public ministry, this evangelist at once shows us what He is as a Teacher, in that Divine Sermon on the Mount, which occupies the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of this gospel. He next shows what He was as a worker of miracles; so grouping the miracles together as to show, not only that He "did among them the works which none other man did," but also the significance of these mighty works in relation to the great mission of the Saviour. If we regarded Matthew as a biographer, we might wonder why he omitted "the beginning of miracles which Jesus did in Cana of Galilee and manifested forth His glory," an omission which, in any case, is the more remarkable because Matthew, as Alford remarks, "in relating His ministry, discourses, and miracles, confines himself exclusively to the events which took place in Galilee until the last journey to Jerusalem;" while the Gospel of John, in which that beginning of miracles is recorded, is almost wholly occupied with the Lord's ministry in Judea. But when we observe that the design of Matthew is not to give a complete narrative

of events in chronological order, but to exhibit Jesus in distinct aspects of His character and offices, then, among other things, it is instructive to observe the order—*first*, the Teacher, *then*, the worker of miracles—the reverse of what we might expect if His miracles were the credentials on the ground of which His doctrine was to be received as Divine.

This of itself would not warrant us to conclude that the miracles of Jesus were not the mere credentials or attestation of a Divine mission. The conclusion, however, is forced on us by many other considerations. Miracles were the natural and every-day works of Jesus; virtue was continually going out of Him to meet all the needs of man, so far as men were prepared to receive His help. Yet there were occasions when miraculous cures of the most imposing character were multiplied; and there were occasions when the exercise of His grace seemed to be restrained. Now if these mighty works were designed merely as attestations of His mission to convince unbelievers, we would expect them to be multiplied where He was unknown or where unbelief was most prevalent, and to be withheld where a prevailing faith rendered farther evidence unnecessary. The fact is the very reverse of this, for they were multiplied when faith was called into most lively exercise, and, on the other hand, we find it recorded of a certain place, that “He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.”

The Lord, speaking of the reception of His doctrine, says: “He that is of God, heareth God’s word.” He was always on His guard against false disciples who might be attracted by the fame of His power, while their hearts were untouched by the truth. On this account He frequently charged those whom He cured that they should not publish it abroad; and He uses great plainness of speech in undeceiving those who

were attracted to Him by seeing His miracles. A scribe who had witnessed a series of miracles, and who probably thought that he saw in them resources which promised all that a carnal mind could desire in a leader, said to Him: "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." The Lord warned him of the choice he was making, in the touching words: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." Divine love is inexplicable to a carnal mind. Such power and resources always employed for the relief and happiness of others, never to supply His own wants or to shield Himself from sorrow! This fact shows us how freely and voluntarily He laid aside all His glory, and for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. And not only in the first great act of self-renunciation, but at every step of it, He was a voluntary sufferer. He who one day fed thousands, and had many baskets full to spare, the next day might be ministered to by the kind matrons of Galilee as a homeless stranger, till at last He laid down His life for us. No man took it from Him; He had power to lay it down and power to take it again. If in such complete self-renunciation we learn what the love of Jesus is, we learn here also what it is to be His disciple. After that saying to the scribe, it was not necessary to add: "Whosoever he be that forsaketh not all he hath, he cannot be my disciple." If some who now bear His name were taught that true discipleship is the same now that it was then, and that it is enough for the servant that he be as his Lord, it might perhaps remain to be recorded anew: "From that time many of His disciples went back and went no more with Him."

In His miracles, Jesus of Nazareth stands not only attested, but revealed as the Saviour, who has the word of eternal

life, and performs the deeds of eternal deliverance to a ruined race. *In the fall of Man*, suffering and mortality manifest his estrangement from God, and a corresponding curse lighted upon the earth; for Eden would have been no home for the guilty and dying. *In the redemption of Man*, sin being put away, those who were dead in sin received eternal life, which shall finally be manifested in a body fashioned like to Christ's glorious body; and then the groaning creation also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. In His miracles, Jesus is revealed as the Saviour who shall accomplish all this.

Without any miracle, He was fully accredited by the Father; but in these works He was revealed, as we might say of a physician who had arrived in a plague-smitten city with ample testimonials, after his skill had successfully treated many patients, that he was revealed to be all that his credentials attested him to be. These wonders of help and healing, which Jesus did every day, belonged to His office as Saviour, and showed what he is as a Saviour—they are the first-fruits of the great deliverance which He is to achieve for the redeemed. We do not now examine the record of His miracles minutely. It is sufficient for our present purpose to observe generally that they are all works of help and healing in the removal of the curse; that they embrace every variety of human suffering, and reach to the most desperate forms of disease, even to death itself. We sometimes overlook the number of them. Only a few are related with more or less minuteness of detail, for the sake of some great principle which their circumstances are suited to inculcate. But what Jesus was as a worker of miracles, must be learned from such statements as these, "Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with

divers diseases brought them unto Him, and He laid His hands on every one of them, and healed them ;” “And in that same hour, He cured many of their infirmities and plagues and of evil spirits, and unto many that were blind He gave sight.” “And whithersoever He entered into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought Him that they might touch if it were but the border of His garment ; and as many as touched it were made whole.” Here is the display of full power to accomplish the deliverance of man ; power constantly in exercise whenever there is suffering to be relieved, and faith to receive the blessing ; power meeting the utmost need of the sufferer, and the utmost reach of faith, if it were like that of the poor woman, who came in the press behind and touched His garment, for she said : “If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole.”

This power was displayed, not only over the diseases and mortality of the human frame, but over all the external world “far as the curse is found.” The powers of nature everywhere owned their Lord. He who by a word produced wine from the vessels that were filled with water, and who made an abundant feast for five thousand with five small loaves, not only showed that in that lowly guise He was present among the poor, who ordinarily gives food to all that live by means of seedtime and harvest ; and encourages the unquestioning trust of His people in His every-day providence, saying to all their unbelieving fears and anxieties, “How is it that ye do not understand ?” but He shows Himself there also the Saviour who will redeem the cursed ground from its blight and barrenness, and make the wilderness and the solitary place glad for them, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. When in the midst of a storm, which terrified men whose business had made

them familiar with the sea in all its moods, "He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm." What majesty in the act, what simplicity in the narrative! Those around him exclaimed: "What manner of man is this?" Might they not rather have fallen at His feet in lowly adoration saying: "O Lord God of Hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea; when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them." We behold Him there in lowliness, because love had brought Him to the rescue of a sin-stricken world; but in that lowliness, He displays the saving power which shall find its perfect manifestation in that scene which the prophet beheld in a vision: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and the sea was no more."

The miracles of Jesus not only extend over the whole field of human suffering, and over all the powers and resources of nature, proclaiming Him to be the Saviour who shall make all things new and wipe all tears from off all faces, but His miracles also afford the most complete proof of His power to achieve the crowning victory, and cast Satan out of his usurped dominion into the lake of fire and brimstone. The history of redemption is a history of the conflict between the Prince of Light and the prince of darkness. At every stage of the work Satan has attempted to counteract the grace of God, and at all the great crises of the history we find his malignant power in extraordinary activity. We cannot, in this place, investigate the proof that the demons of the evangelical narratives were the demons to which the heathens sacrificed under the name of gods; by which also those who uttered their lying oracles were possessed, like the damsel whom Paul delivered at Philippi, who brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. It is

enough to say now, that the malignant activity of Satan, at the Saviour's appearing on the earth, was displayed in the unexampled frequency of demoniacal possession, designed to thwart the work of Christ, but in reality furnishing the occasions of revealing His conquering power. Wherever the Lord and His Apostles went, they appear to have met the possessed; but met them only to multiply His triumphs, for in the records of His miracles, this is always prominent: "They brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils, and He cast out the spirits with His word."

A certain class of perverters of Scripture endeavor to explain away these proofs of Satanic activity in that age, by the supposition that these possessions were simply cases of lunacy, though the evangelists take care to distinguish the two, as where it is said: "They brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatics, and those that had the palsy, and He healed them." When a miracle is related in its minute particulars, there is always some lesson inculcated or truth illustrated by its circumstances. And there is one instance of His power over demons, which is minutely related, apparently for the purpose of cutting off all argument as to the reality of these possessions. We refer to the cure of the two possessed with devils, who met him as he entered the country of the Gergesenes. Regarding the remarkable entreaty of the devils, and the equally remarkable permission granted them to enter into the herd of swine, and the subsequent rushing of the whole herd into the sea, Warburton says: "It is true that the wild extravagance of human fancy may be able to form chimera that shall affright the raiser of them to distraction. Yet brutes have none of this dangerous faculty. Therefore, when we find great numbers of them stimulated

to an instantaneous madness, we must conclude that it was caused by some preternatural agent operating on their organs. So admirably has our indulgent Master been pleased to guard this important truth against the most plausible evasions of self-conceited men."

The joyful import of these miracles of dispossession wrought by Jesus, or by His disciples in His name, is distinctly expressed on the occasion of the return of the seventy, telling with joyful surprise: "Lord, even the devils are subject to us through thy name." The Lord, pointing out the connection between the overthrow of Satan and the establishment of His kingdom, said: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." So He urged the conclusion upon His enemies: "If I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come unto you." Yes, this is what it meant: the conqueror of Satan was there in person, and these were foreshadowings of the final victory. The Jews rejected Him, and the kingdom of God which had come unto them was taken from them, but the purpose of God is not thwarted. Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Amidst the present conflict, while we are not ignorant of Satan's devices, we know that "the God of peace will bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

These views are submitted with the hope that they may enable the reader to discern the important practical truth which the recorded circumstances of particular miracles are designed to inculcate. But chiefly with the prayer that their souls may be refreshed, their faith strengthened, and their hope animated by a view of Jesus, even in humiliation, revealed as a perfect Saviour. These miracles are not designed to furnish a display of absolute power. Omnipotence need not have become incarnate for this. That which speaks elo-

quent consolation to our hearts is that it is not omnipotence on the throne, but in lowliness and suffering. He is not in the form of God, but in the form of a servant, who does these works. In His original glory He could by a word have hurled the usurper to his place, but that would have brought no deliverance to us; nay, the word of righteous judgment would have swept us away in the same condemnation. When we behold Him in the likeness of sinful flesh casting out devils, then in Satan's conqueror we see man's Saviour. We see Him not only exercising a Divine power, to still the storms which reveal the disorder sin has wrought in nature's harmony, but exercising a love-bought right to restore a redeemed people to an emancipated world. When all manner of sickness is healed by His touch, we behold not only the proofs of His power to deliver us from the pains of mortality, but in the removal of the consequence we see a proof of the removal of the cause. He can deliver from suffering and death, because He has put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, as He expressed it when He said to the cavillers of that day: "That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sin," (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) "Arise, take up thy bed, and go to thine own house." What a wealth of joyful assurance is there to our hearts in the simple record which follows: "And he arose and departed to his house." We may echo the praises of the marvelling multitude as they glorified God, who had given such power unto men. What power? Such displays of Omnipotence as awoke the song of the sons of the morning at Creation's birth? Such power as attested the divine mission of Moses, wrought deliverance for His people, and struck terror to the hearts of His enemies? No, but redeeming power, power on earth to forgive sins, power to bid the helpless and oppressed arise, freed from the consequences of

that which brought sin into the world, and all our woe; power which shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body—the power whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself. *Jesus, as a worker of miracles, is Jesus revealed as the Saviour, able to save to the uttermost.*

RE-UNION.

“*When shall I arise, and the night be gone?*”—*JOB.*

THOU wilt not sever us, O Lord our God,
 In Thy blest mansions. On earth's dreary sod
 Our hearts are torn with partings. One by one
 The loved and cherished leave us. Every stone
 The cold damp cemetery holds, is faced
 With lines that find their parallels deep traced
 Within our souls. Thus works Thy chisel, Lord,
 In strokes severe. Yet be Thy name adored
 For all Thy dealings! In Thy purpose deep
 A blessing lies, unscanned by us who weep
 Amid these shadows. Night will soon be past—
 The cloudy night of time that ends at last
 In heaven's bright morning. Yet a little while,
 And we shall greet that blissful morning's smile
 With hallelujahs. Then Thy love's deep thought
 Shall be unfolded. All Thy blood has bought
 Shall come with Thee; and each we loved and knew
 And mourned for here, shall rise upon our view
 In brighter, lovelier form—akin to Thine—
 Thy work, Lord Jesus!—perfect, pure, divine!—
 Thus reunited, through eternal days
 Our joys shall be *Thyself*—our theme Thy praise!

P A R E N T S .

WE have seen that the Christian's home should be a reflection of his character, as one dead unto sin and alive unto God by Jesus Christ, and that all its arrangements should testify that the Lord rules there. We have considered marriage as the ordinance of the Lord, and have exhibited the duties of husbands and wives to one another. We come now to consider their duties as parents, and to view home as the sphere of the most delicate duties and the highest temporal enjoyments of both parents and children. The previous chapters may be regarded as introductory to this chapter. For although the condition of a Christian's home must have an important bearing on his own character, happiness, and influence in society, its influence is most absolute in the formation of the character of his children. And important as the discharge of the relative duties of husband and wife may be to themselves, their children, after all, will be the greatest sufferers by their failure. Nor is it to be forgotten that in that case children suffer innocently, at the hands of those from whom they cannot escape, and who are bound by the strongest obligations of nature and by the ordinance of God to seek their happiness and well-being.

Both in nature and in revelation God has given the highest testimony to the importance of this relationship. In nature he testifies its importance by the strength of the affection which he has implanted in the bosoms to which the

helpless infant is first pressed, to which its very helplessness is a charm, which anticipates the feeblest expression of its wants, and which would regard the neglect of these wants as the most unnatural of crimes. When the infant shall have reached the full vigor of manhood, he will not be more safe, nor, in some respects, more powerful than he is under the guardianship of this affection, to which God appeals as the most inalienable and unconquerable of the human heart. It has been beautifully and truly said: "The child may in mature years speak with the voice of command to those whose services he has purchased, and who obey him because, in the barter they have made of their services, it is their business to obey; but he cannot, even by the most imperious orders which he addresses to the most obsequious of slaves, exercise an authority more commanding than that which, in the first hours of his life, when a few indistinct cries and tears were his only language, he exercised irresistibly over hearts of the very existence of which he was ignorant."

A Christian, studious of the will of God, must conclude that there are high ends to be served by an affection so controlling and so enduring. This conclusion will be strengthened by the fact of the complete and prolonged helplessness of infancy. The young of inferior creatures are indeed protected by an instinctive parental affection of marvellous power. But a few weeks complete the period of their dependence, and they are dismissed to wander through earth or air, without the slightest remembrance of ties that once seemed so tender. The dependence of an infant on its parents is more complete; a multitude of wants and sufferings appeal irresistibly to parental compassion through days of toil and nights of watching; but it is also prolonged through years, and only ceases by slow degrees, as the help-

lessness which appealed to a parent's compassion grows into the pliant strength which may be controlled by a parent's authority; as intelligence dawns and expands under a parent's nurturing care; and when the heart has learned to reciprocate the love of which it was so long the almost unconscious object. This prolonged period of filial dependence is indeed the occasion of the most lasting bonds and the source of the most lasting enjoyments of which this earth is the sphere; but a reflecting man cannot fail to see in it also an indication of God's design that the child should be subject to a parent's moulding influence. God commits to the parents a mind to be educated, a heart to be disciplined. A Christian cannot suppose that the design of God reaches no farther than this present life. To him, therefore, nature most emphatically utters the charge which revelation interprets: "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Having provided for the protection of the child by the strongest affections of the human heart, God has clothed the parent with all authority for the accomplishment of the great ends of the relationship. That authority has its foundation in nature and the fitness of things. Nothing can be more sad than when it degenerates into a mere exercise of power, compelling the sullen submission of a dependent; but even in its perversion we see the ordinance of nature. The necessity of parental authority is apparent in the ignorance and inexperience of the child which needs to be guided and controlled. And who will undertake its guidance but one who loves with a parent's love? Who is so much interested in guiding it aright as the parent, who must share either its happiness or its misery? The child, it is evident, can neither enjoy the protection of the parent's strength nor the guidance of the parent's intelligence, ex-

cept in submission. The authority of a parent is therefore both necessary and natural.

But in a question of authority it is important to notice that it is not left to be inferred from the nature and necessity of the case, but is established by the express ordinance of God. So that the parent is invested with the authority of God, and disobedience to parents is, in the very act, disobedience to God. The divine sanction is all the more complete, because it generally comes in the form of an absolute injunction of obedience, addressed to children. Thus in the passage in Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, to which reference has so often been made in these pages, we read : " Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." No question is raised as to the character of the parents, or the manner in which they exercise their authority. It is enough that they are parents, and then obedience to them is obedience to the Lord. The injunction has no limitation, but that which is contained in the terms by which it is enforced ; for obedience in the Lord can never imply disobedience to the Lord ; that is to say, obedience is to cease only when to obey would be to commit a crime or a sin. The injunction is sustained by a quotation from the Mosaic law : " Honor thy father and thy mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long upon the earth." The Apostle points out the importance attached to this ordinance, by the fact that it is the first commandment with promise. The law of God, as a whole, when it was given for the government of the chosen nation, was sustained by promises of temporal blessings in case of obedience, as well as by threatenings of temporal judgments in case of disobedience. But God gave prominence to this one commandment by accompanying it with a first and special blessing ; thereby intimat-

ing that the relationship which it regulates lies at the foundation of the whole social fabric, and that the duty which it enjoins lies at the foundation of all social as well as individual happiness. This view is confirmed by the history of all nations.

This passage was more fully considered when we came to speak of the duties of children. Enough has been said at present to show the obligation under which parents lie to God and to society, as well as to their families, to maintain the government and discipline of their children with faithful and judicious care. A reflecting man will regard it as no light matter to hold in his hands such absolute authority over others—to know that for so many years of the life of his children, they are placed thus absolutely under his control—and to know that if he exercises his control selfishly or unwisely, he may overcloud their young years with premature sorrow, and inflict an irreparable injury on those whose welfare he is bound by such sacred ties to promote. But with all his sense of solemn responsibility in the exercise of it, it must be evident that in no way can he more certainly dishonor God, frustrate His wise design, and inflict injury upon his family, than by abandoning the authority with which God has intrusted him. The parent who permits the reins of government to fall from his hands, betrays a solemn trust, and fails in his high position as the representative of God, and the depository of His power. Such an infringement of the moral government of God must be followed by heavy and certain penalties.

The principles of God's moral government, like what men style the laws of nature, cannot be violated with impunity. Christians often need to be reminded of this. The violator of either must reap the fruit of his error, whether he be a believer or an unbeliever. God may forgive the sin, but

He will not set aside His moral government or the course of nature. If a Christian thrusts his hand into the fire, grace will not prevent his hand from being burned. If he places his home in a pestilential marsh, grace will not shield him from sickness. A man who has impaired his constitution by intemperance may be converted and forgiven, but he will nevertheless suffer the effects of his folly in this life. The Word of God abounds with examples of the same inevitable enforcement of the principles of God's moral government; and it is evident that it would result in utter confusion if it were otherwise, just as the failure of parents to enforce the government of their families results in utter confusion there.

Without inquiring into the causes of it, we may speak of it here as a generally lamented fact, that our own age and country are notorious for the relaxation of parental authority, to an extent which threatens the stability of social order, and, therefore, all the highest interests of mankind. In the Epistle to the Romans, disobedience to parents is enumerated among the characteristics of the most depraved state of heathen society, when the rejection of the knowledge of God had wrought out its fearful results in human character. And the same fatal characteristic appears in the description of the awful degeneracy of the last perilous times which the Apostle predicts in the Epistle to Titus. There is surely enough in the existing state of families to awaken the earnest solicitude not only of the Christian but of the patriot. Some one has remarked, with what truth the reader may judge, that in our day the divine injunction is inverted, as though it were written: "Parents, obey your children." There will be government and mastery somewhere in a family, and if those into whose hands God has committed authority fail to use it properly, it will be usurped by those

who ought to be subject to it. Most pitiable it is to see parents ruled by their children; and the unnatural inversion of the divine order brings a fearful retribution on the heads of both of the guilty parties. The disastrous consequences to society may not so speedily appear, but they are not less sure. The lingering influence of the strict training of Puritan families has thus far proved the strength and safety of this nation. But it cannot be concealed that this influence is well-nigh effaced; and the insubordination, irreverence, insolence, and wilfulness of youth, which are the proper fruits of the abandonment of parental government, cast their darkened shadow over the future of America. Unless family government can be resumed on Scriptural principles, it will be in vain the Constitution is vindicated, the forms of free institutions preserved, and the vast natural resources of the country developed by the enterprise of the people. They cannot escape the judgment of God.

Multitudes of Christian parents are piercing themselves through with many sorrows by their unfaithfulness to the trust committed to them. To save themselves trouble and pain, they have allowed their children to grow up in wilfulness and worldliness, and God is using their neglected children to chasten them. Such parents may be subjects of divine grace, and God may forgive their sin, but that will not save either themselves or their children from the consequences of their neglect; that will not render it the less true that "a foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bore him;" and what must be their anguish if they are constrained to trace his folly back to their own weak indulgence or criminal neglect, in the face of the most solemn charges of God's Word? Why is it, Christian parents, that you sit in the house of God without the companionship of your children? Why is it not said of you, Christian father:

“He rejoiced, believing with all his house?” Why is it that those who sit most prominently in the seat of the scorner, the vainest of the vain, the most irreligious of the worldly, are those who go forth from so-called Christian homes? Alas! for you, if the answer is that you failed to govern your children in the fear of God, and thus at once wronged your children and dishonored the Lord. No wonder if you have lost your true position and influence as Christians, when the world is pointing the finger of scorn to your families, and your own consciousness that the reproach is merited brings a blush to your cheek and a pang to your conscience.

The strong affection which God has implanted in the bosoms of parents is designed not to turn aside their authority by a weak fondness, but to give to authority its true tone and character. Even in a state of society where we lament the relaxation of parental control, it is necessary to remind parents of the spirit in which authority should be exercised. For it is just in such a state of society that what passes for family discipline is nothing but the occasional outburst of angry passions, which may, for the time, triumph over inferior strength, but which arouses a resentment which only “bides its time.” “And ye fathers,” says the Apostle, “provoke not your children to wrath;” or, as we have it in another place: “Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.” Both father and mother are the objects of filial obedience and respect, and so the authority of both must be subject to this limitation. The injunction is, however, specially addressed to fathers, because they are most liable to err on the side of stern severity, while mothers are more liable to err on the side of indulgent fondness. True parental rule is the rule of love, which secures the obedience of gratitude and respect. A father who has no voice

but that of stern command; may exact the obedience which fear dictates, but it is obedience which ceases whenever fear loses its dominion. He cannot receive from the same individual the fear of a slave and the love of a son. On the contrary, he will speedily discover that such fear is closely allied to hatred.

No more injurious influence can reach the mind of children than the constant irritation of angry passions by the capricious exactions of a domestic tyrant, who vents his ill-humor on those who are dependent on him. If children find that they can never please a father—that their best efforts are greeted by expressions of dissatisfaction, rather than by an approving smile—they become discouraged, and abandon the attempt to please, or yield, at best, a sullen submission, while they long for the day of emancipation from a hated thralldom. A Christian parent should indeed feel that his authority must be maintained at all hazards, but he can never flatter himself that he is bringing up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, unless love and tenderness pervade all his relations, and unless the strictest self-control is conspicuous in the government which he exercises over them. When he demands the submission of their will to his, it must be made evident that it is not caprice but enlightened love that demands the sacrifice, and that the required subjection is not to superior force, but to superior wisdom. He will watch for opportunities of making his children understand, at a very early age, the wisdom, righteousness, and love of his demands, and thus he will win their confidence and gratitude, even by the exercise of authority which was naturally irksome. He will bind them to him by a well-regulated love, which will obey his slightest wish from a desire to please and a reluctance to offend him, without waiting for a command which must be obeyed from a slavish fear of punishment.

The wisest and kindest exercise of parental authority will not indeed avoid the necessity of chastisement. Duty to God and his children demand that a Christian parent should firmly and resolutely control their wilfulness, and there are probably few cases in which that can be done without the rod. We are taught that "He that spareth the rod, hateth the child," but that does not mean that he should delight in the rod without sparing the child. A Christian parent will aim to make it felt that he is an imitator of our heavenly Father, who chastens us as for our profit, and that the rod is wielded, not for the gratification of an angry passion, but in the discharge of a duty, which the tenderest love for the child, as well as a regard to the ordinance of God, imposes. Some of us can testify that we were never more sensible of a father's love than when he inflicted punishment; and though it might excite our anger while a rebellious will was unconquered, conscience secretly approved his course.

Strict discipline, or even severity, is not felt to be unkindness if its justice be evident. Nothing can be farther from the nurture and admonition of the Lord, than to indulge the wilfulness of children; and in no way will a parent sooner forfeit their respect than by conniving at their faults. On the other hand, the nurture and admonition of the Lord can never bear the aspect of unsympathizing hardness. It will be an uncompromising but yet a gracious control, like that of the Lord's over His house. The children will find in the parent an example of self-control, when, instead of provoking their angry passions by incessant conflict, he calmly and gently, but yet steadily, enforces their submission. The parent who leaves it to be suspected by his child that the chastisement he inflicts is but the expression of his ungoverned anger, aims a mortal blow at his own authority, and implants in the bosom of his child a sense of injury which years will not eradicate.

A Christian parent professes not to govern his children by the mere force of natural authority. He takes higher ground, and professes to act in the name of the Lord, and as His representative. In doing so, it is incumbent upon him to see to it that his government commends itself to the consciences of his children, and that his own character exhibits the life of Christ. Even young children understand the peculiarity of his profession, and are swift to detect his inconsistencies. Since he will find it necessary to restrain them in many things in which the children of the ungodly are indulged, he may rest assured that his conduct will be narrowly scrutinized. Personal inconsistency, associated as it frequently is with a repulsive system of religious restraint, is the readiest method of exciting their bitter prejudices against Christianity. A Christian parent should remember that, as he professes to act in the name of Christ, his children are to receive their first impressions, not only of Christianity, but of Christ, from his life, and especially from his conduct toward themselves.

The strongest affections implanted in a parent's heart, and the high authority with which a parent is invested, are designed to secure the education of the children, who are dependent on him through the period of their protracted pupilage. Education too commonly means only a certain development of the intellectual powers and tastes, the communication of a certain knowledge of literature and science, with the addition, perhaps, of the cultivation of certain accomplishments and graces of manner, and a practical acquaintance with a trade or profession, which may fit the child for success in life, or to make a figure in society. Even a heathen, who could extol a virtue which he could not inspire, thus rebukes such a shortsighted view of what a parent owes both to his children and to society: "It is not a

blessing to live merely, but to live well. Life in itself, if life without wisdom be good, is a good that is common to me with the meanest reptile; and He who gave me nothing more than life, gave me only what a fly or a worm may boast." He tells parents that, in giving society another member, they should see to it that he whom they give shall not be among the evils that oppress it, and argues that they completely neglect a parent's duty who think only of a few years, which are as nothing, and overlook eternity, which is every thing. •

Apart from the express injunction to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, the end for which a Christian ought to educate his children cannot be doubtful. With the estimate which he professes to put on this world, he must be training his children for a better portion: professing to be dead to the world, the inconsistency is monstrous if he is directing their whole aim and studies to worldly success and pleasures. Yet with many professing Christians the object of education scarcely rises above this. Whatever their profession, it is to be feared that they are only seeking for their children what they most highly prize themselves, and that the concerns of the soul occupy as secondary a place in their own hearts as they do in their instructions to their children. Indeed it were worse than vain to attempt to impress divine truth on the minds of their children, while it is evident that their own hearts are filled with worldly care.

The errors which Christians commit in the education of their children, too frequently reveal the true state of their own hearts. The duty of providing for their children is made the excuse for devoting themselves to the world, to which they profess to be dead. Their eagerness to have their children embark in the course where they were in dan-

ger of shipwreck, reveals a lurking attachment to what they profess to have renounced. If prosperity crowns the cares and toils which were undertaken under the plea of providing for their own household, their children form the excuse for introducing fashion, luxury, and ostentation into their homes. When they tell us, "You cannot put an old head upon young shoulders, and children will have enjoyment," there is a strong suspicion that the parents crave worldly enjoyment; and, after some festive occasion, the children will remark that their father, with all his prayers and piety, enjoyed it as much as any of them. Professing Christians, however you deceive yourselves, your children interpret all this as intimating that Christ is not the chosen and satisfying portion of your soul—that, whatever you may say, religion is an irksome task, from which you are glad to escape. Just in proportion to the high claims of the profession you have made, they will treat all religious profession with contempt. A thousand times better it were for them that you abandoned a profession which you expose to such shame. And what must they think of you, who say that you are living for God and heaven, and yet are base enough to train them for the devil and the world?

You may say: "We cannot make our children Christians." No, you cannot. That unconverted child of yours is dead in trespasses and sins, and it is not in your power to give life to the dead. Dead in trespasses and sins, by nature a child of wrath! Is this true of the child that lies in your bosom, and is this the reason of your indifference? The affections and dispositions which he inherited from you are depraved, and lead down to death. And is this the reason why you pamper his craving after the world, and eagerly watch for every opportunity of worldly advancement? If your profession were a reality, these very considerations

would arouse your unwearied and prayerful solicitude to lead them to Christ, and you would as soon "with your own hand unbar the gates of hell and thrust them in," as educate them for the world and seek the world for them as their portion.

You cannot deliver them from wrath and give them eternal life, but you know One who can. He has said: "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." When he gives such a charge, it implies the promise of grace sufficient for it, and the result of conformity to His will cannot be doubtful. The issue is pledged in the charge as much as though he had said anew: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." God indeed is sovereign. Has he not displayed His sovereignty in making your child the subject of such a charge, with its implied promise? Your rightful acknowledgment of His sovereignty consists in laying hold of His promise in the face of all natural discouragements, and addressing yourself at once to the solemn trust.

The fact that there are many unconverted children in the households of believers cannot be urged against the certainty of the divine promise. The legitimate inference from that fact is, that these believers have not brought up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, for the failure must be on man's side. It is not bringing up a child in the way he should go to exercise a merely natural authority over him, to inculcate natural morality, though you take the law of God as the text-book, and to teach him the punctual observance of lifeless forms of religion. By all this you may only be confirming him in his aversion to the truth. A man may pray with apparent earnestness for the conversion of his children, and yet the whole tone of his life and the tendency of the education he gives them may go

to settle them in worldliness, and teach them that such a life is compatible with the hope of eternal life. But it cannot surely be said that he has brought them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

In order to do this, believing parents must walk closely with God. Their characters must reflect Christ, and their life must testify that their conversation is in heaven, from whence also they look for the Saviour. They must not defer their discharge of their trust till the character of the child is matured in sin and folly. His almost infantile thoughts should be moulded on Christ. The earliest opportunities of dawning intelligence should be seized to sow the good seed, for it is impossible to decide how early conscience begins to speak, or a sense of the need of a Saviour may be awakened. We know not how early a heart may be attracted by the charms, or melted by the love of Jesus; but we know that they were very young children of whom He said: "Suffer them to come unto me." Christian parents should see to it that what was said to Timothy may be said to their child in after life: "From a child thou hast known the Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation." At the same time, they will bear in mind that the charge to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord cannot be fulfilled in set lessons in Scripture, and occasional instructions and counsels, however faithful. That charge extends to all their associations with them, and all their arrangements with reference to them. Every thing in a Christian's home should tell his children that Christ is Lord there. Every thing in the Christian's life should tell them that he is Christ's. All his intercourse with his family should tell them of the holy attractions and satisfying blessedness of a life in Christ. They ought to know that a Christian's great aim is not that they may attain the wealth or honors of the

world, but that they receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. With this end in view, they should be made to feel that he is desirous that they should learn all that may be useful to them as the servants of Christ here, but nothing that is inconsistent with that character.

This assuredly will not lead to indifference as to the cultivation of the intellectual powers and the acquisition of useful knowledge. The importance of such an education will be enhanced by its subserviency to an end so exalted; and their opportunities of improvement will not be squandered in the pursuit of frivolous accomplishments which can only serve the lowest ends of vanity or ambition. A father's industry and confidence in God's providential care will be an example to the son when he comes to learn an honorable business, not for the purpose of amassing wealth, but to enable him to maintain good works for necessary uses. While the believing parent shows that he is Christ's, he will seek to instil it into the earliest and most firmly rooted convictions of his children, that they are to live not to themselves, but to Christ; not for this world, but for a heavenly inheritance.

In addressing Christian parents, it ought not to be necessary to remind them, that for their children as for themselves there is no salvation out of Christ. The young are often addressed as though they might be saved on legal grounds. They are told that *if* they are good they will go to heaven, and *if* they are wicked they will go to hell, and that too by men who would be ready enough to denounce the falsehood if it were addressed to adults. But while there is no salvation out of Christ, it is essential to the perfection of His character and work that there should be no period of human life at which salvation is impossible. Our present purpose does not lead us to speak of the case of those who fall

asleep in infancy, and yet we cannot proceed without rejoicing that, from amidst the bitter weeping over Bethlehem's slaughtered innocents, there rises a voice of divine consolation to every mother who sits in the desolate home when the prattle of infancy has been silenced: "Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears, for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord, and they shall come again from the land of the enemy." For the symbol, a broken and blighted rosebud, which heathen despair engraved on the tombstones of children, Christian hope would substitute, if human art knew how to express it, a flower transplanted to the paradise of God, and expanding there in unfading beauty.

The precise point where conscience begins to speak cannot be fixed, but wherever it is, there is the point from which a sinner may be led to the Saviour of sinners. Faith in Him is not a matter of intellectual power and matured wisdom. All human attainments, as well as all human services, are so completely excluded in the reception of salvation, that the Lord says to men in the highest pride of their powers, their wisdom and their virtue: "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein." If the wisest and the most self-righteous must become as little children, who have no pretensions either to wisdom or to righteousness, why may not your child come to Him who came to save the lost? "To believe" is the characteristic of their age—loving-confidence is its habitual attitude. Their hearts are at least as susceptible as your own of the tenderest influence of love. Why conceal from them the love of Him who offers Himself to their confidence as a Saviour? The annals of the Church are not without instances of conversion at a very early age, and if the instances recorded are not more numerous, it is

probably because the prevailing impression, even of Christian parents, has prevented them from recognizing a work of grace when it has occurred in their own households, and has prevented the profession of faith on the part of their children till they had reached maturer years. But without dwelling upon the proofs which the Scriptures and these annals afford, the Christian parent surely has a sufficient encouragement in the injunction to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, for confident prayer and unwearied effort.

Human wisdom and strength are indeed inadequate to this office, but with that injunction before them, believing fathers and mothers may go together to a throne of grace, and wrestle with God on behalf of their children, in the assurance that according to their faith so it will be to them. When can any two believers agree on earth as touching one thing, if not a father and a mother pleading for the soul of their child? Parents! in this case your children will be more to you than sweet playthings for the entertainment of your leisure. But in the midst of these solemn responsibilities, as you are sustained by the grace of God, the home which is ordered on these holy principles, and for these holy ends, will become to you and your children a scene of peace and happiness such as earth rarely witnesses. What an over-payment of delight will you have for all your pains and toil in the day when you know that they are indeed children of God. Until that day comes, the promise of God will be a satisfying security for the blessed result. Even should you be called away from them before you have distinctly seen the evidences of a work of grace in them, you know that your presence or absence does not affect the certainty of the answer of prayers offered in faith in the name of Jesus. The faithfulness of God does not require your

watchful eye to see that He makes His promise good, and you will say farewell, as confidently anticipating a meeting with them in the day of our gathering together unto Him, as though you had been privileged to look and see that their names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

THE PARABLE OF THE KING RECKONING WITH HIS DEBTORS.

THE series of parables in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew is, as we have seen, prophetic—designed to unfold the course, character, and issue of the present dispensation. The next parable which we find recorded, that of “the king reckoning with his debtors,” is the first of another class of parables which may be styled “the moral,” in distinction from “the prophetic.” The parables of this class are not allegories, designed to unfold something in the future history of the great plan of redemption, but are incidents, either from real life, or framed in harmony with real life, designed to illustrate some practical lesson, or to make a practical application of some great truth to the hearts and lives of the hearers. In the instance before us, though we have no good reason to conclude that the transaction actually occurred at the court of any Oriental sovereign, there is nothing in the circumstances inconsistent with the supposition that it may be historical; parallels to its principal circumstances may be found in actual history. Even the enormous debt, which amounts to sixteen millions of dollars, if we understand it as ten thousand talents of silver, is not unexampled in the relations of these sovereigns and their servants; nor was it beyond the possible means of such servants to liquidate, for it is the very sum which Haman offered to pay into the treasury of Ahasuerus, as the price of

gratifying his malice against the Jews. The sentence of the indignant monarch, which included the wife and children of the offender, is in perfect harmony with the constitution of Eastern despotisms, which regarded all the subjects, with their families and households, as the slaves and creatures of the sovereign. The wife of Haman and their ten children were involved in his ruin; and profane history enables us, if it were necessary, to multiply examples.

This parable is recorded in the close of Matt. xviii., and forms the appropriate conclusion of a discourse which was called forth by the question of the disciples: "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Though there is not the close connection between the various parts of the discourse which we should expect in a regular and methodical composition, we shall find it profitable to take a preliminary glance at the principal topics introduced by the Lord in His reply to the question of His disciples. We need not at present inquire into the occasion of their dispute as to who should be the greatest among them; only it will be remembered that the dispute occurred after the Lord had taken three of them apart as the witnesses of His transfiguration, and when they were on their way to Capernaum.

Capernaum, it will be remembered, was the temporary abode of Jesus in the intervals of His public labors throughout Judea and Galilee. What we know of the course of Him who was "meek and lowly in heart," forbids the supposition that the children and youth of Capernaum were overlooked by Him. Nor would it appear surprising if, when the great and wise despised Him, the young found an irresistible attraction in the gentle love of their Friend. Though, from the very circumstance of their youth, they do not appear as actors in the Gospel narratives, there may have been many of these "little ones who believed upon

Him," and who were among the foremost to welcome Him on His return from His journeys of mercy. The tradition that Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, was the child whom the Lord set before the disciples as an example, is as worthless as these traditions usually are. But there are several things in the discourse which lead us to the conclusion that the boy was a youthful disciple, whose unassuming humility and unquestioning faith furnished the emphatic rebuke of the pretensions and rivalries of older disciples. Bengel attempts to meet the necessities of the case by the supposition that "it was doubtless a child of excellent disposition and most attractive appearance, then present by divine providence." But there is no reason, except in the very disposition to slight these little ones which the Lord rebukes, why we should seek to explain away the plain import of the action and the language, which recognize the little one as a believer. The child is kept before the twelve as the instance and illustration through the whole discourse. The Lord points to him not only when he says, "Whosoever shall humble himself as *this* little child"—the child He then clasped in His arms; but also when He says, "Whoso shall receive one *such* little child in my name receiveth me;" not any little child, but "one *such* little child"—"one of these little ones which believeth in me"—for no other can be received in His name. While in receiving one of these believing ones, we receive Christ, because Christ is in them.

The force of the discourse is not impaired by understanding it thus literally, as relating to the boy before them, not as in some way a type of believers, but as himself a believer. For what could more emphatically rebuke the unhallowed ambition of the twelve, or more clearly illustrate the principles which the Lord inculcates, than just such a living instance of His own distinguishing grace. The an-

nouncement of the great truth that "the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost," places them all, old and young, upon a level. That which attracted Him to the oldest and wisest among them, in a human point of view, was not that they were old or wise, but that they were lost; and that which was the dearest and highest distinction of any of them was one that was common to them and that young disciple—they were saved, "not by works of righteousness which they had done, but according to His mercy." They had been all alike lost, they were all alike helpless, and it was only as, in utter self-renunciation and abasement, they were brought to the same position of simple faith in Him, that any of them could enter into the kingdom of heaven. God, as Bengel remarks, "in receiving a believer receives Christ;" and this is equally true whether the believer be a child or a sage. So in our reception of one another in the name of Christ, Christ is received. No one can aspire to a higher place than this; but, however exalted, the believer has nothing in which to glory. This is the consideration which should regulate our relations to one another, extinguishing all rivalries, abasing every self-exalting thought, and investing the very least with unspeakable preciousness in our esteem, since *there* we see, not only an object of Christ's love, but Christ Himself.

It is not difficult to see how the thought of offending one of these little ones that believed in Him occurred in such a connection. The unseemly discussion in which the twelve had been engaged, and the question which they asked, not only showed how little they were prepared, as yet, for the place to which they were called in relation to the flock of God; but by such a discussion and such a question, they might already have offended one another, and more especially the little ones. The very thought in each of them was

an injury to all ; and the question was an occasion of stumbling, both in the unhallowed spirit which it provoked, the discouragement which it brought to the weak, and the evil example which it set before the young and inexperienced, who would naturally look up to them. The Lord emphatically testifies the evil of such offences, and the preciousness of these little ones in His esteem, when He says that it would be better for a man to be cut off by the most violent and shocking death, than that he should live to be a stumbling-block to the least of them.

At the hazard of unduly curtailing space for the consideration of the parable, we dwell for a little on the Scriptural meaning of offences, and on the Scriptural mode of dealing with them. The word rendered "offence," in this and other passages of Scripture, signifies a stumbling-block ; and the corresponding verb "to offend," signifies to cause to stumble. It is, for example, the word which is rendered "stumbling-block," in 1 Cor. i. 23 : "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a *stumbling-block*, and to the Greeks foolishness." In its general use with reference to the Christian life, it signifies any thing that may prove a stumbling-block, either to faith or practice ; that may obstruct faith or shake confidence, or that may lead into sin. To offend signifies to ensnare any one, to lead him away from the purity of Christian doctrine, or to lead him into sin, as when Paul says : "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." It is joined in Scripture with other sins against the purity and peace of the Church, the integrity of Christian doctrine, and the unity of Christian love. For example, in Rom. xvi. 17 : "Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and *offences* contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid

them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

The connection is not remote between this entreaty and charge of the Apostle, and the warnings of our Lord in the passage before us. The question of the disciples was the budding forth of the very spirit of self-seeking and ambition, which, afterward, by perversions of the truth and incentives to pride and strife, corrupted the Church and rent it into rival factions, making the young, simple, and unwary, partisans and a prey. Is it not in view of the disastrous consequences of these corruptions and divisions as obstacles to the reception of the truth by men in general, that the Lord says, "Woe unto the world because of offences;" and pronounces His most emphatic woe upon those who occasion and encourage these schisms and scandals? Is it not also the Church, as a body having many members, that He calls to cut off unsparingly these authors of confusion and disturbers of its unity, however prominent the position they may occupy, and however eminent their gifts? It is true that the individual believer may often be called upon to sacrifice many things that appear both useful and precious to him in the relations of this life, when he finds that they are hindrances to him in the Christian life; but the aim of the whole discourse, and the analogy of the Scriptures, seem to give especial pertinence to the injunction to cut off hand or foot, and pluck out the eye, when understood as referring to believers corporately, and in their associated capacity. The Apostle's charge to "mark them and avoid them," is an echo of the charge of the Lord regarding all who offend.

The spirit which the twelve had manifested would naturally lead to contempt for the young, or at least to neglect of them; and therefore gave occasion to the charge: "Take

heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you that, in heaven, their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." "To behold the face of the king," was an Oriental expression for the enjoyment of the highest favor and confidence of a king, because the privilege of free access to the presence of these proud despots was bestowed upon few. To say, then, that "their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven," was just, in other words, to say, that these little ones were held in such high esteem that the noblest and mightiest of the angels—those who stood nearest to the eternal throne—are those to whom the guardianship of these young disciples is intrusted. By this consideration the Lord commends them to the care of His Church, and the twelve are taught that, instead of seeking in their ambition to lord it over God's heritage, a loving care of the least of all His disciples was their most honorable service. They were not only to avoid every thing that would put an occasion to fall in their way, but they were not to look on with indifference when the least of the flock wandered or was led into error. He presents a higher incentive than the fact that the highest angels make these little ones the objects of their special ministry, in the fact of His own self-sacrificing love, which was drawn out by the thought that they were lost. And so all believers are admonished, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus;" and to go forth in His footsteps, at all self-sacrifice and self-denial, to seek the lost, to reclaim the erring; encouraged by the assurance that in this they are in harmony with our Father in heaven; "for it is not His will that one of these little ones perish."

A believer who is led of the Spirit can never be indifferent to the sins and errors of his brethren. His love, both of his brother and of the Church, forbid *that*. He cannot, like a

proud worldling, affect a haughty contempt of one who trespasses against him, as though it were beneath him to feel or to notice the injury. Yet it is not under a sense of the injury done to himself that he is to act, but under the influence of love, which would save both the erring brother and the Church from the consequences of the wrong. Accordingly he is charged to go to him, and remonstrate with him, and entreat him, but, from a regard to his feelings, to go alone, that there may be no exposure to mortify him or spread the scandal. Failing thus to reclaim the offender, two others are to be taken, who may join their remonstrances and entreaties, as well as be witnesses in the next step. For, if all this fails, love is not to abandon its efforts; but then at last it must be told to the Church; and, if this last resource fails, then there remains nothing, for sake of the honor of the Master, the purity of the Church, and the welfare of the offender himself, but that he be avoided and be no longer treated as one of the saints, but as a heathen man and a publican. The welfare of the offender himself demands all this, as Paul enjoins the Corinthians, "to deliver such an one unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

The solemn force and significance of such an action, duly taken in the name of the Lord, cannot be overlooked. The action, therefore, when called for, can neither be lightly undertaken nor timidly neglected. But a question might arise, How many persons may be required to exercise authority in the name of Jesus, or to enjoy the privileges of such an assembly of brethren? And how full of gracious condescension is the answer! how graciously accommodated to the circumstances in which believers have so often found themselves placed! *Two*, agreed and asking in His name, have all the fulness of the promise given to prayer—two or three,

assembled in His name, have the unqualified assurance of His presence. But then it must be observed that every thing turns upon this condition, "IN MY NAME;" and before we claim the promise, it becomes us to inquire faithfully into our compliance with the condition. We urge this question on our readers: Do they really know what it is to ask or to assemble in the name of Jesus?

Peter's question regarding the forgiveness of injuries manifestly refers to a case in which the visit of remonstrance should prove successful—"if he hear thee," or, according to the Lord's charge in Luke xvii.: "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and *if he repent*, forgive him." How often should this be repeated? Peter doubtless gave himself credit for a great stretch of charity in the supposition that he might be called to do this seven times. The Lord's answer: "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven." It will be remembered that this is the number which measures the period in which, according to the prediction in Daniel, the temporal history of the Jews will be summed up. It has been suggested that the Lord refers to that period, and since, with the last of these seventy weeks, all temporal history will close, so to say "until seventy times seven," was just in other words to say: "Never during the dispensation of grace will it become one who needs forgiveness to cease to forgive." At any rate, it will be granted that the number intimates that the time can never come when a Christian may avenge himself, for as it has been expressed, "Charity is a boundless and eternal debt," and so there is no point of oft-repeated provocation at which a Christian can refuse the hand of cordial forgiveness to an offending brother. It is proper to observe that the Lord is speaking of forgiveness among His people as implying the full and cordial recognition of brotherhood.

We need not say that Christians in their relations to the world can have no injuries to avenge, no rights to claim. Without regard to the number or magnitude of injuries and insults endured, the Lord's charge is, "Resist not evil," "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." Yet, strange to say, professing Christians in our day think that they are at liberty to urge every claim and to seek satisfaction for every injury, for example, to go to law with any man, provided he is not a member of the same Church with themselves. With regard to unbelievers, the charge of the Lord is unqualified; He does not say in their case, "if he repent." That condition is only added when forgiveness includes the recognition of brotherhood, and is added evidently for the maintenance of Christian discipline.

The grounds of Christian forgiveness and the extent of it are illustrated more fully and forcibly than they could be in any general discussion, in the parable which, Greswell says, "teaches us that the true reason why we are at all times bound to forgive, or to be ready to forgive the offences of others against ourselves, is that we are at all times offenders against God, at all times in need of His forgiveness for offences committed against Him—a reason which, being of perpetual force, renders the obligation founded upon it perpetual also; and being of universal application, makes the duty proposed for observance binding upon all." Or, as we might perhaps express it, the parable lays us under the constraint of that love which has freely forgiven us all trespasses to exercise a forgiving love toward those who have committed injuries against us, which are too insignificant to be named in comparison with the enormity of our sins against God.

The parties introduced in the parable are a certain king and his servants or slaves, for such is the import of the word, and it is used in accommodation to the notion of an absolute monarchy in the East that subjects were the slaves, the absolute property of the sovereign. So that, in his reckoning with those who were indebted to him, he must be understood as sustaining the threefold relation of king, master, or owner and creditor. It is thus that the relation of God to the sinner is illustrated, and however our judgment may revolt against the arrogant assumption of such claims on the part of one man over his fellows, the figure but inadequately represents the claims of God upon us. It is evident at a glance that the reckoning in the parable refers not to a future judgment, but to God's present dealing in grace with sinners. The act of reckoning with the individual sinner may be understood as referring to any occasion on which some view of the claims of God and the consequences of sin may be brought home to the heart of the sinner; for example, by some faithful and pungent testimony of truth, or by some striking, startling providence—some bereavement which softens the heart and discovers the emptiness of earth and the bitterness of sin—some imminent danger or some marked deliverance—some sickness or peril which breaks in upon the ordinary security and insensibility of the soul, bringing death, judgment, and eternity into near and terrifying view; such occasions as many of us can remember in our own lives or have witnessed in the lives of others, when the abject terror, the bitter outcry, and the rash promises and good resolutions of the sinner are graphically represented by those of the convicted defaulter in the parable.

“And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents.” When we remember that it is a king reckoning with his servants, and

then notice the enormous amount of the debt, we may infer that this servant is supposed to be a subject high in the confidence of his sovereign, who had been intrusted with the administration of some important department of state. The fact that he is the first to be reckoned with, indicates that he occupied the highest trust and enjoyed preëminence of favor. We will then see that the claims of the creditor are augmented by the peculiarity of his relations to the debtor, as a master who had heaped favors upon his slave, as a monarch who had advanced a subject to the highest place of trust and honor; and the servant summoned into the presence of the king, stands not simply chargeable with an enormous debt; but as a debtor he is a defaulter, chargeable with the blackest dishonesty and ingratitude, with a shameful breach of trust and a betrayal of confidence, which involved disloyalty and treason against the sovereign who had the highest claims upon his devotion and fidelity. The amount of the debt is the proof of the blackness of his criminality. The actual amount, of course, depends upon whether we are to understand the talent as a talent of gold or a talent of silver. We have already said that ten thousand talents of silver would amount to sixteen millions of dollars, and it may easily be calculated how enormous the sum is if we estimate it as ten thousand talents of gold. For the great lesson of the parable, it is important to notice the greatness of the sum which was due to the king by this servant, in contrast with the insignificance of the sum due to himself by his fellow-servant; and that is sufficiently apparent if we take the talent of lowest value—the talent of silver. But it would better illustrate the relation of the sinner to God if we understand the debt as ten thousand talents of gold—a sum beyond any intelligent estimate, and utterly beyond all reasonable thought of the possibility of payment.

We then behold, in the servant before his sovereign, an apt representation of the sinner before God, weighed down by a debt which he has nothing to pay, and which it is utterly impossible that he ever can discharge; the debt, moreover, a crime, and the clearest proof of his black ingratitude for the highest favor, his foul betrayal of the most honorable confidence, and his disloyalty and treason against one who, to the claims of right, had added those of love and unstinted kindness.

The severity of justice in such a case as this can arouse no objection in any mind not lost to the sense of justice; and the character of the sentence, "His lord commanded him to be sold and his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made," a sentence which is in strict accordance with the customs of those oriental courts from which the whole imagery of the parable is borrowed, is designed to express the condign punishment which his crime deserved, and so, in a figure, to express the utter, and, so far as his own efforts are concerned, the irretrievable ruin into which the sinner has fallen, and from which nothing but the grace of God can redeem him. The prostration of the servant, his bitter outcry for mercy, and the reckless promises of the debtor, "Lord, have patience with me and I will pay thee all," reveal the desperateness of his situation and his vivid and terrifying sense of the consequences of his criminality, but at the same time his complete insensibility to the baseness and enormity of his guilt. This also is a striking representation of the course of the sinner in the circumstances of awakening to which we have referred, when, under the pressure of his fears, he makes promises as reckless of reformation, as a bribe to the insulted compassion of a sin-pardoning God, and seeks to appease his own conscience with a piety which expires as his fears subside, and by good resolutions

which vanish with the danger or the suffering which extorted them. In such cases the result is invariably that which is expressed in the true proverb: "The dog is turned to his vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

In the parable, the benignity of the king's compassion for the wretched criminal is displayed, not in accepting the man's reckless promise to pay, which was in its recklessness only adding insult to injury, but rather in overlooking that miserable folly also, and he "loosed him and forgave him the debt." It is thus that God deals with sinners in His grace. He exacts no payment, for that were to consign to hopeless and irremediable destruction the sinner who has nothing to pay and whose debt is past reckoning. He accepts of no vows, or promises, or good resolutions, which in their very conception betray an utter insensibility to the true character of sin, are insulting to God, and perfectly futile in their results. His is no partial or conditional pardon, but a free, full, and everlasting forgiveness. It is true that there is an adequate ground of pardon in the sacrifice of Christ which vindicates the justice of God in the pardon of the vilest sinner; but then, so far as the sinner is concerned, it is all of grace, for the grace which seals the everlasting forgiveness itself provided the sacrifice, and, setting forth Christ crucified for our offences and raised again for our justification, proclaims, without condition or qualification, "he that believeth on Him is justified from all things."

That which is represented by the debtor going out from the reckoning in the parable, has its counterpart in the case of the sinners we have spoken of, as arrested by some awakening testimony or providence—the professed recipients of the divine mercy, the objects of the divine forbearance, delivered from the danger or relieved from the suffering that

alarmed them. The man's language showed that he was terrified by the consequences of sin, but untouched by a sense of its exceeding sinfulness; and the result illustrates the character of all such instances of professed repentance in actual life. The heart untouched by a sense of forgiveness which was never received, whatever may have been professed, when once relieved from the pressure of suffering and terror, only returns to its old course more hardened and ungrateful than ever.

The object of the parable, however, was not to exhibit the general results of such professed repentance; but to illustrate the ground of Christian forgiveness of injuries, which is nothing else but God's free forgiveness of our sins. And it is not so much that His forgiveness lays us under a formal obligation to forgive, as that the sense of His forgiving love lays us under such irresistible constraints, as that an unforgiving spirit is completely and for ever inconsistent with the enjoyment of forgiveness. The man who was a monument of his lord's mercy "met a fellow-servant which owed him five hundred pence"—a sum perfectly insignificant compared with that which he owed to his sovereign—not amounting to the millionth part of it, even if we take the debt, at its lowest estimate, as ten thousand talents of silver. The relation of the parties also must be taken into account; they were fellow-servants, so that the indebtedness was not augmented by all these claims of gratitude, fidelity, love, and loyalty, which, in the former case, were violated. But, forgetful of all this, the heartless and wicked man seizes his fellow-servant with ruthless violence, demands his rights, and, deaf to every appeal of pity, which is made more impressive by the use of the very language which, in the hour of his terror, he had addressed to his justly offended sovereign, he drags him along, and vindic-

tively exacts payment in full, without regard to the suffering he inflicts upon his victim.

The case needs only to be stated to awaken in every breast a sense of the outrageous character of the proceeding, as is expressed in the grief and indignation of those fellow-servants who went and told the Lord. Yet who of us, either in the remembrance of past transactions with our fellow-man, or in the consciousness of feelings now cherished, does not hear the voice of truth saying, "Thou art the man"? Who, on this view of our relations to God on the one hand, and to our fellow-man on the other, may not well blush to think of the spirit in which we, against whom God enforces no claim, have been disposed to prosecute the most insignificant claim against a fellow-mortal, and we, toward whom God has been acting in such great mercy, have been disposed to show no mercy, but to avenge the slightest injury?

The final doom of the ingrate in the parable, by which he is consigned to despair, is designed to show the essential difference between a legal repentance, with its accompanying vows, self-dedication, and good resolutions, which is the fruit of a selfish terror of hell, and not of a true view of sin, and that simple, self-renouncing faith in Christ, "in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace." In present fruits the difference may be seen, on the one hand, in the selfishness unsubdued, and the pride fostered by the self-righteous resolutions of one who, in his unsparing censure of others, seems to say, "Stand aside, I am holier than thou;" and, on the other hand, in the meek and lowly disposition to take even the lowest place—in the charity which suffereth long and is kind, which envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself un-

seemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things—a charity which is found in no heart that has not been subdued and pacified by the assurance that its sins, which are many, are forgiven—in no heart in which Christ is not formed—a charity which is derived from the heart of Jesus, and sustained by abiding in Him. In ultimate fruits the difference will be seen, on the one hand, in a forgiveness which can never be revoked, crowned and confirmed in a full participation of the glory of Christ—the meet expression of the Father's approval of His work for us, and the Father's gracious recognition of Christ in us; and, on the other hand, by the withdrawal of all the grace and forbearance which the heartless rebel, seeking only impunity in sin, has so recklessly abused, and the enforcement to the full of those righteous claims for which grace provided a satisfaction which the proud and self-sufficient sinner only despised.

Nothing is more plain than that the wicked servant in the parable had felt nothing but a guilty terror of the consequences of his crime, and sought nothing but an escape from its pains and penalties. His heart was untouched by any sense of the enormity of his guilt, and consequently was untouched by any sense of forgiving love. He had not in reality received the proffered forgiveness; but was satisfied if the penalty was not enforced. It is your case, Christless sinner, to whom God is not now imputing your trespasses—He is not now dealing with you in justice. But when grace is finally rejected, then comes a terrible reckoning, thus expressed in the parable: "And his Lord was wroth: and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto Him." The "tormentors" were officers who were charged with the execution of any sen-

tence ; and the sentence in this case was evidently one from which the criminal could never hope to be absolved ; and is designed to express the awful doom of the despiser of mercy—even “judgment without mercy,” “everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power.” But for you, children of God, what a volume of argument and persuasion is there here ! “Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering : forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any ; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.”

THE LEARNING OF PAUL.

A MISTAKEN desire to do honor to one who occupies so prominent a place in the annals of Christianity, has led to the most extravagant estimate of the genius and learning of the Apostle Paul; as though what God wrought through him were in any way dependent on his attainments as a scholar, or could be, in any sense, an achievement of human genius. The materials out of which any just estimate of either his natural endowments or his scholarship can be formed, are very scanty. Nearly all that we know of him must be gathered from the records of a ministry in which he sought to hide himself behind the cross of Christ, or from epistles which were written, to use his own expression, "as he was moved by the Holy Ghost." Of the latter, it is true that the nature of the moving influence did not obliterate the peculiarities of the natural style of the writer; as every musical instrument has its own peculiar tone, though the notes that issue from it are according to the skill and intention of the performer. The peculiarities of his style were apparent when he wrote by inspiration, just as the tone of voice and the peculiarities of elocution were Paul's, though it was not he that spoke, but the Holy Ghost speaking in him; and the Lord "gave him a mouth and wisdom, which all his adversaries were unable to gainsay or resist."

He, indeed, mentions a few particulars of his own education: "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus,

a city in Cilicia ; yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law, and was zealous for God as ye all are this day." Again in speaking of the results of this education, he says : " I profited in the Jew's religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." It avails little to speak of the high literary reputation of his native city, or the celebrity of its schools of learning and philosophy, outrivalling those of Athens, when we remember that he was "circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law a Pharisee." We are sufficiently acquainted with the terms on which strict Jews lived with the Gentiles in all cities to which they resorted for the purpose of traffic, to know that it agrees better with the character of Paul's family, that he should be brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, than that he should have been educated in the schools of Tarsus.

We have sufficient information regarding the Rabbinical schools of Jerusalem and regarding the character of Gamaliel, his teacher, to know that the results which Paul records are much more natural results of the training he would receive there, than the scholarship which the world would recognize, and which his mistaken eulogists claim for him. Gamaliel was not only the most celebrated teacher of the law in that day, but, so far as we may judge by the place he occupies in Jewish tradition, he was one of the most eminent of any age. He was a Pharisee, but the part he took at the trial of the Apostles before the Council of which he was a member, shows how superior he was to the ordinary bigotry and intolerance of his sect. We are told also that "he had no antipathy to Greek learning, and in this particular rose above the prejudices of his party." But

there is no reason to suppose that Paul imbibed his taste for Greek letters, any more than there is for supposing that he imbibed the mild and tolerant spirit of his master. According to Paul's own account, it was not in the learning and philosophy of the Gentiles, but in the Jew's religion that he excelled his contemporaries; and we might rather conclude that his zeal in the one, would produce a contempt for the other. The two or three quotations from Greek authors, which are found in his writings, are no proof of the contrary; for, even if we omit the fact that he wrote by inspiration when he made these quotations, it would be strange if one who had spent his boyhood in Tarsus, and who had spent so many years of apostolic labors in countries where such sentences as he quotes doubtless obtained the currency of proverbs, had not acquired a few lines and phrases from popular authors. We should not consider it any proof of a man's acquaintance with English literature, that we found in his letters a quotation from Shakespeare, another from Burns, and a third from Moore.

The style of Paul's letters is not that of a man who had cultivated a familiarity with the great models of Greek composition. He expressed himself fluently, sometimes eloquently, but it is in such Greek as a Jew residing in Tarsus might speak, and displays greater familiarity with the Septuagint than with the classics. The epistles of Paul are equally destitute of any proof that he had ever addicted himself to the study of Greek philosophy. His attainments in the law and his zeal for it, as well as his ardent enthusiasm for the distinctions of his own people, render it exceedingly improbable that he ever did so. The following is probably a fair estimate of the fruits of such a training as his youth received: "Intellectually, his mind was trained to logical acuteness, his memory became well stored with 'hard sen-

tences of old,' and he acquired the facility of quick and apt quotation of scripture. Morally, he was a strict observer of the requirements of the law; and while he led a careful, conscientious life, after the example of his ancestors, he gradually imbibed the spirit of a fervent, persecuting zeal. Among his fellow-students who flocked to Jerusalem from Egypt and Babylonia, from the coasts of Greece and his native Cilicia, he was known and held in high estimation as a rising light in Israel."

We should perhaps apologize for occupying so much space with these remarks, since it is proper to add, that the want of any proofs of scholarship in Paul's epistles, is no proof that he was not a scholar; and that the absence of philosophy from his writings and discourses, is no proof that he was not profoundly versed in the Greek philosophy. Paul speaking of his attainments in the law, says: "What things were gain to me, these I counted loss for Christ." He would surely have said no less of any possible attainment in human literature and philosophy, and after that we should not expect that, inspiration apart, he would ever have been disposed to make a display of either. In coming to Christ, he became a disciple of a Master, who says to all the wisdom, as well as all the greatness of this world: "Except ye be converted and become as *little children*, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." He became the servant of Him "who hath made foolish the wisdom of this world. For after that the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe."

Since the professing Church has descended from its spiritual elevation to ally itself with the systems of this world, and to court worldly favor and influence, a different estimate has been placed upon the learning and wisdom of the

world in what is called a Christian education. The Church of Christ, called to be a witness to that which, in man's esteem, must always be folly, makes it her boast in later days that all progress in secular education and civilization, in science and in letters, is mainly to be traced to her influence. It is not wonderful, therefore, that she should demand in her ministry a real or supposed literary culture, not to be concealed behind the cross, but to be displayed before it; or that she should wreath the cross with literary flowers, and temper the foolishness of preaching with a mixture of philosophy — how profound or shallow we do not here attempt to determine.

If we point to the character of the first chosen preachers of the gospel, the fishermen of Galilee, we are told that "we are not to expect the Lord to work miracles in our day;" as though the Lord, in that day, had miraculously made these men scholars and philosophers; or as though a smattering of classical learning and philosophy, or mental cultivation and intellectual power were left to accomplish *now*, what the Spirit of God did *then*. But here is the Apostle Paul, to whom they sometimes refer as an example of an educated and talented preacher, to offset these illiterate fishermen; here is the Apostle Paul, whatever his attainments, who expressly testifies that, so far from his success being attributable to learning or talent, "his speech and his preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom," "that he came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom." Nay, who expressly testifies that "Christ sent him to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, *lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.*" This reason should be final and conclusive, and its force cannot be limited to the days of Paul. We are not merely taught that the resources of human wisdom and culture were not necessary, as though

there was then, at least, a demonstration of the Spirit and power which made up for the lack of them ; but the broad reason is stated for excluding their use, that they "render the cross of Christ of none effect." We shall not now inquire how far our modern pulpit exemplifies this disastrous result, but there is a warning here which ought not to be unheeded. If it be true that the preaching of Christ is foolishness according to the world's standard, and if it be true that God has made the wisdom of this world foolishness, then it is certain the former cannot be promoted, but must be hindered by any attempt to modify it by the latter. We would be willing to leave this question to the decision of impartial history.

Doubtless there have been men of learning and genius, who have also been able ministers of the New Testament, but then it will be found that, in as far as they were honored to be the instruments of God, either in the conversion of sinners, or in the edification and comfort of His people, those who had learning became as those who had none. When such men have refused to deny themselves and renounce all that might gain worldly fame, they have come short of all evangelical success ; however they may have contributed to the outward prosperity and influence of the churches which were spiritually blighted by their ministry. God will always vindicate the honor of His own name, and not only he who is employed as an instrument in the salvation of souls must own it, but it must be made evident to all that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us."

We might do well to inquire whether an error on this point is not bringing leanness upon the churches, and staying the progress of a work of grace ; not that the ministry is encumbered with learning, but that the minister and all his

attainments and powers are not concealed behind the cross, and that the churches have learned to depend upon excellency of speech and wisdom, instead of the demonstration of the Spirit and power. The error is not confined to the ministry, nor to the demand for literary qualifications as the substitute for spiritual power. It extends to the Church itself in all its chosen means and resources. Forgetful of what its beginnings were, both in its outward lowliness and its spiritual grandeur, it has fallen back upon carnal expedients and policy, counts upon worldly influence and position, and, withdrawing itself from a simple reliance on Him who said, "Lo, I am with you always;" it relies upon such means as worldly men would reckon upon for the success of a worldly enterprise.

Let us for a moment glance at the original character and condition of the Church as a witness for Christ in the world. Not only were its first apostles illiterate fishermen, but Paul, if he had an intellectual culture which they did not possess, was sent to preach the Gospel *not* with wisdom of words. And not only is the Gospel which they preached foolishness according to every carnal estimate, but any mixture of the wisdom of man in the preaching of it vitiates and neutralizes it. Not only in these particulars was it made evident that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men, but this was most clearly manifested in the outward condition of the Church itself. By affecting to apologize for it, Gibbon endeavors to render the reproach more poignant: "That the new sect of Christians was almost entirely composed of the dregs of the populace, of peasants and mechanics, of boys and women, of beggars and slaves." Paul would willingly underlie the reproach. It was to these, that the Gospel pointed as its trophies; when, for example, pointing not only to the ignoble in rank,

but to the most degraded in character, an Apostle reminds those whom he recognizes as the chosen of God: "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." The glory of the Gospel is that it brings salvation to *sinner*s, even to the chief of them. And then, as to the rank and condition of those who composed the first churches, listen to the testimony of Scripture, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble were called," a state of things which need not surprise us when we remember the obscurity of the first chosen preachers of the Gospel, and remember also that the Master Himself, the son of a carpenter, wandered "a homeless stranger in the world His hands had made." In Corinth faith might hear his voice saying: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

How could the lesson have been more impressively conveyed to us that the influence and wisdom of this world have no legitimate place in the accomplishment of the gracious purpose of God? Thus, rather, the glory of God is vindicated and His grace displayed, in that "He hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty: and base things of the world and things that are despised hath God chosen, yea and things that are not to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence." This is the Divine, in direct antagonism to all human policy.

The Spirit which testifies the lowly condition of those who

composed the Church adds: "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus." They were not "of the world," but "of God," but it is only "in Christ Jesus" that we are of Him or owned by Him. The wisdom or strength of those who are thus of God is not an attribute of their own nature or in any sense inherent in them, but "Christ is made unto us God's wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." This explains to us the triumphs which were achieved through an instrumentality so unpromising in human eyes. It was not that, though originally foolishness and weakness, the Church became in itself wise and mighty; it was Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God, who achieved the triumph through the Church. The manifestation of this wisdom and power through the believer, necessarily implies the renunciation of all his own—he must be content to be nothing, as Paul gloried in his infirmity, that the power of Christ might rest upon him, and then recorded this as his experience: "When I am weak, then am I strong." He says, "I am strong," just as in another place he says, "I live," but adds: "Yet not I but Christ liveth in me."

We desire in all this to lead the churches back to their strength; and, at the same time, to encourage the weak and self-distrustful believer, who, misled by the prevailing worldliness, shrinks from the testimony of Christ, and the work of faith, and the labor of love, under a conviction of his want of skill, tact, wisdom, and eloquence. In no city, perhaps, did the Lord achieve more splendid triumphs of the truth through Paul, than in Corinth; and yet Paul reminds the Corinthians that he was with them in "weakness, and fear, and much trembling,"—the very self-distrust which represses the zeal of many a child of God who has not fully learned that in the Lord alone we have strength. What a delusion

it must be to suppose that human eloquence could persuade, or human wisdom enlighten a sinner! Human eloquence could as soon raise the dead, and human wisdom could as soon create a world. Why, then, make our want of either a reason for declining the blessed privilege of carrying the message of Divine grace to the perishing? We might as well go in our own righteousness for acceptance with God, as go in our own wisdom and strength to do the work of God. Human wisdom and eloquence may win admiration, but they cannot win souls. The humblest of the flock may, like the little captive Jewish maiden in the house of Naaman, tell the perishing that there is balm in Gilead, and a physician there; and God may be glorified in the salvation of souls, while the eloquent preacher may be electrifying admiring congregations with no other fruits but his own profit and fame.

THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH.

IN John's great grief and distress, because no one was found qualified to open the book which was in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne, one of the elders said unto him : " Weep not : behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." We have already seen that the symbolical import of opening the book and its seven seals is doing all that was necessary to be done in order to make good the title of the saints to the purchased inheritance, that, in their own words, they should reign over the earth. What was necessary to the accomplishment of this purpose may be understood by considering the state of the earth occupied by the enemies of God, and its dominion usurped by Satan. Or we may find a more distinct view of what was necessary, by observing what was actually done ; in other words, by observing what occurred on the opening of the several seals, until all was accomplished, and the seer beheld these king-priests actually enthroned in the commencement of the millennial reign. There can be no question as to who the person is who undertook to achieve the triumph of the saints. But it may be interesting and instructive to notice the propriety of the figures and emblems under which He is presented in relation to this great achievement.

The elder announced Him as "the Lion of the tribe of

Judah, the root of David." Regarding the first of these figures, we may remark, in general, that the lion is everywhere a favorite emblem of strength and courage, and, from a period of great antiquity, has been associated in the minds of men with royal power. Solomon speaks of "the lion, which is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away from any;" and, contrasting the cowardice of conscious guilt with the calm fortitude of righteousness, he says: "The righteous are bold as a lion." But, in Scripture, when this figure is employed with reference to kings, it usually represents the terrible aspect of their power in the execution of judgment. Thus, to quote again from the Proverbs of Solomon, "The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion;" "the fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion. Whoso provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own soul." The same figure is used in the Prophets to express the terrible aspects of Divine power in the execution of judgment on iniquity. Thus, in Jeremiah, when the Lord has a controversy with the nations, and the very judgments are predicted which are unfolded in the visions of the Apocalypse, we are told: "He hath forsaken His covert, as the lion; for their land is desolate because of the fierceness of the oppressor, and because of His fierce anger." Thus, in a general view of the Scripture use of the figure, we may see the propriety of representing Him who is about to undertake the execution of these final judgments, as a lion.

But, more particularly, He is described as "THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH." "It is evident," as Paul says, "that our Lord sprang out of Judah;" and it is this fact which gives to that tribe its peculiar place and prominence among the tribes of Israel. It is this fact also which explains the peculiar prediction which Jacob uttered regarding Judah, when he gathered his sons together to tell them that which

shall befall them in the last days, Gen. xlix. 8, 9: "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?" Some one has suggested that the elder, who in the vision made the announcement to John, was no other than the patriarch Jacob. But we have at least the satisfaction of identifying the prophecies; and know that, when the Lord shall at length arise to perform His strange work upon the earth, He will fulfil at once John's vision of the opening of the seven seals, and Jacob's prediction of the destiny of Judah: "Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies;" "from the prey, my son, thou art gone up."

He who prevailed to open the book is also described as "THE ROOT OF DAVID." The idea seems to be that, though the degenerate sons and successors of David had been cut down in their guilt, without any fulfilment of the covenant, like immature shoots, the root from which they sprang, full of vitality, shall sprout again, and a noble tree shall yet arise from it, the true seed of David, in whom all the glorious things spoken of the house of David shall be fulfilled. This figure is again and again referred to in the Prophets; as, for example, in the instance which Paul quotes, Rom. xv. 12: "And again Esaias saith, 'There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; and in Him shall the Gentiles trust.'" The prophecy to which Paul refers, and which also is referred in the designation used by the elder, is found in Isaiah xi. The chapter describes the blessedness of the millennial reign of Christ, of whom it is said, in verse 1, "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his

roots;" and again, in verse 10: "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse." The propriety of the reference to this prophecy in the designation, "the root of David," when he undertakes to open the book, may be seen in the fact that in the chapter which describes the blessedness of Messiah's reign, we have also a prediction of the terrible judgments which shall usher it in: "But with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and, with the breath of His lips, shall He slay the wicked." Without dwelling on these predictions of the Old Testament, to which the terms used by the elder necessarily carry us back, we may claim that these titles, "The Lion of the tribe of Judah," and "The Root of David," thus illustrated, furnish a striking confirmation of the views already presented of the symbolical import of "the book and the opening of the seven seals."

But there is another feature of John's account of the vision, to which we must briefly advert in this connection. After recording the glad announcement of the elder, he continues: "And I beheld, and lo! in the midst of the thrones, and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." He who is announced with reference to the execution of judgment upon his enemies, as "The Lion of the tribe of Judah," is seen by John as "a Lamb as it had been slain;" the aspect in which He is ever presented to faith, in which He is ever presented to the redeemed — "For ye are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." Faith now beholds the Lamb of God which hath taken away

the sin of the world, in the very act of entering upon His awful work. Whatever He is to others, believers, to you He is a Lamb, as it had been slain; and in all your anticipations of heavenly glory and blessedness, this is the pledge of your eternal satisfaction—"THE LAMB"—none but He; "the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed men, and shall lead them to living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

There is, however, a profound meaning in the conjunction of these emblems, which immediately appears in the song of the elders, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain," etc. This was the very basis of His qualifications for the mighty enterprise on which He was about to enter. It was an enterprise for which none but the Redeemer of lost men was fitted. This was His peculiar province. Because He was slain, He shall win the victory. Because He humbled Himself, He is exalted. Because He suffered, He shall reign. Believer, the work is all His own; no part of it is imperilled in created hands. That love which bound Him to the accursed tree, will strike the last blow for you; and having won the victory, will place the crown upon your heads, and set you beside Himself upon His throne. And seeing how suffering love is at last enthroned with the garland of immortal victory on the brow that was wounded by the crown of thorns, you too, amid all the hostilities and trials of this present time, are comforted by the assurance: "If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him."

WAYMARKS

IN

THE WILDERNESS.

THE LORD'S DEALINGS WITH GEORGE MUELLER.

THERE are probably few of our readers who are not familiar with the name, and to some extent with the life and labors of George Müller. His "Life of Trust," as it is appropriately named by Dr. Wayland, has been an example and a blessing to many of the children of God among us. The work of Dr. Wayland is chiefly composed of extracts from the annual reports published by Mr. Müller himself down to the year 18—. These reports, or, as they are styled, "narratives of facts," have been continued annually till the present time. To those who are acquainted with the narrative of the earlier years of the Orphan Houses, we will be performing an acceptable service in stating the later proofs of God's faithfulness. To those who are not acquainted with the former, it will be an acceptable service to give a brief statement of the work from the beginning, and we may, in doing so, find an opportunity of answering many enquiries regarding the views of Divine truth and the ecclesiastical position (if we may use the phrase) of a man who has been so graciously owned by the Lord.

Mr. Müller was born at Kroppenstaedt, in Prussia, in the year 1805; and has now entered upon his sixtieth year. His father held an office under the government of his native country, and appears to have been a kind and generous man of the world, whose partiality for his son George was among the injurious influences to which the youth was exposed. The brief account of his earlier years with which the first part of the "Narrative of Facts" is introduced, abundantly proves that the remarkable work of grace, the fruits of which redound to the praise of God, had no foundation in any original excellence of character and disposition. With a certain precocity of intellect, there was an early display of depravity which, in the judgment of men, would have given promise only of a career of vice and infamy to afflict society. At ten years of age he had been guilty of many acts of dishonesty; and his student life was one of profligacy, not undisturbed by remorse, but unchecked by all the good resolutions by which he sought to silence the upbraidings of conscience.

Such was his character when in conformity with the wishes of his father he entered the University of Halle as a student of Divinity, at the age of twenty. One day when he was in a tavern, he met Beta, a former schoolfellow, who in boyhood had been quiet and serious, but who in youth was endeavoring to throw off all serious impressions. They were attracted to one another—Müller by the hope that the seriousness which had characterized the boy would now aid him in his good resolutions; the other by the hope that Müller's early maturity in vice would introduce him into the so-called enjoyments of the world. They became companions in dissipation for a year, at the end of which, Beta, conscience-stricken by their folly and excesses, had sought the acquaintance of a Christian tradesman at whose house there was a

weekly meeting for prayer and Bible enquiry. Mr. Müller was easily persuaded to attend this meeting; and he says with reference to his first visit to these friends: "I have not the least doubt that on that evening the Lord began a work of grace in me, though I obtained joy without any deep sorrow of heart, and with scarcely any knowledge. That evening was the turning point of my life." He had learned something of the love of God to a lost world, and of the object and results of the death of Christ; and then, he says, "apprehending in some measure the love of Jesus for my soul, I was constrained to love Him in return. What all the exhortations and precepts of my father and others could not effect; what all my own good resolutions could not bring about—even to renounce a life of profligacy, I was enabled to do, constrained by the love of Christ."

Some months later he began truly to enjoy the peace of God; and it will not surprise our Christian readers to learn that one of the first impulses of this new life was to write to his father and brother, in the expectation that if the Gospel were only fairly presented to them, they would gladly embrace it. Nor will it much surprise them to learn, though it greatly surprised him, that an angry reply was returned. The displeasure of his father was complete when, a few months later, Mr. Müller announced his desire to devote himself to missionary service; and the father who had forgiven all the delinquencies of the prodigal, now informed the youthful disciple of Christ that he could no longer consider him as his son. About this time Dr. Tholuck settled at Halle as Professor of Divinity, and he, in various ways, befriended and encouraged Mr. M. When he could no longer receive pecuniary aid from his father, Dr. T. introduced him to several American gentlemen, who paid him liberally for instruction in the German language.

With his views directed to the missionary work, he did not overlook the spiritual destitution more immediately around him. At a very early stage of his discipleship, God blessed him as an instrument in the conversion of two of his fellow students. He began to distribute tracts, to write letters to friends, and in other ways to spread the knowledge of the name of Jesus. As he himself expresses it, "he who so faithfully had served Satan, sought now to win souls for Christ." Gradually he was led out to preach the Gospel in public, and, in view of the work in which he has subsequently been so extensively engaged, it is interesting to notice the fact thus recorded: "About the time that I first began to preach, I lived for two months in free lodgings provided for poor students of Divinity, in the Orphan House built in dependence upon God, by that devoted and eminent servant of Christ, A. H. Franke, Professor of Divinity at Halle, who died 1727." In the same connection we may mention that from the commencement of his Christian life, he was distinguished by a simple and childlike disposition, and was accustomed to carry the most minute matters to the Lord in prayer.

We cannot dwell upon his experience during this period of his life, though there is much in it that might be profitable both in the way of warning and of encouragement. There is, however, one great error which he notices at some length, which we cannot pass over, especially, because it is a prevailing one amongst ourselves,—“the error of reading religious books in preference to the Scriptures.” “Like many believers,” he says, “I practically preferred for the first four years of my divine life, the works of uninspired men to the oracles of the living God. The consequence was that I remained a babe both in knowledge and grace. In knowledge, I say, for all true knowledge must be derived

by the Spirit from the word. And as I neglected the word, I was for nearly four years so ignorant that I did not *clearly* know even the *fundamental* points of our faith. And this lack of knowledge most sadly kept me back from walking steadily in the ways of God. For it is the truth that makes us free, (John viii. 31, 32,) by delivering us from the slavery of the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life. The word proves it, the experience of the Saints proves it, and also my own experience most decidedly proves it."

His desire to devote himself to missionary life led him to seek an appointment from the Continental Society in England, as an assistant to an aged minister at Bucharest. After the appointment was received, the war between the Turks and Russians, in 1827, led the Society to abandon their intention to send a missionary to Bucharest, as it was the seat of war. Dr. Tholuck then proposed that Mr. Müller should go as a missionary to the Jews; and upon application to the Society, the committee determined to take him as a missionary student for six months on probation, provided he would come to London. In pursuance of this arrangement, after many trials and delays, he arrived in London in March, 1829.

After some months of intense application to study in the Missionary Seminary, his health failed, and he was recommended to go to the country for change of air. In accordance with this advice, he went to Teignmouth, and there, in the providence of God, he became acquainted with a godly minister through whose instrumentality, he says, "the Lord bestowed a great blessing upon me, for which I shall have cause to thank him throughout eternity." The blessing to which he refers was a great advancement in knowledge on several important points, which has exercised a decided in-

fluence on all his future course. He was led to see clearly that the Word of God alone is our standard of judgment in spiritual things; that it can be explained only by the Holy Spirit, and that in our day, as well as in former times, He is the teacher of His people. He saw that the Holy Spirit was not only the agent in our conversion and sanctification, but our guide and aid in all the acts of the Christian life. This truth he was enabled to put to the test of experience by laying aside commentaries and human guides; and found that he not only learned more in the prayerful study of the Scriptures themselves, but that in doing so, he received real strength to his soul. He was at this time also led to bow to the great truths of God's sovereignty, and His electing love, and to the assurance that the believer is saved, and saved for ever. The practical influence of these truths on his own soul he found to be all on the side of holiness, leading to increased watchfulness, greater deadness to the world, and a closer, as well as a more peaceful walk with God. It was then, also, that he was enlightened as to the truth concerning the speedy coming of the Lord. Hitherto, he acknowledges, his views had been vague and unscriptural. He had taken it for granted that the world was getting better, and that soon the whole world would be converted. But now he found in Scripture, that there will be confusion and corruption till the return of Jesus; that His return, and not death was the hope of the Christian, and that we should be continually looking for His appearing. In course of the narrative he, again and again, reverts to the influence of this expectation in quickening his zeal and diligence in preaching the Gospel to perishing men. At the same time he learned the Christian's true place and glory, and that it ill became him to seek to be rich and honored, in a world where his Lord was poor and despised.

He returned to London improved in health, and burning with zeal to be actually engaged in the Lord's work. He did begin to labor among the Jews in London, without waiting to be sent abroad by the Society. He soon saw insuperable objections to taking his authority to preach from a Society, and to receiving ordination at the hands of a Prussian Consistory or a Bishop of the Established Church, without which the Society would not appoint him. After he had frankly stated his difficulties to the Committee of the Society, they honorably released him from all engagements with them, stating that "should more mature reflection cause him to alter that opinion, they would readily enter into further communication with him."

After his connection with the Society was dissolved, he returned to Teignmouth, where he met with the brother whose instructions had been so greatly blessed to him. There the Lord blessed his labors to the conversion of souls and the comforting of saints, though his preaching aroused considerable opposition on the part of some members of the Church who had been his warmest friends and admirers when he was less instructed in the truths of Scripture. He learned here to seek guidance, directly, in all his ministrations, public and private. In preaching he waited upon the Lord first of all for the subject on which he should speak, and testifies that though it has often happened that he did not obtain it until he was just going to preach, he has never lacked the Lord's assistance at the time of preaching, if he had earnestly sought it in private.

When he has obtained a text in answer to prayer, his practice is to ask the teaching of the Spirit in his meditation on the Word, occasionally writing down the outlines of a discourse as the Word is opened up to him. "But," he says, "my chief help is in prayer." The true preparation

for public ministry of the Word is to live in such constant communion with the Lord, and to be so habitually engaged in meditating on Divine things, that, without special effort or *formal* preparation, we may edify others. Many faithful ministers will endorse Mr. Müller's statement of his experience in the course of thirty years' ministry, that the most edifying teaching is "expounding the Scriptures, and especially going through a whole Gospel or Epistle." "Neither eloquence nor depth of thought makes the truly great preacher, but such a life of prayer and meditation and spirituality as may render him a vessel meet for the Master's use, and fit to be employed both in the conversion of sinners and in the edification of saints."

At an early period of his residence in Teignmouth, he was led to examine the teaching of Scripture on the subject of baptism, and the result was his baptism as a believer. He also saw it to be scriptural and according to the example of the Apostles to break bread every Lord's day. At the same time he saw it to be scriptural that, in the meetings of the church, "room should be given for the Holy Spirit to work through any of the brethren whom He pleases to use; that thus one member might benefit the others with the gift which the Lord has bestowed upon him." Shortly afterward he began to have conscientious objections against receiving a stated salary; and at length he stated to the Church that he could no longer receive it. A notice was placed at the entrance of the Chapel that the seats were all free; and a box was placed in a convenient place where those who desired might deposite their contributions. From this point he was led on to an unreserved dependence on the Lord for the supply of all his needs, without, in any case, asking help of man; and he bears testimony that "this has been the means of letting us see the tender love and care of God over

His children, even in the most minute things, in a way in which we never experimentally knew them before; and it has in particular made the Lord known to us, more fully than we knew him before, *as a prayer-hearing God.*" In his journal at this period, many instances of God's providential interposition and His direct answers of prayer in the supply of every day wants, are recorded, so striking, that it is difficult to conceive how infidelity could explain them away, but our limited space requires that we should hasten on to another important era of his life.

On his first visit to Teignmouth he became acquainted with Mr. Craik, who has been the associate of all his later labors, and who is known to many by his valuable contributions to the critical study of the Scriptures. On Mr. Müller's return to Teignmouth, he was intimately associated with Mr. Craik in evangelical labors in that vicinity. We find the following entry in his journal bearing date March 29, 1832, "I went to Sheldon this morning. Brother Craik has left for Bristol for four weeks. I think he will only return to take leave, and that the Lord will give him work there." Under date April 8, there is the following entry, "I have again felt this day that Teignmouth is no longer my place, and that I shall leave it." Within a week from this time, he received an invitation to visit Bristol to assist Brother Craik, for whom a wide field of usefulness had been opened up in that city. Their joint labors were abundantly blessed, and they were urged by many Christians at once to remove thither. They returned to their homes, and there, in earnest prayer, sought direction of the Lord, who, in every way, made the path plain to them, and in the end of May, they both took up their abode in the scenes of their thirty years' labor, in which the Lord has so far exceeded their highest expectations of what He would accomplish through their instrumentality.

The beginnings indeed were small, for in the journal under date August 13, 1832, we find the following record: "This evening, one brother and four sisters united with Brother Craik and me in church-fellowship, at Bethesda, without any rules, desiring only to act as the Lord shall be pleased to give us light through His Word." This was the beginning of a church regarding which Mr. Müller writes twenty-four years later, in 1856, "Since my beloved friend and fellow-laborer and I first came to Bristol, fifteen hundred and eighty-six believers have been received into fellowship; which number, with the sixty-eight we found in communion (at Gideon Chapel) makes sixteen hundred and fifty-four. But out of that number two hundred and fifty-two have fallen asleep, fifty-three have been separated from fellowship, one hundred and forty-five have left us, some however merely through circumstances and in love, and five hundred and ten have left Bristol, so that there are only six hundred and ninety-four remaining in communion." We have dwelt upon these particulars of Mr. Müller's progress toward the position he now occupies in relation to the Church in Bristol, for the purpose of answering enquiries, frequently made, regarding his ecclesiastical connection. The enquiry to which denomination does he belong? may be answered in his own language, "We meet simply as believers in Christ, without reference to any sectarian distinction, maintaining the Scriptures as our only rule of doctrine and discipline, and affording freedom for the exercise of any spiritual gift which the Lord may be pleased to bestow. We thus hold out a gathering place for all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and desire to confess His name by obedience to His authority. Nothing but necessity can justify our putting any obstacle in the way of the saints in this city, who feeling the obligation of separating from every sectarian bond of union, would desire to meet with us."

Many interesting statements regarding their views of the Church and its ministry, are scattered throughout the narratives of successive years. But for our present purpose it is not necessary to say more on this subject, than that Mr. Müller and Mr. Craik are recognised as called of God to the oversight of the flock; and that they have labored together in uninterrupted love and union. "There is not one point of importance as it regards the truth, on which we differ," is the grateful testimony of Mr. Müller. "In judgment as to matters connected with the welfare of the saints among whom we labor, we have been almost invariably *at once* of one mind."

After the account we have already extracted from his journal of his early views of missionary labor, and of his evangelical spirit and labors, it will not appear surprising that methods of providing for the diffusion of the Gospel at home and abroad, should have occupied the attention of Mr. Müller. Several insurmountable objections appeared, both to his own mind and to his fellow-laborer Mr. Craik, to supporting the existing religious societies. The end they profess to have in view, the conversion of the world, their dependence on worldly patronage, their adoption of worldly policy, and the means employed to obtain funds, all appeared to these brethren to be unscriptural, without judging Christians for remaining in connection with these societies if they do not see these things to be unscriptural. They accordingly commenced, in dependence on the blessing of the Lord, what they called "The Scriptural Knowledge Institution for Home and Abroad," in the year 1834. Its objects are to assist schools in which instruction is given upon scriptural principles, to circulate the Holy Scriptures, and to assist missionaries whose proceedings appear to be most according to Scripture. Its beginning, as may be supposed,

was very small; but in 1863 Mr. Müller reports that four day-schools have been sustained in Bristol, in which there are at present three hundred and twenty-one children; many Sunday-schools have been sustained, and one adult school in which thirty-one hundred and eighty-three adults have been instructed. In all of these schools from the commencement fourteen thousand two hundred and eighty-three souls have been brought under habitual instruction in the things of God, and more than fifty thousand dollars have been expended in their support. Since 1834 over thirty-five thousand dollars have been expended in the circulation of thirty-two thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight Bibles, twenty-one thousand one hundred and fifty-nine New Testaments, nine hundred and two copies of the Psalms, and two thousand three hundred and fifty-nine small portions of the Holy Scriptures. During the same period two hundred and fifty thousand dollars have been expended in the support of missionaries in the four quarters of the world. In addition to this, nineteen million six hundred and fifty-two thousand seven hundred and eighty-nine tracts and books have been circulated since 1840. The narratives of later years are enriched by interesting communications from missionaries and evangelists, regarding the progress of the work. Altogether the sums which have been given for these objects amount to three hundred and fifty thousand dollars, to which may be added nearly fifty thousand dollars realized by sales of Bibles and tracts.

Soon after Mr. Müller's first arrival in England he was much interested in an account of a Mr. Groves, a dentist in Exeter, who relinquished a profession which yielded him an income of seven thousand five hundred dollars and went as a missionary to Persia, simply trusting in the Lord for temporal supplies. Mrs. Müller is a daughter of this devoted

man who now sleeps in Jesus. In 1835, Mr. Groves returned to Europe to obtain German missionaries to go to the East-Indies. Mr. Müller accompanied him to Germany; and, among other interesting incidents of this visit to his native land, Mr. Müller writes: "April 1.—In the evening I went to the large Orphan House, built, in dependence on the Lord, by A. H. Franke, and spent the evening in the same room where it pleased the Lord to begin a work of grace in my heart, with several of the same brethren and sisters with whom I used to meet seven years ago." After his return to England, he writes: "November 20.—I took tea at a sister's house, where I found Franke's life. I have frequently, for a long time, thought of laboring in a similar way, though it might be on a much smaller scale; not to imitate Franke, but in reliance upon the Lord. May the Lord make it plain." Again he writes: "November 21.—To-day I have had it very much impressed upon my heart no longer merely to think about the establishment of an Orphan House, but actually to set about it; and I have been very much in prayer respecting it, in order to ascertain the Lord's mind."

In the course of his pastoral labors he had seen to how large an extent the minds of Christians were filled with distrust of God's actual care of the smallest thing that affected them, and how little they were accustomed to carry every thing to him in faith; that God was not looked upon by them as THE LIVING GOD. He longed to be instrumental in giving them a manifest proof that God is the same that ever He was. He remembered the encouragement his own faith had received by the example of Franke. So, while from his heart he desired to benefit the orphans in temporal matters, and to be used in training them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, his primary object in undertak-

ing this work was that God might be magnified by the fact that the orphans under his care are provided with all they need only by prayer and faith, without any one being asked for aid; by which it might be seen that *God is faithful still, and hears prayers still.*

With much searching of his own heart, and an anxious desire to know that his motives were free from all self-seeking, he continued instant in prayer for months; and, though there was no immediate or striking interposition of God to make the way easy, his faith was confirmed, and he was led along, step by step, till at length a suitable house was obtained and furniture supplied for the accommodation of thirty orphans, a well-qualified matron and governess offered their services, abundant means for their present support were provided, and, on April twenty-first, 1836, the institution was opened by a day set apart for prayer and thanksgiving. At first, girls alone were received, from seven to twelve years of age, and the number of these in course of a few weeks was twenty-six.

Scarcely had a beginning been made when the applications for admission on behalf of orphans under seven, and a consideration of the injurious influences to which they might be exposed before they reached that age, led to the conclusion, in dependence on the guidance of the Lord, to establish an Infant Orphan House, for the reception of both male and female infants bereaved of both parents, with the design of caring for them until their seventh year, when they might be transferred to the institution already opened. In answer to prayer, a suitable matron and governess offered to take care of these infants, a convenient house with playground was obtained, and on November twenty-first, 1836, seven months after the opening of the first house, the Infant Orphan House was opened for the admission of children. About a year later the Boys' Orphan House was opened.

In the close of 1838, Mr. Müller reports: "There are at present eighty-six orphans in the three houses — thirty-one in the Girls' Orphan House, thirty-one in the Infant Orphan House, and twenty-four in the Boys' Orphan House. The whole number of orphans who have been under our care from April eleventh, 1836, to December, 1838, amounts to one hundred and ten. Without any one having been asked for any thing by us, the sum of £2111 5s. 4½d. (about \$10,500) has been given to us, entirely as the result of prayer to God, besides many articles of clothing, furniture, provisions, etc."

Amidst many trials of faith, but with still multiplying tokens of the Divine approval, these three institutions were conducted, in the houses rented for the purpose in Wilson street, Bristol, for nine years. In October, 1845, when the number of inmates was greatly increased, the inhabitants of the adjoining houses began to complain of the inconvenience they suffered, and this first suggested the inquiry, Whether it would not be desirable and for the glory of God to erect a suitable building, instead of continuing to rent premises which were not originally planned with a view to the accommodations required by so large a number of children? After months of prayerful deliberation, it was determined, in dependence on a prayer-hearing God, to erect a building sufficient for the accommodation of 140 orphan girls above seven years of age, 80 orphan boys above seven, and 80 male and female infants under seven, together with the necessary overseers, teachers, and attendants. As it was thought best not to commence the work until means were provided for the payment of all expenses, it was not till July 5, 1847, that the building was commenced, on a piece of ground manifestly obtained in answer to prayer, on Ashley Down, Bristol. On June 18, 1849, the children,

numbering in all 118, were removed from the rented houses on Wilson street, to the new Orphan House, amply furnished and complete for the accommodation of 300 inmates.

In the close of the year 1850, Mr. Müller, reviewing the progress of the work, states that there were, then, 308 persons, including orphans, teachers, nurses and servants, connected with the establishment. From the beginning, 443 orphans had been under his care, and nearly \$160,000 had been given for the support of the orphans and the erection of the building, in answer to prayer and without any one having been asked to contribute. About this time the applicants for admission far exceeded the capacity of the building, and the thought was suggested that it might be to God's glory that another house, capable of accommodating 700 orphans, making 1000 in all, should be erected. Months were spent in prayer and self-examination before this thought was mentioned to any one. But at last the way was made plain, and, after four years of patient waiting, the original thought was so far modified that it was judged best to commence the erection of a building capable of containing 400 orphans, on the south side of the new Orphan House, with the design of subsequently erecting a building capable of containing 300 more on the north side. At this time there were 715 applicants waiting for admission; and Mr. Müller's zeal was quickened by a fact which appeared in the census of Great Britain, that there were about 6000 young orphans in the prisons of England. On November 12, 1858, he writes, "The long looked for and long prayed for day had now arrived when the desire of my heart was granted to me, to be able to open the house for 400 additional orphans;" and, encouraging Christians patiently to wait on God, he adds: "You may have to pray

long, as I had in this case for nearly seven years, but the answer is certain." Up to this time the heart of this faithful servant of the Lord and those associated with him in the instruction of the orphans had often been cheered by conversions among the children, and several of them had fallen asleep in Jesus. But during this year there was a remarkable work of grace in the Institution. Out of 140 girls in the original Orphan House there were 23 respecting whom there was no doubt that they were believers; and many more in both houses were under concern for their souls.

Mr. Müller designed to erect an additional building for 300 orphans on the north side of the original building, but it was thought better to procure additional ground for the purpose. Accordingly, $11\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land were bought, only separated from the original site by the road, and on this it was decided to erect a house with accommodation for 450 instead of 300. This building was commenced in July, 1859, and was opened on March 12, 1862, so that the report for that year is entitled, "Brief Narrative of Facts relative to the New Orphan Houses, for 1150 Children, on Ashley Down, Bristol, etc." In recording the opening of Orphan House No. 3, Mr. Muller says: "Observe then, esteemed reader, how long it may be before a full answer to our prayers is granted, though these prayers may be believing prayers, earnest prayers, and offered up in the name of Jesus; and though we may desire the answer only for the honor of our Lord. For I did, by the grace of God, without the least doubt or wavering, look for more than eleven years for the full answer; I earnestly importuned the Lord; I alone looked for the answer on the ground of the worthiness of the Lord Jesus, judging myself entirely unworthy of an answer; and I only sought in this matter the glory of God."

Before this third house was completed his spirit was exercised about a still further enlargement of the work. For weighty reasons, and after much prayer, he determined to aim at the erection of two additional houses, Nos. 4 and 5, for the accommodation of 850, which, with the houses already opened, will make accommodation for 2000 orphans in all. These two buildings it is estimated will cost \$200,000, but it is proposed to proceed with the erection of No. 4 so soon as there shall be about \$100,000 in hand, and of this over \$60,000 had been received up to May 26, 1863. At that date there were 1060 orphans in the three houses already opened, and the total number who had been under Mr. Muller's care from April 11, 1836, is 1681. The amount that has been given for the orphans during that period exceeds \$800,000, all given as the result of prayer to God, without personal application to any man. So scrupulous has Mr. M. been on this point that, when persons desirous to aid the institution have inquired into the state of its funds, he has declined to answer, though at the time he may have stood greatly in need of aid. In all his reports he dwells upon the peace he has enjoyed in relying upon God for every thing, and we only regret that space is not afforded us to cite some of the marvellous interpositions of God on behalf of His trusting servant. In his narrative he seeks to encourage believers "fully, unreservedly, and habitually to depend upon God for every thing."

Speaking of the mode of admitting orphans to the benefits of the institution, he says: "Without any sectarian distinction whatever, and without favor or partiality, the orphans are received in the order in which application is made for them. I do not belong to any sect, and am not therefore influenced by sectarianism. The new Orphan Houses on Ashley Down are not *my* Orphan Houses, nor the Orphan

Houses of any sect or party; but they are God's Orphan Houses, and the Orphan Houses for any and every destitute orphan who has lost both parents by death, provided, of course, there be room for them."

We have only been able to state the general results of a life of faith, in which God has glorified Himself in our day, and we must leave the statement without comment. The narratives from which we have gathered these facts have been widely blessed not only to the comfort of the children of God, but to the conversion of sinners. They were mainly instrumental in originating the recent extensive revival and awakening in Ireland. We cannot but cherish the hope that even this imperfect abstract may encourage some timid believer to greater boldness at a throne of grace. At least it will turn the hearts of Christians to Mr. Muller and the orphans in fervent sympathy; prayers on their behalf will ascend, and God's name will be magnified in abundant thanksgiving in view of the monument to His grace and faithfulness which He has reared in the face of an unbelieving age.



THE DISPENSATIONS, PROPHETICALLY AND DOCTRINALLY CONSIDERED.

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IN undertaking to sketch, in a series of articles, the leading features of the Dispensations, as prophetically and doctrinally considered, the experience of many years attests that nothing is better calculated to strengthen faith than to trace in the earlier revelations, as in the womb and dawn of time, the great purposes of God which are about to be fulfilled, and which are clearly unfolded on the pages of Scripture with more immediate reference to our own dispensation. Though the limits of these articles necessarily render the view brief and fragmentary, still, being convinced that the comparison of things new and old out of the treasury of God, is the safest clue to the meaning of Scripture, we cherish the hope that enquiry may be stimulated, and that, by Divine help, enquiry may be satisfied, though we cannot pretend to satisfy it, since the subjects are inexhaustible.

As introductory to the whole subject, a few words in defence of the study of prophecy may not be out of place. Those who object to the study do not reflect how much our daily pursuits and expectations are influenced by prophecy. Our confidence in the continued rotation of the seasons rests, not on the order of Nature, but on the promise made to Noah, Gen. viii. 22, that "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and win-

ter, and day and night, shall not cease." We know that it is vain to expect the spontaneous fruits of the earth, not by experience, but by prophecy; for God has said, Gen. iii. 17-19, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground, for out of it thou wast taken." Nor do these objectors reflect that the fundamental truths of a Resurrection, a judgment to come, an eternal abode of bliss and an endless state of misery are all subjects of prophecy, which is, literally, a speaking beforehand, a foretelling of what is in the future, which can only be done by Him who knows the end from the beginning.

Prophecy is put into our hands with this important memorandum, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but the things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever." The study of it is commended in 2 Pet. i. 19, where, after commenting on the peculiar privilege granted to him in being an eye-witness of the Transfiguration, the Apostle adds, "But we have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." Prophecy is included when Paul says, 2 Tim. iii. 16, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works;" and prophecy is directly in the Apostle's view when he says, Rom. xv. 4, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope."

If history is so practical a part of education that he is regarded as deficient in the most useful information who

knows nothing of the rise and fall of empires, a strong argument in favor of the study of prophecy may be derived from the importance of knowing the predicted destiny of nations in whose ruin we may be involved. Self-interest, if no higher motive, may lead a man to ponder the issues of the times in which he lives. The violent opposition to the study of prophecy in our day, reminds us of the obstinacy of past generations who rejected the voice of the prophets. We pity and condemn the infatuation of Zedekiah, who turned a deaf ear to the warnings and entreaties of Jeremiah when he foretold the downfall of Jerusalem; but what is his perverseness more than ours if we shut our eyes to the certain doom that hangs over the Gentiles, contending that Christendom has abode in the goodness of God, and therefore is in no danger of excision.

If prophecy is a forbidden subject of study, what becomes of the largest portion of the Bible? From Isaiah to Malachi all is prophecy; half of the Psalms are prophetic, as well as important parts of those books which we call historical. The Bible is indeed a sealed book if we may not look into prophecy. But far different from this is the assurance in 1 Pet. i. 12, "Unto whom (the prophets) it was revealed that, not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things that are now reported unto you, by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into." If angels desire to look into prophecy, surely we, to whom the prophets expressly ministered these things, may and ought to feel the highest interest in them, and ought patiently and diligently to search into them. To what purpose did the Lord, in great condescension, say to his followers, "Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends,

for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you ;” if we refuse to become acquainted with the disclosure which He has made? It is no light thing to be brought into the privilege of Abraham, of whom it is said, “Shall I hide from Abraham, my friend, the thing that I do?” Shall we despise our birthright and the confidence of our Father when He takes us into His counsels?

It is objected to the study of prophecy that *it is not practical*. Prophecy teaches the Christian not only what he is redeemed *from*, but what he is redeemed *for* ; it shows him that he is made a king and a priest unto God, that the world out of which he is redeemed is under sentence, that he is called to live in holy separation from the world, that all things are hastening to the grand consummation, and that this memorandum should be at the head of all his transactions : “But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep as though they wept not; and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not; and they that use the world as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away.” Is there nothing practical here? But those who say that the study is not practical and that the true use, as well as the true interpretation of prophecy, is to be found in its fulfilment, forget that it is declared to be “a light in a dark place,” and they forget the lessons of the examples that are recorded of the fatal neglect of prophecy. Was the prophecy by Noah that God was about to bring a flood upon the world of the ungodly designed only to be understood by the events? Was it so with Lot’s warning to his sons that Sodom was about to be consumed? Did the charge, “Look not behind thee,” save Lot and his two daughters, or was it designed that the meaning of it should be understood only

when his wife was turned into a pillar of salt, when she disobeyed it? Were the prophecies that Christ should come of the seed of David, of the tribe of Benjamin, and that he should be born in Bethlehem, to be understood only when they were fulfilled? The truth is, that the bitter opponents of this most profitable study are those who know nothing about prophecy, and who have no scruples in acknowledging their ignorance. We cannot accept them as our guides in a matter of which they are ignorant, in the face of all we have found of delight and profit, when, taking the Bible as its own expositor, and remembering Paul's direction about rightly dividing the word of truth, we have discovered the majestic plant here unfolded, and the indelible traces of Divine grace and wisdom on every page. The Omniscient and Omnipotent revealer—the fountain of prophecy, declares Himself, "I am God and there is none else, I am God and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done." From the distance of nearly six thousand years we have gone back to the beginning, and there we see traces of the end. We read for instance, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." The thing is not yet done; but we have abundant reason to be assured that His counsel shall stand, and He will do all His pleasure. Faith laying hold of the ancient prophecy, exults in the assurance, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

One who is stirred up in the name of Jesus Christ to testify the things that are most surely believed among us, must feel the deep responsibility under which he rests to establish every thing expressly on the word of God. We desire to exhibit the principles on which our investigation of the Scriptures proceeds in such a way that these articles may not only be intelligible, but may draw our readers to study

the Word of God for themselves, with a warmer and deeper interest. We remark, therefore, that we find the revelation of future events under four distinct forms. 1st. TYPES, as the Apostle says of the recorded history of God's ancient people, 1 Cor. x. 11, "Now all these things happened unto them for examples, (margin, *types*,) and they are written for our admonition on whom the ends of the world are come." 2d. SYMBOLS, such as the great image seen by Nebuchadnezzar, and the four wild beasts, seen by Daniel. 3d. FIGURES, such as the predictions regarding our Lord under the figure of a lamb, a lion, a branch, a rock, or a fountain. 4th. Simple predictions, such as the prediction to Abraham, "Sarah thy wife shall have a son." But it is to be remembered regarding all prophecy, that *the events are always literal*, whether revealed in type, symbol, figure or simple prediction.

Abundant proof of the literal accomplishment of prophecy, whatever its form, might be found in the earthly life of Jesus, the events of which were foretold minutely and accurately; the place and circumstances of His birth; the manner of His life; the reproach and contempt which followed him; His rejection by His own nation; His betrayal by one of His disciples, the price for which He was betrayed, and the use that was made of the thirty pieces of silver; His meekness under injury and insult, the cruel mockery and derision of his trial, the minutest circumstances of His crucifixion, the division of His raiment by lot, the cruel mockery of His dying agony, the manner of His death and His burial, His resurrection from the dead, and His ascent to heaven. All this, and much more, is described by the prophets in terms that can leave no doubt that He in whom it was all fulfilled, was indeed the Messiah promised to the fathers.

Now, as the past history of the life of Christ was plainly

described by the prophets, so is the future. It was a remark of a Jewish Rabbi, "Strange it is that you Christians take literally all the passages in which you can debase your Messiah; and then with marvellous inconsistency you spiritualize all the words of the prophets that tell of His glory, when he reigneth before his ancients gloriously." The rebuke is only too well merited, for Christian teachers have failed to divide rightly the Word of God, and to distinguish the dealings of God in the different dispensations.

In no way is revelation so clearly unfolded as when it is viewed *dispensationally*. The term is used by Paul, who speaks of "the dispensation of the Gospel," and "the dispensation of the fulness of times." The literal meaning of the word is the order of the house; our word 'economy' is derived from it. It embraces the order of events transpiring between two definite periods, with all the principles, rules and ordinances peculiar to that interval. The dispensations are very clearly defined, and are eight in number.

THE FIRST DISPENSATION we may call *the Eden dispensation*. The account of it begins at Gen. i. 24, with the creation of man on the sixth day, and concludes at Gen. iii. 24, with the placing of the Cherubim on the east of Eden to keep the way of the tree of life.

THE SECOND DISPENSATION is *the Antediluvian*. The account of it begins at Gen. iv. 4, with the birth of Cain, and concludes at Gen. viii. 14, with the drying up of the earth.

THE THIRD DISPENSATION is *the Patriarchal*. The account of it begins at Gen. viii. 15, with Noah's departure from the Ark, and concludes at Gen. l. 26, with the death of Joseph.

THE FOURTH DISPENSATION, *the Mosaic*, begins with the oppression of Israel under Pharaoh, and concludes with the birth of John the Baptist.

THE FIFTH DISPENSATION is *the Messianic*, which extends from the birth to the ascension of Jesus Christ.

THE SIXTH DISPENSATION is *the dispensation of the Holy Ghost*, or, as we sometimes call it, *the Gospel dispensation*, which extends from the day of Pentecost to the time of the gathering together of the Saints under Christ in the air at His coming.

THE SEVENTH DISPENSATION is the *Millennial*, and extends from the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to the judgment of the Great White Throne.

THE EIGHTH DISPENSATION is *the eternal state* when the New Jerusalem descends to the new earth, and the Tabernacle of God is with men.

The whole family of mankind may be regarded as the subjects of revelation, under three great divisions: The Jews, The Gentiles, and The Church of God, (1 Cor. x. 32;) and we must be careful not to confound them in reading the Word of God—we must be careful that we do not apply promises made to the Jews as though they belonged to the Gentiles; nor predictions relating to Israel as though they referred to the Church. A student of the Word of God who keeps these distinctions in view, exercises patience in investigating the truth revealed to the several dispensations, and who has a spiritual aptitude to discern the truth regarding our own dispensation, which is allegorised in the types and symbols of former dispensations, will be continually arrested by the proofs of the wisdom of the great God, who maketh known to His servants the things that come to pass hereafter, and will rise from the study with a profound conviction of the Divinity which is stamped upon every page of revelation.

In unfolding His counsels and revealing His will to man, the revelation was more general or more particular as the

dispensation was farther from or nearer to the event predicted, but each dispensation received the whole truth, and with sufficient explicitness for the necessity of the time being. On this principle we shall proceed in the proposed series of articles to show how all Scripture bears harmonious testimony, and the latest revelation will be found to be the unfolding of that of which the earliest revelation was the germ. This indeed is the plan of the Word of God. Though communicated at sundry times and in diverse manners, the various parts of the Bible form one complete whole, and that oneness reveals its divine origin, and shows that, in reality, it has but one author. A knowledge of the dispensations is the clue to its oneness and harmony.

What is true of the Word of God as a whole is true of every separate prophecy. For every prophecy is framed upon the model of the book, and, in form, is the whole in miniature. In its opening we have the subject in its length and breadth, and immediately we have the details and subdivisions of the revelation, as will be shown in our progress through the dispensations. As when we throw a stone into the centre of a sheet of water there appears on the ruffled surface a succession of circles, each perfect in itself, but each in the succession larger and larger as they recede from the centre, till the last includes the whole pond; so with these successive dispensations, each is larger and more comprehensive than its predecessor; fresh incidents are introduced, but only to make the revelation in the last dispensation a more full and emphatic announcement of what was revealed in the first. The result of this accumulation of truth is to raise up an irresistible proof that, with our unchangeable God, His purposes have been of old from everlasting. Can it for a moment be supposed that He who has so wondrously planned and ordered all creation should introduce at last

a book without a purpose, a revelation without a design, a chaos of events interspersed with doctrines and enigmas without order or system? Not for a moment. All earnest Christians must deplore the scepticism of the present day, and the daring insults which are heaped on the Word of God by the so-called masters of divinity schools. But whence does it spring? From the old cause: "They know not the Scriptures nor the power of God, therefore they do greatly err." And how shall we meet these insidious attacks on our faith and on the truth of revelation? Even by learning to comprehend our Bible as a whole, and to see its marvellous divine construction. Take the key which alone can, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, open that mysterious and unbroken chain of proof that the hand that made it is divine.

One very peculiar feature of the early dispensation was the unfolding of certain counsels of God by typical illustrations in scenes of actual life, which arise so naturally that the actors were unconscious of their typical character. Nay, very often in scenes which illustrate the most important doctrines, so far as the actors are concerned, their position was of a very questionable character. For instance, when the Pharisees demanded a sign of the Lord He gave them the sign of the prophet Jonah, whose fearful punishment in his consignment to a living tomb, from which he was brought forth after a three days' burial, was a type and sign of the burial and resurrection of the Prince of Life. The prophet, overtaken in his disobedience by the hand of God, little thought what mighty and wonderful truth lay concealed in this mysterious judgment. We shall soon see that it takes the whole Bible and its collected worthies, each shining in his peculiar sphere and standing in the grandeur of his particular character, to constitute a type of the concentrated

perfections, the commanding powers, the unparalleled sufferings, and the glorious conquests of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God over all, blessed for ever. And it is thus we see the great design of the Bible, which is revealed in its close: "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," while we find Jesus dimly shadowed but most assuredly foretold in the first prophecy, the germ, the bud of all the rest. As the naturalist traces the footprints of the Creator, from the rudest elements to the perfected structure of the universe, we shall find a noble field of holy investigation, in which we may trace the footprints of redemption through the six thousand years of God's dealings with mankind; and, as we trace the unfolding of the great design from events in the infancy of our race on which it is unmistakably stamped, we shall be convinced that the same perfect skill which built the universe has been engaged in raising the imperishable fabric of salvation.

Amidst these preliminary remarks we may properly explain two words which constantly cross the path of our inquiry, and of which we require to have a correct understanding—the words "world" and "day." A passage in Heb. ix. 26, will explain the former: "For then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world, (*κόσμον*;) but now, once in the end of the world, (*τῶν αἰώνων*;) hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Now, here "the foundation of the world" and "the end of the ages" are contrasted, and the passage intimates that the Lord suffered in the END of the Mosaic dispensation, which then gave place to another. These same words occur in our Lord's explanation of the parable of the tares and wheat, "The field is the world, (*κοσμος*;) the harvest is the end of the world," (*αιῶνος*;) *i. e.*, the end of the age or dispensation. The natural meaning of the

word "*day*" is a period of twenty-four hours, but in Scripture, as in common use, it often signifies an indefinite period. For example, in Gen. ii. 4 we read: "In *the day* that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens." In Deut. ix. 1, Moses says, "Hear, O Israel, thou art to pass over Jordan *this day*," though many events, and among them the death of Moses, were to occur before they actually passed over the river. The word is frequently used to denote a *dispensation*, as when the Lord says, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day;" or when David speaks of "the day of temptation in the wilderness," which lasted forty years; or when Paul styles the present dispensation "the day of salvation," which has already lasted over eighteen centuries, and we shall find that, like "the day of salvation," "the day of wrath" and "the day of the Lord Jesus" extend over a full future dispensation.

The predictions of "*the sufferings* of Christ" have been literally fulfilled. We shall see these sufferings prefigured in the types of past dispensations. The prophets speak also of "*the glories* which should follow." We say "glories," for both words are plural, as Wickliffe translates it "the latter glories," and the Rheims translation has it "the glories following" the sufferings of Christ. These "glories" also we shall see foreshadowed in the types, and one object of these articles will be to investigate what is revealed of these "glories"—the glory of Christ as Son of God; the glory manifested in the Son of man; the glory of the house of David; the glory of the celestial, which is one, and the glory of the terrestrial, which is another. We shall have occasion also to consider "the partakers of the heavenly glory," those who first trusted in Christ, the partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, and the sphere of their inheritance which is heavenly.

Here we must pause for a moment to regret the great and just cause of offence which has been given by a certain class of advocates of the second coming of Christ, who ignore the express revelations of the heavenly glory of "the Church of the Lord born;" who, in defiance of the plainest revelations, have brought them from their heavenly places, and, as one of them expresses it, "camped them between the Red Sea and the Euphrates, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, no man making them afraid." Now, that the household of faith, these kings and priests unto God, the bride; the Lamb's wife, rising from the marriage supper, should be converted into tillers of the earth, may well shock the least sensitive Christianity. But is this a reason for abandoning the study of prophecy? It is an argument for pursuing it, that we may scripturally expose these errors and show in what a mass of confusion the teachers of them are involved. Many zealous advocates of the premillennial advent of Christ, such as Dr. Cummings, locate the millennial dispensation in the new heavens and the new earth, and thus give a handle to post-millennial writers, who are not slow to expose the absurdity of placing a dispensation which shall still have to do with *mortality* on the scene of *immortality*.

To return from this digression, as we proceed with our investigation we shall see the calling of the Church and its predicted declension; the progress of the kingdom of heaven, from the sowing of the seed of the kingdom to the drawing the net on shore and its subsequent judgment; the second coming of Christ and the first resurrection; the marriage of the Lamb; the day of His wrath; the millennial dispensation, its progress and its judgment; the kingdom resigned by the Son into the hands of the Father, when all enemies are subdued; the final resurrection and the judgment of the great white throne; the creation of the new

heavens and the new earth; the everlasting state, when God shall be all and in all.

Such are the subjects before us. The just appreciation of them demands, not the excitement of a speculative curiosity, but the calm and steady search of the Scriptures, with earnest prayer that our hearts may be filled with the love, wisdom, and power of God. It becomes us seriously to consider the circumstances in which we find ourselves; born into a world in revolt against the majesty of heaven, the arch enemy, the devil, who is described as a murderer from the beginning, a liar and the father of it, the mysterious instigator of evil, that works in the hearts of the children of disobedience, using every fiendish art to entice us to our ruin; the long-forbearing mercy of God tolerating the evil for nigh six thousand years, while He has mercifully provided a refuge from the impending destruction in the marvellous scheme whereby "He could be just and yet the justifier of him that believes, and therefore trusts in Jesus; the wonders of wisdom displayed in the salvation of sinners, since as by one man came death, so by one man comes deliverance from death. Can we contemplate ourselves as we appear on this scene and actually play our part in it, with such tremendous alternatives staring us in the face, and not feel that he who fritters away the precious moments of this brief life in the concerns of time, mistakes the true ends of existence, trifles with eternity, and endangers his own soul? Let us rather give heed to the injunction of our Lord, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you."

LECTURES ON THE EPISTLES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES IN ASIA.

BY GEORGE DUFFIELD, D.D.

LECTURE III.—THE PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF JESUS CHRIST.

THE Apostle John, through whom the Saviour made His communications to the Seven Churches of Asia, in this context gives an account, 1. Of the circumstances under which the revelation was made; 2. The place where he was; 3. The manner of its being made; 4. The parties to whom it was addressed; 5. The person of the Revelator; 6. The effect the revelation had upon the Apostle; 7. The manner in which that effect was arrested and prevented from fatal results; and 8. The general key given him for the interpretation of the communications about to be transmitted through him.

It was during a season of severe affliction, while suffering from the power of persecution then brought to bear upon the Churches of God, that the Apostle was favored with this wondrous revelation. Although he was as highly distinguished as any mere mortal ever was, certainly honored above all the other Apostles by the Saviour Himself, yet, in the truly meek and modest spirit of the Gospel, he affects no supremacy, nor even superiority; but, in addressing the Churches, styles himself "a brother and companion in the tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." Here is no lofty assertion of authority, no vainglorious assumption of official titles and dignity, nor arrogant demands

of respect and reverence from his fellow-Christians. All these proud symbols of distinction become utterly insignificant, and are, in fact, forgotten and despised by one who feels impressed with a sense of his accountability to God our Saviour, and of the infinite glory and exaltation above all that mere mortal man can ever hope or dream of attaining to. The highest honor and distinction he aspired to was to be a fellow-partaker with the Christian Church in the afflictions and persecutions which the faithful followers of Christ were then suffering from the rage and tyranny of the Roman Emperor Domitian. The men of the world look to earthly sovereigns for preferment and distinction, and dread their hatred and their ire. But John gloried in his tribulations. For he knew that suffering in this world for the sake of Jesus Christ, and in consequence of his attachment to Him and to His cause, was the way to become assimilated to Him; to have like patience developed in himself which marked the character of his blessed Master while here on earth, and to share in his glorious kingdom. "If we suffer we shall also reign with Him." 2 Tim. ii. 12. So far from being afraid of trials and reproaches for Christ's cause and a good conscience, and seeking to avoid them, we are exhorted to rejoice inasmuch as we are thus made "partakers of Christ's sufferings, so that when His glory shall be revealed we may be glad also with exceeding joy." 1 Pet. iv. 13. At the advanced age of 90 years or upward, when pressed and burdened with its infirmities, this devoted Apostle had been banished by the decree of the Roman Cæsar, Domitian, to the island called Patmos.

This is a small island in the Ægean Sea or Archipelago, a few hours' sail, lying south-west of Samos, and now called Patimo, or Patmosa, or Pathmos, having a village of fishermen's huts and a harbor of the same name, in which are

some monasteries of Greek monks, who show a cave or chapel where they pretend that John wrote "the Revelation." This may or may not be. In what precise spot on this island he penned his vision John has not informed us, and it is a matter of no moment whatever. It is enough to know that the island exists, and corresponds with the descriptions given of it by ancient authorities. Its circuit is from 25 to 30 miles, a place of little or no note or consequence, on which there were mines or quarries, and in which convicts from proconsular Asia there banished were anciently required to work. It has neither trees, nor rivers, nor land for cultivation, except some little nooks among the ledges of rocks of which it is composed. Yet on this wild and desolate spot the Apostle enjoyed the presence of His Saviour and had glorious visions of the heavenly state. No power of persecuting tyrants can prevent the visits of Christ to His suffering and afflicted saints. He had been guilty of no crime whatever against God or man. But he had proclaimed the Word of God, had asserted the claims of Christ, and professed his belief in His promises, and this was accounted seditious and treasonable. The lofty monarch of earth could not brook the thought that there was still a loftier king, who was destined to sway His universal sceptre over this globe. And for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ this aged Apostle was exiled. What odious spectacles of ignorance and weakness, of folly and wickedness do proud persecutors make of themselves when they array themselves against the faithful ministers of Christ!

It would be in vain for us to expect to understand the precise manner in which Jesus Christ communicated to John this sacred vision. Here is no place to enter into a discussion on a subject on which some have attempted to display

useless learning. The Apostle Paul, in speaking of the visions which he had, tells us that he could not say "whether he was in the body or out of it." How utterly absurd therefore is it for learned men, who never had a vision themselves, to attempt to explain the manner of such communications! All that the Apostle John has told us on the subject is, that he "was in the spirit on the Lord's day." By some mysterious and inexplicable movement of the Spirit of God, the great agent whom Jesus Christ employs to make known the things concerning Himself, the Apostle's mind and thoughts were affected. He describes them as they affected his senses, and represents the communication made to him to have been like a voice coming from behind him — loud as of a trumpet giving the signal for war — fearful, appalling, and filling him with sudden and awful surprise. It was the voice of God, like that awful peal, worse than the bursting of sevenfold thunders, when the Law was uttered from Mount Sinai. "I heard behind me a loud voice, etc.," v. 10, 11. The parties to whom John was directed to write are "The Seven Churches of Asia." Whether these churches are here named as symbolical representatives of the universal Christian Church in different stages of its future history, or as merely independent churches in proconsular Asia, is a question the consideration of which we reserve to another and future occasion. It may suffice here to remark that, whatever we are to understand in relation to them, the entire vision of John was to be communicated to them. He was to write what he saw as well as what should be dictated.

There was more than the awful thunder tones of the loud trumpet-voice of God that suddenly burst upon the Apostle's ears as from behind him. As he turned in wonder and alarm to see what the appalling voice that spake to him meant, a bright and dazzling vision met his astonished eyes

It was Jesus Christ Himself, not as the meek and gentle one on whose bosom once he leaned and in whose presence he ever found delight; not as the crucified One, insulted, spit upon, mocked, suffering, and dying; but radiant and brilliant in unearthly splendor, with such dazzling coruscations of glory as to fill his mind with rapture and amazement. The scene or locality in which this wonder was portrayed seems to have appeared to John like that of the holy place of the Jewish temple. For there stood the seven-branched golden candlestick with its seven lamps lighted and burning, and there the Ancient High Priest, robed in his splendid vestments, moved and ministered before it and before God for the benefit of His people. John saw the Saviour in the place and discharging the office of the High Priest, but habited in infinitely greater splendor. In the midst, not of branches but of seven different golden lamp-bearers, appeared one like the Son of Man, robed like the Ancient High Priest, walking and exercising oversight, the glory of his Deity coruscating through the veil of his humanity, and corresponding in every respect with the vision which Daniel, centuries before, had of the same illustrious person.

The seven golden candlesticks, or lamp-bearers, are subsequently explained, by Christ Himself, to symbolize the seven Churches; not as they exist and are seen in their external organization, but as they are gathered round the Saviour, and are seen in the holy place, the true sanctuary, where He alone ministers. They are not the sources, but simply the beams of light, "the instruments on which the lights being suspended illuminate the Christian world." This is a favorite emblem in the sacred Scriptures. They receive their light from Jesus Christ, and reflect it on the world. The seven-branched golden lamp, of the ancient Jewish temple, was a type of Christ in this respect. Here in this vision of John,

we have its evangelical exposition. The evangelical ministry and true disciples of Jesus Christ, found in the different evangelical churches, form the sconces, or radiators, of religious knowledge, reflecting light from Him. The station where they are placed and whence it is disseminated, is the Church of Christ, the golden candlestick.

It is wonderful to notice the care with which God has preserved in the world a monumental knowledge of the great types of the Old Testament Dispensation. The same spirit of infidelity that denied the antiquity of the prophetic writings, and, when it had no other way to meet the argument in favor of the Divine inspiration of the sacred Scriptures, founded on their fulfilment, pronounced them to be history written after the events, would have declared the whole Jewish system fabulous, when the temple, and its worship, and all traces of it had perished from the world, as Christ predicted it should. But the providence of God made its very destroyers to be the veritable historians, who should transmit to future ages the knowledge of its symbols. The triumphal arch, still extant in the city of Rome, which was erected to grace the triumphant entry of the Roman Emperor Titus Vespasian, the conqueror, represents in bold relief, the royal procession bearing the spoils of the temple, and among them this very symbol. History informs us, also, that the original golden lamp-bearer, used in the temple, remained in the city of Rome till Rome itself was destroyed by Genseric, the Vandal, in 455, when it was removed to Africa, where it, with the other spoils of the temple, remained until the Emperor Justinian having subdued the Vandals in 534, presented them to the great Church at Jerusalem. They had answered their purpose as a type, when the true light that shines in the Church had come, and their presence here was of value only as monuments of history.

The description of the person of Christ, given by John, corresponds remarkably with that by Daniel, with sufficient agreement and yet variety of expression, to show that the Apostle did not copy the prophet.

Amid all His unearthly splendor, John could, nevertheless, discern and trace the features of that well-known countenance and form of the Son of Man, of whom for years he had been eye-witness, and a familiar companion. He was clothed like the High Priest, with a garment down to the feet, and girt about the waist or loins, with a golden girdle, in token of His being actively employed. Notwithstanding He has returned to "the glory He had with the Father before the world began," He is still the wakeful, watchful, unwearied guardian of His Church. He who once girded Himself with a towel to wash His disciples' feet, now wears the girdle of royal priestly dignity, while He renders active and efficient service for us in the true sanctuary above. "His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow." Those radiant locks, unlike His appearance when encircled with a crown of thorns, presented to the eye of John the great "Ancient of Days." The whiteness, as the use of the word in the original indicates, was of the purest splendor, like that of light, or of metals heated to the highest point.

"His eyes were like a flame of fire," piercing and penetrating into all things, appropriately symbolical of that Omniscient and Omnipresent Being of whom it is said that "his eyes run to and fro, etc.," that "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." "His feet like unto fine brass" (as if glowing as they burned) "in a furnace." Like expressions were employed by Ezekiel to describe the Divine appearances made to him. There was a metal known to the ancients called by the Greeks ELECTRON, a mixture of gold and brass, which received the most exquisite polish, possessed the most brilliant splendor,

and assumed a fiery resplendent color. This corresponds with the description of the whole person, and as the footsteps, or tread of a man, are an admirable index to his character, so here, it well denotes, the strength, firmness, decision, celerity and power of His movements, whether in providence or in grace.

“His voice, as the sound of many waters,” marks at once His majesty and power. The roaring of the ocean, the raging of the waves, the rushing of many waters, the rushing of nations, the tumult of an army, and of a popular assembly, are all figurative resemblances in the sacred Scriptures, and in classical writers, having their foundation in nature, and justifying the description John has given of the infinite overpowering majesty and irresistible might of our great Redeemer, whose voice can make the very heavens tremble.

“He held in his right hand seven stars.” These were his glorious sceptre. They are explained, v. 20, to mean the angels of the seven Churches. The word angels denotes ambassadors or messengers, and this is the title which the Apostle appropriates for the ministry of reconciliation. They are the ministers or servants of Christ, sent to enlighten the Church, and reflect His glory. As teachers and pastors they are called stars and angels, and are upheld by the mighty hand of Jesus Christ. The ministry and pastoral office are His own ordinances. They are the sceptre of His right hand in the Church, and when found faithful to their trust, as Daniel has predicted, will “shine as the stars for ever and ever.”

“Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword.” This is the weapon of offence—the instrument of victory, by which He will conquer all His enemies. It was the breathing of the exalted Saviour that John thus described. It appeared to him like the piercing sword of flame, a terrific

symbol of the power of destruction. It corresponds with Daniel's fiery stream that issued and came forth from before the great Ancient of Days, breathing out burning wrath—that "breath of His mouth and brightness of His coming," which are referred to by Paul when he speaks of His coming to destroy the lawless one, the man of sin. In perfect keeping with this was "His countenance which was as the sun shineth in His strength," the most intensely brilliant appearance, such as John already had seen that countenance, when He was transfigured on the mount.

Such was the personal appearance of Jesus Christ. The sight was most appalling. No wonder that John was overwhelmed by it. Paul had been smitten with blindness by the same, and John says, "when I saw Him I fell at His feet as one dead," just as Daniel has told us, he too was affected by the same. "There remained no strength in me, for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength." Dan. iii. Such will He appear again, when the sight of Him shall shock a guilty and agonized world, as with electric stroke.

John, fainting away at the sight, placed him for the moment, as it were, among the dead. But he tells us that this same glorious Being "laid His right hand upon me saying, Be not afraid; I am the first," etc., v. 17, 18. The idea may be as truly and more freely expressed, Even the living One; I was indeed dead, but behold I am the living One to all eternity, and I have the keys of Death and Hell. There can be no doubt or possible method of denying who He was, and what He claims to be. He was the crucified Jesus now manifesting Himself as the Lord of life and glory, the eternal self-existent God. John need not fear, when in such infinite condescension he is admonished to dismiss his fears. That same hand that upholds his ministering servants in this world, and makes them His sceptre, or the immediate means

of His sway, and the influence which He exerts in it, shall wake, even the dead to life, by its almighty and life-giving touch. It was as one raised from the dead that John received his commission. "Write thou the things thou seest, (not hast seen,) even the things which are," what he at that moment saw, and what other things should be disclosed to him, in his vision, "the things which shall be after these." As seen in prophetic vision, however, they set forth corresponding events in time. The vision he had already was that of the personal coming of that Lord from Heaven, who now sustains His ministering servants, as the stars in His right hand, or the sparkling diamonds that adorn His sceptre, and shall hereafter wake the dead as he did John from the swoon in which he lay.

Let us learn that

1. The Lord Jesus Christ still exercises in Heaven the office of High Priest. The long robe to his feet was sacerdotal.

2. He is specially exercised in watching and protecting those for whom He is concerned. "Walking in the midst;" this phraseology is appropriately adopted in reference to God's care over His people.

3. The visible glory of the personal presence of Christ is indeed preternatural, but not at all incredible. For 1. The angelic messengers appeared with extraordinary powers. 2. Christ Himself had so appeared to John on the Mount. 3. There are agents, or second causes in nature, as the electric fire, that are capable of being employed to secure such displays.

4. The eternal deity of Jesus Christ, v. 18. The person of Christ is the great mystery of the Universe.

5. The certainty of the resurrection, v. 18. He has power over, and is Lord of the invisible state.

THE RICH FOOL.

WHEN we come to the study of the prophetic Scriptures, we are required to decide between two rival schools of interpretation, the literal or grammatical, and the mystical or allegorical. The former profess to come to these Scriptures with the conviction that God means simply and truly what He says; the other come, apparently, with the design of extorting a hidden meaning from them, in harmony with certain conclusions of their own as to what they ought to teach. For example, having arrived at the conclusion that the plain and literal meaning of those passages of Scripture which announce the second coming of Christ and his reign over the earth, is inconsistent with their reasonable expectation of human progress and evangelical success, they are constrained to explain away all such passages as mystically or allegorically, referring to death, or the destruction of Jerusalem, or a revival of religion; just as certain philosophic Christians at Corinth, judging a resurrection from the dead to be absurd and impossible, explained away the language of inspiration in what is called a spiritual sense, as referring to regeneration, and said "that the resurrection is passed already."

This mischievous tampering with the Word of God, with the design of accommodating it to the conclusions of human wisdom or the desires of the natural mind, is by no means limited to the prophetic Scriptures. In fact, we might ask

what doctrine of revelation, or what exhibition of Christian privilege or responsibility has not been frittered away by such a system of interpretation, if it deserves the name? Without referring at present to the mature fruits of the system in Neological speculations and Swedenborgian chimeras, we desire to call attention to the extent to which many who are indeed resting in Christ alone, have been led to make His words of no effect, to their own spiritual detriment and the dishonor of His name. They have connected their own hopes and the hopes of the Church with the systems of this world. They are looking to the scientific and mechanical progress of the age; to the advancement of secular education; to schemes of social and political reform; and at last, they have learned to regard it as the mission of the Church to promote all these, and expect this boasted progress to culminate in the supremacy of the Church, and what they call the conversion of the world. To reconcile all this to the Word of God it is necessary to explain away every thing in it that relates to the hope of the Church and the doom of the present evil world; to the coming of Christ and the establishment of His kingdom. But they cannot stop there, for, in the face of the plainest testimony of Scripture regarding the true place and calling of the Christian, they must find some way of justifying their design to make the most of both worlds; and must neutralize all those plain injunctions of the Word regarding our separation from the world, our abandonment of its honors, pleasures and possessions, our complete freedom from all its cares and entanglements, and our simple and direct dependence on our Heavenly Father. They would regard it as sheer fanaticism, for example, to understand literally and in their plain grammatical import, such injunctions as, "Resist not evil," "Give to him that asketh of thee," "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on

earth," "Sell that ye have and give alms," "Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" If they cannot explain away and qualify the language, then they are driven to maintain that all such injunctions, as well as a multitude of precious promises, had only a temporary application to the apostolic age or to the primitive Church at Jerusalem; though they do not tell us upon what principle they determine what portion of the Word of God has such a limitation.

To discuss the principles of interpretation is not the design of this article, but rather to exhibit in plain language the lesson which the parable of the rich man, in Luke xii. 16-21, most forcibly inculcates. But we venture to ask whether this mode of explaining away the Word of God, in accommodation to the desires of the carnal mind and to popular tastes, be not the very error against which the Lord warns His disciples in the first verse of this chapter, "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy!" The Lord most graphically describes the personal character of these hypocrites, "Ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them." The object of the whole pharisaic system was to substitute an apparent for a real devotion to the will of God. The leaven of the Pharisees is in another passage explained to mean their doctrine or manner of teaching, which the Lord denounces as "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, and making the Word of God of no effect by their traditions," explaining it away to accommodate their own selfish purposes or to secure the favor of men.

That the Lord foresaw the temptations to which His followers would be exposed to tamper, in like manner, with the truth of which they are stewards, and that He cautions them against just such a hypocritical and time-serving ac-

commodation of His doctrine to popular tastes, appears also from the charge in the fourth verse, "And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear. Fear Him which, after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, fear Him." Throughout the whole chapter He evidently has in view, first of all, our simple and childlike reception of His Word wherever it may lead us, without fear of consequences. Worldly prudence will often interpose with the most plausible suggestions as to the consequences of receiving the truth: "It will lead you to beggary," "You are cutting yourself off from all opportunities of usefulness," "You will sacrifice the confidence of the most judicious Christians," "Nothing but ridicule and ruin lie before you." And in some ages and countries it might have been added, "Nay, nothing lies before you but the scaffold or the stake." To all such suggestions of worldly prudence the Lord says, "Fear not." Secondly, what is true of our own reception of truth wherever it may lead us, is true also of our public testimony to the truth—the Christian has nothing to do with the consequences of his fidelity. Prudence might suggest, "Well, if you will hold these extreme views, hold them to yourself." The Lord says to His faithful witnesses, "Fear not," and encourages our fidelity by the assurance, "Whoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God." It enlarges our view of the confession here intended, and, at the same time, gives distinctness both to the duty and the promise, when we observe that in the Greek we have in both members of the sentence, "*in me*," "Confess in me." In contrast with this ample compensation for all present sacrifice and hazard, the hope of being "confessed in Christ before the angels of

God," stands the awful alternative of being repudiated in that august presence. Without prolonging these preliminary remarks, the aim of the Lord's discourse is to guard His disciples against all temptations to temporize, or to tamper with the truth; to encourage them to a fearless following of the truth and an unfaltering testimony to it, in simple confidence in God's providential care and in the sufficiency of His grace, without regard to the counsels of worldly prudence or the resources of human wisdom.

Was it by accident that a selfish man was permitted to interrupt these counsels and assurances of Divine grace with the seemingly untimely demand, "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me"? No one will think so who observes how appropriately the parable to which the demand gave occasion, falls in with the train of the Saviour's counsels. Disclaiming all authority in the temporal affairs of those whom He instructed, and rebuking the blind worldliness of the man, who, in the presence of such an instructor, was occupied only with worldly interests and his private wrongs, the Lord turned to those around Him and said, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." The word here rendered covetousness, signifies "the possession of too much;" and, thence, the excessive desire of possession, which was exemplified by the brother who, we may suppose, unjustly appropriated more than his share of the inheritance; as well as by the applicant, who forgot every thing in the presence of Jesus but his eager desire to obtain what may have been his just share of it, while he might have been seeking an inheritance that fadeth not away. On the supposition that both of the parties were present, the parable was admirably adapted to rebuke them both; though it evidently is not of any merely

temporary application; for it is an illustration of this universal maxim, "For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth;" or, as it may be rendered, "For at the time when all things abound to a man, his life is not of his possessions." If he possessed the whole world, he could not secure or control his existence for a single instant. How absurd as well as impious, then, his presumptuous attempts to escape from a simple dependence on God by accumulating provisions for many days. "And He spake a parable unto them saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then, whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is every one that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Luke xii. 16-21.

The parable is carefully constructed to guard against any attempt to evade the force of the lesson. Had the wealth which the rich man abused been acquired in a way which left it open to suspicion, it might have been supposed that the rebuke was directed against the mode of its acquisition, and sudden death was God's judgment on a crime. For instance, had it been gained in trade, it might have been suspected that it was the fruit of unscrupulous speculation or fraudulent dealing. But there can be no suspicion in this case. This wealth was evidently a gift and a trust from God Himself—"the ground brought forth plentifully." Wealth could not possibly have come to a man more legiti-

mately. The wrong and the folly could not possibly be in the method of acquiring it. The wrong began in his thoughts about it after it was his, and in his purpose to dispose of it for his own selfish ends.

The first thing that demands notice in the man's thoughts regarding that which the bounty of God had bestowed upon him, is the utter absence of any thought about God. Instead of the grateful acknowledgment of the hand of a benefactor and a becoming acknowledgment of a trust reposed in him, there is a self-satisfied appropriation of all to himself. "What shall *I* do, because I have no room to bestow my fruits?" and in the same spirit throughout, he speaks of "*My* barns," "*My* fruits and my goods," as though his own wisdom and power had obtained them, and no will but his own was to be consulted in the disposal of them. There is no thought of asking, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Thus it is always with carnal hearts. Even when, in conformity to the proprieties of a nominal Christianity, there may be a formal and unmeaning acknowledgment of God upon the lips, there is no thought of God in the heart. Infidelity scarcely ever assumes a more insolent aspect than in its pretended acknowledgment of God; as, for instance, when many professing Christians express the extent of their confidence of God in language the humor of which is expected to atone for its profanity, "Trust in Providence and keep your powder dry," intimating, slyly, that their actual trust is in their own sagacity and foresight. Where there is no looking to God as the true source of success, success, when attained, instead of filling the heart with gratitude will inflate it with pride. There can be no true gratitude for daily benefits, unless there is a practical recognition of a providential care so minute as that the hairs of our head are all numbered.

After such a godless contemplation of his wealth, nothing is to be expected but the unmingled selfishness of the rich man's purpose: "I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." In popular religious teaching the parable is commonly employed to illustrate the folly of an absorbing occupation with temporal interests to the neglect of the interests of the soul, or the infatuation of a too confident reckoning upon many years in forgetfulness of the uncertainty of human life. Even worldly moralists would condemn the gross sensuality of the purpose to fill up the years of a life of ease with the pleasures of the table and empty mirth. But passing over these glaring violations of the proprieties of civilized society, modifying the expression of the purpose to hoard his wealth, and substituting the refinements and elegant tastes of educated men of wealth, for the undisguised sensuality of this man's prospective enjoyment: the world, and it is to be feared, a multitude of professing Christians, would commend his plan as not only legitimate but praiseworthy. According to the usages of our modern civilization, instead of bestowing fruits and goods in enlarged barns, the surplus gain would be converted into the more convenient form of stocks or bonds, or other profitable investment. And to accomplish this is the common aim of a busy life. The world would pronounce a man a fool who failed to provide for the future by accumulating the profits of his trade or successful enterprise. God's judgment in this as in every thing, is precisely the reverse of the world's. Its wisdom is folly in His esteem, and He says to the man whose sagacity it commends, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, and then whose shall those things be which thou hast

provided?" This is but giving form to the language of many an occurrence in actual life, when death abruptly intrudes on the scene of success in the very hour of its accomplishment, to demonstrate the folly of a calculation in which the chief element is left out of the reckoning—making provision for life when life itself is not ours; since "at the time when all things abound to a man, his life is not of his possessions."

The lesson of the parable is much more searching, and its application much wider than appears in the popular use of it, in which it is supposed to rebuke the gross infatuation of an ungodly man who is wholly absorbed in schemes of accumulation and sensual enjoyment, recklessly postponing all serious thought to a remote future, while death may be knocking at the door. For the Lord in his improvement of the lesson, without making any exception in favor of what would be called a prudent foresight, says, "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God." The proposition is a sweeping one. Without any allowance, without any qualifying consideration as to the amount of the hoarded wealth, or as to the motives and design of the accumulation, the parable is directed against the sin and folly of 'laying up treasure for himself,' simply and *per se*. It is an impressive enforcement of the Lord's injunction in another place, an injunction also absolute and unqualified, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

With this key to the parable, we see that the sin and folly of the man consisted 1st, in what he did or purposed to

do—laying up treasure for himself; and 2d, in that in which he failed—being rich toward God. As to the first, his purpose was, and it is the purpose of every man who is laying up or who designs to lay up treasure, to make provision for the future, to secure for himself “an independence.” Proud presumptuous word on the lips of mortals! Yet it expresses that after which multitudes who call themselves Christians are striving, either in their little savings, or their large investments—independence of what they call the contingencies of life—sickness, old age, public calamity, commercial reverses; in other words, independence of the providence of God. The man in the parable proposed for the future to be independent of Him by whose bounty his fields had brought forth plentifully. Having much goods laid up for many years, he would no longer need to pray, “Give us this day our daily bread.” And on the lips of any man who is endeavoring to lay up treasure for himself, the prayer is a mockery which the whole aim of his life contradicts, a mockery which is akin to the impious maxim, “Trust in Providence, but keep your powder dry.” In spite of all self-deception, the saying of the Lord is true, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also;” and that not only in the bent of your thoughts and desires, but in your *heart's trust*. Say what you please, your trust is not in God, but in your treasure, as you might learn by the consternation and dismay which would seize you if God in mercy to you should scatter your riches; or in the care and anxiety with which your heart is racked lest your investment should prove worthless, or your adventure a failure. If there were no other reason for the injunction, “Lay not up treasure on earth,” this, surely, is sufficient, that it withdraws the heart's trust from “Our Father in heaven,” and virtually silences the prayer, “Give us this day our daily bread.”

In his fancied independence, the fool pictures to himself a life of luxurious ease and self-indulgence. His sin and folly consisted not only in the debasing use to which he meant to turn the gifts of God, but also in the idleness to which he purposed to abandon himself. And this always, more or less distinctly, enters into the plans of those who are toiling to lay up treasure for themselves. Now the Lord, who rebukes the cares of the avaricious man, frowns also upon an idle, useless, and unproductive life. No man in our Father's house is invited to eat the bread of idleness. It is written in His book for all time, that if any man will not work neither shall he eat, and the rule holds good, though hunger may-not drive him to the necessity of labor. At whatever table he sits down, he is an intruder if he is not a worker, unless, indeed, he may be called for a time to suffer rather than to toil. Worldly men seem to think that we take away the motive to industry when we speak of a simple dependence on a heavenly Father's care for the supply of every want, while the truth is that we only exchange a low motive which degrades work for a lofty motive which ennoble it. The Christian has always the highest reason for improving time and every faculty to the glory of God and the good of others. The humblest toil is dignified when the laborer works with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. And, though weak nature may often be weary, the task will never be irksome wherever its sphere may lie. But in the mind of him who is doing a slave's drudgery in laying up treasure for himself, and so is making provision for the flesh that he may fulfil the lusts thereof, these two things are always connected—indolence and self-indulgence; he is looking forward to the time when he may escape from work and gratify his tastes and appetites. The refinements of culti-

vated society may cover up the grossness of the selfish purpose as it is expressed in the parable ; but, stripped of its disguises, the aim of the most refined in accumulating wealth resolves itself into a desire to be able to say, "Soul, take thine ease ; eat, drink, and be merry."

But we must hasten to consider that in which he failed — "*being rich toward God.*" In order to a clear understanding of his failure, it may be best, now that we have seen what he proposed to do with his wealth, to inquire what he ought to have done with it. One thing is plain, he ought not to have hoarded it, and the Lord adds in effect that every one who lays up treasure for himself is, in the estimation of God, a fool as he was. When the Lord charges His disciples in the Sermon on the Mount, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth," He adds : "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." Since His professed disciples have learned, in some way, to evade the force of the former injunction, they have accustomed themselves to consider the latter as having no reference at all to the use of those means and resources which constitute earthly treasures. Under the guise of greater spirituality, they endeavor to separate their religion from their every day relations, and to persuade themselves that they may at the same time be devoting their life and its energies to the business by which they hope to become rich, and devoting their Sundays and spare moments to certain religious services and exercises from which they hope, in some way, to reap a harvest of glory in heaven. This is a part of the scheme for making the most of both worlds.

The Lord told a young man who had great possessions, in very plain terms, how to lay up treasure in heaven, but it was in a way that was fatal to all thoughts of having treasures on earth at the same time. "Go and sell that thou

hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." In like manner, in following up the improvement of the lesson in this parable, he says to His disciples: "Sell that ye have and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Here then is what the man ought to have done when his fields brought forth plentifully. Instead of asking, "What shall I do because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?" he should have seen that a bountiful Father had only so far honored him to be His almoner. Instead of purposing to enlarge his barns, and lay up goods for many years, he ought to have remembered that there was room in the homes of the widow and the orphan; that there were the sick to be ministered to, the hungry to be fed, the naked to be clothed, the ignorant and perishing to be instructed and fed with the bread of life. His goods bestowed there would have been treasures in heaven, a deposit in a bank that never fails, from which he might draw in sickness and old age, or to be restored with liberal interest in that day when a gracious Lord shall say: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these, ye did it unto me."

It must not be objected that we are representing salvation as purchased with money or secured by good works. We are addressing believers who are saved by grace, and with whom the questions of their pardon, acceptance, and eternal life are already settled on immutable grounds, altogether apart from any service or sacrifice of theirs. But then, just because they are believers and saved, they desire to know the Lord's will, and to live, not unto themselves, but unto Him. And this is His will regarding the disposal of that portion of this world's goods of which, in His providence,

He makes them stewards. His language is very plain, and the duty or privilege which that language presents to them is in harmony with every emotion of the renewed mind warmed by His love and weaned from the world. The heart that is in fellowship with Him who, "though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich," need scarcely wait for a formal injunction. The salvation of a believer is settled the moment he believes, and beyond this the believer could never conclude that any service of his, any expression of love to Christ in any kindness done to any of His disciples, was worthy of any notice. Rather humbled and ashamed, in view of all his failures, he will say that at the best he is an unprofitable servant. Still the Lord is so full of grace that He considers even a cup of cold water given to a disciple as worthy of a reward. It may be well here to notice that the amount of the treasure in heaven is not measured by the simple amount of treasure expended on earth in His service. According to the reckoning of heaven, the poor widow's mite, which was her all, is more than the superfluity of a whole crowd of rich men, and so in every case it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not. Thus it will be in that day when the Master shall reckon with His servants. Many disciples of His, saved by grace, though they lived beneath their privileges, whose names stood highest on subscription lists, will be found poor indeed; while many of the poor, whose benefactions were never mentioned on earth, will be found rich because, though they gave little according to earth's reckoning, they gave their all.

The attempt has been made to show that these injunctions regarding the disposal of earthly goods, which would be fatal to the life projects of so many Christians of our

day, were designed to apply only to the apostolic ages ; or, still more narrowly, only to the Church at Jerusalem in those days when "as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them down at the Apostles' feet." But when we examine the discourses of the Lord in which these things are enjoined, we find nothing to indicate a temporary or a local application. The reason by which the caution against covetousness is urged is as broad as humanity. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth." The folly of burdening oneself with care about the supplies of life when life itself is beyond our care, is as evident now as then. God still feeds the ravens when they cry, the lilies are still arrayed in beauty. God knows that His children still have need of these things, and if the duty, "Sell that ye have and give to the poor," was peculiar to the saints at Jerusalem, to them also must be limited the hope of having treasure in heaven.

But let us examine the epistles to the churches of a later day, which will be admitted to contain the views of Christian privilege and duty in all ages, and we will find every thing in harmony with these plain instructions of the Lord. However well it may suit Christians in a commercial land and age, to justify their keen pursuit of worldly success by a pretended spirituality which makes religion a separate matter, a matter of sentiment and forms, of occasional emotion and appointed services, and however well it may suit them to attempt to throw off responsibility by paying others to attend to the charities and activities of the Christian life, for which they say men of business have no time, in these epistles religion appears as a very practical, every day matter, which must be the business of every true disciple. Here is a summary of it : "Pure religion and undefiled be-

fore God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Is this what we in our day call religion? But it may be asked, Is a man's life to be occupied in such visitation, to the neglect of business and daily toil? By no means; but then our attention to business and daily toil should all fall in with this, for the object for which the Christian should labor is, "that he may support the weak," "that he may have to give to him that needeth." Or again it may be asked, Is the love of God and His worship overlooked in this summary of religion? By no means; for it is the love of God which finds expression in all this, and a man may say what he pleases of his love to God; he may affect what fervors of devotion he pleases, make his prayers as loud and as long as he pleases, God Himself demands "whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" A man may affect what zeal he pleases for sound doctrine, and profess to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and persuade himself that this is pure religion, while he is adding house to house and field to field; but God in His loving care of the widows says: "But if any provide not for his own, (the widows of the Church,) and especially those of his own kindred, (according to the direction in v. 4,) he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." (1 Tim. v. 8.)

In the epistles, also, we find the connection which the Lord establishes between such a bestowment of earthly means and resources and the accumulation of heavenly treasures. Thus Paul says to Timothy: "Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they

be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate ; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." This throws light upon the expression "rich toward God." First of all, it is being "rich in good works," "laying up in store for themselves a good foundation for the time to come." In the homely language of George Müller, whose eloquence is in a life which exemplifies what he teaches, "Just as persons put one sum after another into the bank, and it is put down to their credit, and they may use the money afterward, so truly the penny, the shilling, the pound, the hundred pounds, the ten thousand pounds given for the Lord's sake and constrained by the love of Jesus to poor brethren, or in any way spent in the work of God, He marks down in the book of remembrance, He considers as laid up in heaven. The money is not lost, it is laid up in the bank of heaven ; yet so that whilst an earthly bank may break or we may lose our earthly possessions, the money which is thus secured cannot be lost."

Again, as every attempt to accumulate wealth for ourselves is an act of distrust of God, and is withdrawing us from the attitude of simple dependence, so, when we are thus laying up treasure in heaven by expending our earthly means according to the will of our Father in heaven, we are practically expressing our confidence in Him, and are drawing near in a simple trust to the living God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy. It is here that the believer's riches are found. "All things are yours," and away beyond the present there is an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Nay, God Himself is the believer's portion. But limiting our view for the present to the provision for which the worldly man hoards up wealth, and in view of which the world esteems a man rich, which

of these two is the richer—the man who trusts in the living God, or the man who trusts in uncertain riches? Of course, we do not compare their command of the means of luxurious living and sensual enjoyment, for these the believer does not want and cannot use; we compare their security for the supply of all true wants, in all possible circumstances of life.

The worldly man flatters himself that he has goods laid up for many years. Now, leaving out of view the uncertainty of the life for which he supposes he has made provision, the cares and anxieties which torment him, and the unsatisfied craving which still cries Give, sufficiently attest the character of his security. Nor is his anxiety unreasonable, since his trust is in uncertain riches. He cannot conceal from himself their true character. They take to themselves wings and fly away, and fail him very often just when he most needs them—when sickness or the infirmities of age disqualify him for every effort to repair the loss. Can he lie down upon a death-bed at ease about the wife he is about to leave a widow, or the children he is about to leave orphans? Who will watch over his wealth as he has done? If it be squandered or fraudulently snatched from those who are so little qualified to protect their rights, what remains for them? And how many probabilities are there that what he has designed as a provision for his children will prove their curse and ruin? All this is on the supposition that the man who has made it the business of his life to lay up treasure for himself has been successful, but it must not be forgotten that the successful are the few out of the many. And how miserable the condition of the multitude who, with no other trust, utterly fail in their object!

Contrast with this the position of the child of God who, with a confidence in a heavenly Father's care of him and his, uses the means of which he is the steward in the service

of his Lord, in doing good to all men as he has opportunity, especially to them that are of the household of faith. No reverse can reach the resources on which he relies. Careful for nothing, in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, he makes his requests known unto God; and, as a necessary consequence, the peace of God which passeth all understanding keeps his heart and mind through Christ Jesus. In the exercise of that trust dissatisfaction with his lot is impossible. In whatsoever state he is, he must therewith be content, because he knows that it is the will of God concerning him, and he would not, if he could, have it otherwise in a single particular. As to all possible necessities, it is enough for him to remember the assurances of the Lord. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." The promises of God in this matter are as ample as they are sure. But, then, in order to enjoy their fulfilment, there must be an actual confidence in them; and in that confidence we must be going forward in the path which He marks out for us, devoted to his business, seeking to glorify His name, living for the salvation of souls and the good of His Church, with the same mind in us which was also in Christ Jesus, and seeking conformity to His will in all things. *Then* the promise of God is absolute and unqualified. He will not suffer His name to be dishonored by leaving the wants of His servants unsupplied. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." Those whose opportunities of observation have been the largest may safely be appealed to, that they never saw a child of God who lived on this plan to whom this promise was not a sufficient provision in sickness and in health, and to whom it was not the best legacy to leave to fatherless children.

No consideration can be better calculated to promote an

unquestioning trust in the living God, and to repress every thought of covetousness, than the consideration suggested by the Lord in the conclusion of His discourse. We should be like servants waiting for their Lord. There can be no more palpable inconsistency than for a man to be professedly waiting for the Son of God from heaven, and yet to be cumbered with earthly care or striving to lay up treasure on earth. He may profess what he pleases, but he is saying in his heart: "My Lord delayeth His coming." The world's scorn is merited when it is heaped upon the hypocrite who is saying, "Come, Lord Jesus," and yet is vieing with the most worldly in the pursuit of wealth, or honor, or worldly gain in any form. Brethren, in that blessed hope, we ought to show that there is a difference between us and those whose hopes are bounded by the grave; between us, also, and those who think that this poor world has a long career of improvement and prosperity to run. What is all the world to a man who is expecting Christ to come? What has he to fear of to-morrow who thinks that ere then we may be with the Lord?

CHOIR SINGING.

THE following lines were written by Rowland Hill, on the occasion of his preaching in a church in England where he was pained by the character of the persons who formed the choir. It is needless to say that they are not reprinted here for any poetical beauty in the composition :

“ A HINT TO ALL GALLERY SINGERS.

“ *Wherever the cap fits, let them wear it.*”

“ In solemn ranks, behold, they stand,
Selected as a choral band,
While o'er their tuneful notes they glide,
Only to gratify their pride.
But how impossible to sing
The praise of our most Holy King,
Till hearts are turned by grace divine
To celebrate such love as Thine.
And which of all the choir can say,
We've lips to praise, or hearts to pray ?
But how can praise or prayer be found
Where sin and wickedness abound ?
And how disgraced the cause of God
While such profane Christ's cleansing blood,
That bids all hateful sin depart,
When grace divine renews the heart ?
What strange hypocrisy and guile
Must that black sinner's heart defile

Who imitates an angel's song
 With such a heart and such a tongue !
 And, oh ! what scandal and offence
 Proceed to God's dear cause from thence,
 While such with hearts and lips profane
Pretend to celebrate His name.
 Let silence seize that lying tongue
 That can presume to lift its song
 Before that great heart-searching God,
 Whose awful sin-avenging rod
 Might send the sinner down to dwell
 Amid the darksome shades of hell.
 Great God ! in mercy yet impart
 Thy powerful grace to change the heart,
 And make such sinners meet to shine
 Where angels chant their songs divine."

What would churches think of a proposal to hire professional elocutionists to perform the prayers of our worshipping assemblies, or to engage a company of actors to celebrate the Lord's Supper for the sake of the grace and impressiveness of the manner in which they might *render* that solemnity? It is only custom that reconciles men to the parallel enormity of the musical performance that is too often substituted for the praises of God by His people.

THE GREAT TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION.

PAUL wrote himself 'the chief of sinners,' and his life was an embodiment of the principle involved in the saying of the Lord concerning that woman at the house of Simon, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much." His life also was the unfolding of the intimation of the Lord to Ananias, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." For the most part we lose sight of the severity of the trials in beholding the heroic faith which triumphs over all: since, as the sufferings of Christ abounded in him, so his consolation also abounded by Christ. But there was one period of gloom and depression, aggravated it may be by bodily sickness, when our compassion is awakened for one whom we usually regard only with admiration. The churches which he had planted in heathen lands were passing through an ordeal which seemed to threaten their very existence. And Paul addressed himself to the correction of the evils which were springing up in them, with feelings which may be understood by what he informs the Corinthians regarding his first epistle to them, "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart, I wrote unto you with many tears." While he awaited the issue of the struggle, he says, "Our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Without were fightings, within were fears."

The first break in the dark cloud was the arrival of Titus with tidings of the happy effects of the Apostle's faithful re-

monstrance with the saints of Corinth. Throughout his second epistle to them his joy and tenderness continually struggle for utterance; and his fervent gratitude shows from what a load of anxiety he had been relieved. In reviewing the season of peculiar trial through which he had just passed, he found especial occasion of gratitude in the thought that, through the grace of God, no depression or discouragement had been allowed to turn him aside from his great mission. "Thanks be to God who always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of His knowledge by us in every place." 2 Cor. ii. 14.

This language is frequently understood as parallel to another expression of Paul's gratitude, "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," as though he were in this place, also, giving thanks for success in the life-long conflict. But the language will not bear this meaning; for the word which is rendered "causeth to triumph," refers, not to the achievement of victory in a conflict, but to the enjoyment of the honor of participation in the pageant by which victories were anciently celebrated.

Under the Roman Empire, the Senate was accustomed to decree the honors of a triumph to a general and his army when a decisive victory was won. On the appointed day, the Senate and officers of state met the victorious army at the gates of Rome, and conducted it with great pomp to the capitol. The triumphal procession was led by musicians, followed by the captive princes and generals of the conquered nation, who were dragged along in ignominious chains. Then came the victorious general splendidly attired, seated in a gilded chariot drawn by white horses, followed by his companions in arms, and a long train of friends and citizens in festal garments, shouting his praise. Flowers were showered upon the conquerors and strewed in their

path, and the air was filled with the fragrance of incense from a thousand censers, as, amidst the acclamations of the multitude, the procession advanced to the capitol; when the victor, having rendered thanks to the gods, welcomed his followers to a splendid entertainment; after which the people accompanied him to his home, with blazing torches and shouts of joy.

Such was the custom from which Paul derived the illustration of his life as a follower and a witness of Christ. He does not speak of himself as the victor enjoying the honor of a triumph. Christ is the victorious leader, who, having spoiled principalities and powers, made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Paul is only one of those who are led in the conqueror's train. He gives thanks to God that he, who had been one of the bitterest enemies of Christ, was there, a trophy of His might. Or, he regards himself as one in that procession which we can now trace through the long march of centuries, following on to the meeting place, where the victor shall welcome us to the feast of everlasting joy. Or, with more immediate reference to his great mission, he regards himself as one of those who carried and scattered incense in the procession; as everywhere he diffused the knowledge of Christ.

The office and the trials of Paul were peculiar, and, so far as we know, his zeal and devotion are unequalled. But as a trophy of redeeming love, a follower in the train of Christ's triumph, and a witness for Christ everywhere and always, Paul's privileges are common to all believers; and from the inspired record of what his life was, we may gain some impressive lessons of what ours should be.

1. Every believer should appear everywhere as a trophy of redeeming love; not a reluctant captive dragged in shame at the chariot-wheel of relentless victory to slavery and

death; but as one who, when conquered, was also freed from oppression and ruin—like the subjects of some despot who in *his* conqueror, welcomed their deliverer. This is the believer's true character; rescued indeed from the tyrant that oppressed him, but still love's captive—not his own, but bought with a price. The galling fetters of his former bondage are exchanged for the sweet constraints of the love of Christ—a controlling love which makes the lowest place of service a joy; like that of the woman who stood behind Jesus, weeping tears of joy in the consciousness of redemption, kissing His feet, and anointing them, amidst the scorn of the proud Pharisees—an absorbing love which makes this the description of the believer's existence, "Whether we live we live unto the Lord, and whether we die we die unto the Lord." Eternally it will be thus; for as Jesus shall for ever wear the marks of Golgotha's shame, more glorious than all His crowns; so the believer will for ever esteem the bonds which bind him to Christ more dear than even the crown which Christ bestows; and the king-priests will account it more blessed to cast these crowns at His feet than even to wear them by His side.

2. Believers are led in Christ's train as His admiring friends, His fellow-soldiers and the sharers of His triumph. When they consider the glory He has won, and the splendor of His conquest, and remember also that the enemies He overthrew were theirs, and theirs the fruits of victory, they may well forget the dust and heat of the march, and the derision of the city of Destruction, through the streets of which the procession holds its way. We delight to think of the Church in its progress through the centuries, as the train of Christ's triumph. The line often seems thin and scattered; but there they are, marching on, dust-covered and way-worn, but every heart beating with love to the Conqueror who has

preceded them. Still more we delight to think of the assembly of all who formed the long line at last, like the crowd gathered around the victorious general on the capitol, to be welcomed to his feast, and to accompany him home; but with this difference, that we shall not, as they did, part with the victor at His own door, but shall go in with Him, to go no more out for ever.

3. Believers, like the incense-bearers in the ancient procession, ought to manifest the savor of the knowledge of Christ in every place. "Thy name is as ointment poured forth." This, all believers should diffuse by the testimony they bear; nay, their whole life should be redolent of Christ. It is not by an occasional effort that frankincense or a flower emits its perfume—that is its very nature. So it is the very nature of a renewed soul to diffuse the knowledge of Christ, in a testimony which will not be silenced, and a living influence which will not be restrained. "For me to live," says Paul, "is Christ;" just as it is the very existence of luminous bodies to shine. With the believer the light and the fragrance are still *Christ—only Christ*. They shine, but theirs is not the light of the sun shining in the effulgence of perfect day; but of the moon or the planets reflecting the light of the sun upon the night of time. Theirs is not the native fragrance of the flower; they are rather like the piece of clay which retains the fragrance of the Rose of Sharon that bloomed over it.

In His own person or in His Church, Christ is always despised and rejected of men. But the Apostle says, "*We are UNTO GOD a sweet savor of Christ*, in them that are saved and in them that perish." Jesus Christ, exhaled in their love or in their likeness to Him, is ever a sweet odor to God. We are disposed to look only at the visible results of our testimony among men, and to leave God out of the reckon-

ing. But this word is designed to assure those who see no results but the world's disdain, that their labor is not in vain in the Lord. This word is also for the comfort of lowly ones, who in their places of poverty and suffering seem hidden away from the notice of men; like the lily of the valley, filling darkling nooks with perfume, or like some flower of the forest, born to blush unseen and waste its fragrance on the desert air. Ah! not wasted—not unseen, lowly one! Christ breathed out in the love to which no ear listens, in the joy which no heart shares, in the patience which no eye witnesses, is *unto God* a sweet savor, and He sends back to you the smile of His approving love, like sunshine on the forest flowers. But, O believers, let your light shine, for otherwise the world is dark, and in the darkness, the people perish. Manifest the savor of the knowledge of Christ, for it is a savor of life unto life in them who shall be saved; and what if the incense have lost its fragrance? Nay, but what, if, instead of shedding light, you are spreading darkness; diffusing pestilential vapors instead of scattering fragrant incense? What if, instead of the knowledge of Christ, you are spreading another gospel, which is not another?

While Paul gave thanks that through all his trials he had neither been diverted nor deterred from prosecuting his great mission, but had been enabled everywhere to spread the knowledge of Christ, he could not fail to think of the results of his ministry to those among whom it had been discharged. "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish; to the one we are the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life." Reverting for a moment to the triumphal procession of which we have spoken, it is evident that it must have been viewed with very different emotions by the conqueror and his friends, and by the captive princes

and generals of the conquered. The exultant music to which the glad hearts of the victors danced was to the others the wail of lost liberty, its very joy outraging all their sadness. The incense wafted on the air tremulous with shouts of victory, which regaled the senses of the festal throng, was, to the doomed and drooping captives, more offensive than vapors of the charnel house. So differently were the Apostle's hearers affected by his gospel. And not only did it awaken very different emotions in different classes of his hearers, but upon the reception which they gave it a destiny of life or death depended. Our readers know that not only are perfumes which are most grateful to some persons offensive to others, but certain odors which are refreshing to some persons occasion faintness and violent disorders to others. Ancient naturalists say that vultures, which revel in the odor of carrion, are killed by the fragrance of myrtle and frankincense. In some such fact or fancy the Apostle finds an illustration of the effects of his preaching among the saved and among the lost; to the one it was a deadly odor causing death, to the other an enlivening fragrance producing life. These results were not due to any thing in Paul, but to the Gospel itself, as Paul elsewhere testifies, "But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." Leaving Paul, therefore, out of view, the attention of all who hear the Gospel should be directed to the inevitable consequences of hearing it; either it proves the means of a glorious salvation, or it will prove the occasion of a condemnation aggravated beyond all that can fall upon the vilest of men who perish in ignorance of it.

The Scriptures come to us with a testimony of the charac-

ter of God and His claims upon men, of man's guilt and God's just hatred of sin, which may well appal the stoutest sinner. They show us all the guilt of our alienated affections and polluted desires, as God has been cast out of our minds and hearts; and we have been foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. All men must own that in all this they hold the mirror up to nature, though many a man, after beholding his natural face in this glass, may turn hastily away from the hideous image and straightway forget what manner of man he was. Sad it is to think how, after a few years of sin, with their frivolity, delusive hopes, and grovelling cares, the sinner must go down to the oblivion of the grave. But beyond this, the Scriptures reveal a judgment in which the sinner will be set face to face with the Holy One, to answer, not only for the idle and angry and corrupt words spoken, and not only for the open acts of sin committed, but for every impure thought, for every malicious wish, for every insolent emotion, "for He will judge the secrets of all hearts." Their alienated affections as well as their godless lives must undergo the scrutiny of that pure eye. And is it not a startling view of the condition into which sin has brought men, that they can contemplate all this without being overwhelmed with shame and filled with the wild agonies of despair?

In this awful condition, the Gospel comes to men, revealing the amazing love of God and the stupendous means He has provided for the salvation of sinners; testifying that the Son of God descended from the throne of His glory and assumed the nature which Sin had ruined, that He might endure the curse which we had incurred and answer for the sins which we had committed; that, though despised, rejected, and betrayed by man, He closed a life of holiness

and love by a death of pain and ignominy, in which He made full satisfaction for sin ; that, in proof of this, He rose from the dead, and, in our ransomed nature, ascended to the right hand of God, where He now sits, able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him.

On the ground of this perfect sacrifice a righteous way of reconciliation with God is opened up to all. And such are the riches of the divine grace, and such is the value of that sacrifice that no degree of guilt, however black and enormous, and no continuance in sin, however obstinate and prolonged, excludes the sinner from the free pardon which is proclaimed in His name to every one that believeth on Him. This, and this only, is the Gospel : " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Paul, the inspired preacher of it, in an epistle which is designed to show that no work or merit or service or suffering of man can enter into the grounds of his justification, testifies, " If we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be accursed." And is it not terrible to think how professed ministers of Christ obscure the grace of God by their conditions, and perplex the simplicity of this message of life by vain speculations ? They would pledge you, first of all, in vows and resolutions of godliness, or commit you to acts of public confession or self-dedication ; they summon you to give your heart to God, and then invite you to turn a self-complacent gaze upon the stilled tumult of your remorse and terror, and call *that* the peace of God. It matters not if, to all this, they add something about faith in Christ. The grace of God admits of no partnership with man's duties or doings. Introduce the most trivial condition, and grace is no more grace. The essential nature of the Gospel excludes every thought of a price offered, a suffering endured, or compensation made in the way of preparation, as well as every prom-

ise of a subsequent holiness, or devotion, or self-sacrifice, or service as a condition of receiving salvation. Without considering whether the recipient of it shall live through long years of suffering and service like Paul, or die like the thief on the cross in the very hour of receiving it, it comes to the sinner simply as a sinner, and, in Christ and Christ alone, it presents a full, a free, and a *present* salvation. We adjure perishing men to turn a deaf ear to all flatteries and lying promises of safety in any thing wrought by you or wrought in you. When they call on you to do this or that in order that you may be saved, they are mocking you, for you are dead in trespasses and sins, and what can you do? Nay, but Christ has left nothing to be done, and God's word to you is, "Believe on Him." They call upon you *to give yourself* to God, as though you were not condemned already; but the Gospel tells you something better—that Christ *has given Himself* for us; and God's word to you is, "Believe on Him." They incite your own unbelieving prayers, and they offer you the aid and influence of their own vehement conjurations, as though the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ were a grim and gory Moloch, bent on your destruction, while the truth is, that, with a love whose ardor Calvary attests, God is beseeching you to be reconciled to Him, for He hath made the sinless to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. The question here is not regarding the greatness of your sins, but regarding the greatness of Christ's sacrifice. Nor is it regarding your helplessness, but His power to save; nor regarding your love to God, but God's love to you, and His faithfulness when He says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

But it must be borne in mind that this Gospel, if not a savor of life unto life, must prove a savor of death unto

death. The condemnation of unbelievers does not mean merely that they shall be left in the situation in which they would have been if there had been no Saviour. It means that this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and they loved darkness rather than light, and that the rejection of mercy so overshadows their original guilt that the Saviour could say, "If I had not come and spoken unto them they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin." Natural justice determines that guilt must be in proportion to the light against which sin is committed. How enormous the guilt of sin must be when it is committed against all the light which the Gospel sheds on the character of God and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, against the most powerful motives and the holiest influences which the love of God can supply? When we think of the love of God spurned and His testimony belied, of the sacrifice of Christ slighted and His glory despised, and of the fervent persuasions and long-suffering exhortations of the Holy Spirit resisted, it is impossible to question the enormity of the guilt incurred by every impenitent hearer of the Gospel, and the appalling condemnation that shall distinguish him from all other sinners, however vile.

This twofold result, life or death, is always contemplated in the office of Christ. He who proclaims the acceptable year of the Lord is the same who proclaims the day of vengeance of our God. He who comes without sin unto salvation to them that look for Him, is the same who comes in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the Gospel. He who hung upon the cross is the same who shall sit upon the great white throne. When He sits there, it will not only be a meet vindication of His insulted name in the presence of His enemies, but it will be God's loud and living testimony to the universe that it is

only after mercy has been rejected that judgment is executed. There is terrible significance in the fact that if you are condemned He will pronounce the sentence, and the wrath in which you perish will be the wrath of the Lamb.

In fine, let believers fully understand their true place as the followers of Christ. The ordinary life of man, when we look beneath all its grotesque and ill-timed levities, is a vast funeral procession, in which the din and the shout of madmen cannot altogether drown the wail of its ceaseless dirge. All its paths meet at last beneath the shadow of the yew. Even the path of earthly glory leads but to the grave. But believers, children of light and of the day, have altogether another destination. They are in a long triumphal procession following the Captain of our salvation, who has gone up with shouts of victory. The advanced head of the procession is already far out of sight, and we in this day are bringing up the rear. The way may often seem long and rugged, but who thinks of weariness amidst the joy of victory? Mocking enemies may deride the pageant whose glory carnal eyes cannot see; malignant enemies may with fierce assaults endeavor to break the line, but divine power baffles their malignity, and "thanks be unto God who always causeth us to triumph in Christ." We are marching on, not to the grave, but to the meeting place where the Almighty victor Himself will welcome the gathered celebrants of all ages—a mighty multitude which no man can number, to that feast, the marriage supper of the Lamb. Patience, brethren, we are almost there.

THE DAY OF CHRIST.

IN both the Old and the New Testament the consummation of the plan of redemption is connected with the appearing of Christ in glory. To believers in this dispensation His appearing is the grand object of hope, as the occasion when they shall be introduced into all His glory and joy. Strange it would be if, loving Him unseen, and, even now, rejoicing in Him with joy unspeakable and full of glory, they did not eagerly long for the day when they shall see Him as He is. No one, indeed, can truly long for that day who is not assured of his salvation, but it is unaccountable that "the Church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" should be disturbed by a rumor that an event was at hand for which they had been waiting as the fulfilment of all their joy. Yet such is the impression which men receive from the language which is used in our English version of the first two verses of 2 Thess. ii.

The impression which this language conveys is very different from the impression which would have been conveyed if the word rendered "is at hand" had been translated as it is in other passages in which it occurs. It is part of a verb which occurs seven times in the epistles of Paul. In five cases it is properly rendered "*present*;" as, for example, in Rom. viii. 38 and in 1 Cor. iii. 22, where "things present" are contrasted with "things to come." In 2 Tim. iii. 1 the future tense is rendered "shall come." But it is the perfect

tense that is used in the passage before us, and, the proper translation is "hath come." The mistake, therefore, against which these Thessalonians were warned is not that "the day of Christ is at hand," as something still future, but that "the day of Christ hath come," as something then actually present. Now it is not difficult to understand how those who had been waiting for the Son of God from heaven as the completion of all their hopes, should be agitated and distressed by a rumor that He had come and their hopes were all disappointed. Their dread was not that He was coming, but that He had come; and that in the gathering of His saints unto Him they had been left out, like the foolish virgins in the parable, who are represented as standing at the closed door, vainly crying, "Lord, Lord, open unto us."

But in order to a fair understanding of the passage, it is necessary to attend to a distinction in the terms used by the Apostle — "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," "our gathering together unto Him," and "the day of Christ"—for, however the events indicated by these terms may be connected, the terms are not by any means synonymous.

"*The coming of the Lord,*" though one event, must include many acts. Thus, throughout the Scriptures we find that His coming is the occasion not only of the resurrection of those who sleep in Jesus, the gathering of His people unto Him and their introduction into His glory and His rest, but the occasion also of the accomplishment of God's promises to Israel, after they shall have been chastened and purified in the great tribulation which shall attest God's last indignation with their ingratitude and rebellion. It is the occasion also of the overthrow of all the corrupt sovereignties of the earth and of their removal to give place to the glorious kingdom of heaven. It is the occasion also of weeding out of His kingdom all things that offend, when He shall

execute His strange and terrible work of judgment upon the ungodly, which shall issue in completed salvation to His people. Just as His first coming to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself includes all that passed from Bethlehem to Calvary, so His coming again the second time without sin unto salvation includes all that is necessary to the accomplishment of that end.

“*Our gathering together unto Him*” is described by Paul in the fourth chapter of his first epistle to the Thessalonians, and must evidently be the *immediate* desire and expectation of believers, although all that they hope for in the coming of the Lord will not be consummated until the work of judgment, in which they shall be His companions, is finished and His kingdom actually established.

“*The day of Christ*” is evidently distinct from this, for while Paul found it necessary to instruct them regarding our gathering together unto Him, he says that “they knew perfectly that *the day of the Lord* so cometh as a thief in the night.” In the Old Testament “the day of the Lord,” that “great and terrible day,” is always described as a time when the Lord shall pour out His wrath upon His enemies. And in the New Testament we find the Lord and His apostles using the phrase in its familiar and well-understood sense. The Church shall not be exposed to the wrath-storm of that terrible day, but, safe with her Lord, shall be associated with Him in judgment. “Our gathering together unto Him” must therefore precede “the day of Christ,” though both are connected with “the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” We can, therefore, well understand why these Thessalonians should have been shaken in mind and troubled by the thought that *the day of Christ* had come, since in that case the gathering of the saints unto Him must already have taken place, and they were left behind.

