
THE FAITH
AND
THE FLOCK,
1910.

THE FAITH AND THE FLOCK.

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THE FAITH AND THE FLOCK

Vol. II.—No. 1.

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EDITORIALS.

1910.

Be careful for nothing ;
But in everything
By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving
Let your requests
Be made known unto God.
And the **PEACE OF GOD,**
Which passeth all understanding,
Shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

(Phil. iv. 6-7.)

As we stand on the threshold of another year what words are more suitable with which to greet our friends than the above? Is it possible to have a happier wish for others than that, instead of care hanging over them like a dark cloud, the peace of God may keep their hearts and minds? There is plenty in such a scene as this to cause care, whether it be connected with the individual himself, a household, or the world at large. The general unrest was, probably, never greater than it is now. The causes that tend to produce anxiety were never more numerous. The inventions of man and the development of the world do not produce happiness, but rather new causes of alarm.

We know not what 1910 may have in store for us of surprise. What joy, or sorrow, or loss, or disappointment await us, we know

not. But there is one Who does know, and it is His word we have quoted above. It is He Who greets all His children with these words of cheer and comfort as the year opens upon them. He meets us before anything happens, and says "Be not *anxious* about anything." The world has no such comfort as this. The unconverted have none. They are living in disobedience to His word, and at enmity with Him, though He does not wish this, and has done all He can, by sending His own Son, to turn them from it. But for those who have been converted, who have *accepted* the Saviour, there is this peace which passeth all understanding. May it be yours, dear reader, throughout the next twelve months.

How is this peace to be ensured to us? In the first place, we have to take heed to the injunction: "Be careful for nothing." This does not mean, of course, we are to be careless about our work and responsibilities, or indifferent as to the numerous claims upon us. It is not that we are to be callous, but we are to be without care. To begin with, then, in face of such a command, we have to make up our minds that it is *wrong* to be anxious. For if I begin to worry and fret, what am I doing? I am supposing, either that God does not care sufficiently about me, or that He is unable to meet the difficulty. Both are a slander upon God's character. And this being so, the Christian who gives way to temper, or despair, or unrestrained grief, or anxious foreboding only makes himself more miserable than ever. For it does not make the weight of care any the less, and he loses the joy of communion with God.

If we are not to give way to repining, or fretfulness, or worry, what are we to do? "In *everything* by prayer and supplication"—an intense form of prayer—"with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Here, then, we have two commands. One that I am not to give way to anxiety; the other that I am to tell God. All this supposes that the gospel of His grace is known, and that I am assured He is my friend. He has all that I can need; all help, all comfort, all succour, and He is my Friend; yea, my Father; and I go to Him like one we read about in the eleventh chapter of Luke, who, in need, went to his friend. And what happens when we go in this spirit? We carry all our care into His presence; and bring away His peace. It is the peace which passeth *all understanding*. Because the circumstances, for the time being, may remain just the same, yet a load is gone from your heart.

If our *hearts* and *minds* are garrisoned with this peace, no outward circumstances can embitter our lives. May we, then, face the year and all that it brings with this word in our hearts.

DON'T LOOK FOR CARE.

Don't you trouble trouble
Till trouble troubles you
Don't you look for trouble,
Let trouble look for you.

Don't you borrow sorrow,
You'll surely have your share.
He who dreams of sorrow,
Will find that sorrow's there.

Don't you hurry worry
By worrying, lest it come.
To flurry is to worry,
'Twill miss you if you're mum.

If care you've got to carry
Wait till 'tis at the door,
For he who runs to meet it
Takes up the load before.

If minding will not mend it,
Then better not to mind;
The best thing is to end it,
Just leave it all behind.

Who feareth hath forsaken
The Heavenly Father's side;
What He hath undertaken
He surely will provide.

The very birds reprove thee
With all their happy song;
The very flowers teach thee
That fretting is a wrong.

"Cheer up" the sparrow chirpeth,
"Thy Father feedeth me;
Think how much more He careth,
Oh, lonely child, for thee."

"Fear not" the flowers whisper,
"Since thus He hath arrayed
The buttercup and daisy,
How canst thou be afraid?"

Then don't you trouble trouble,
Till trouble troubles you;
You'll only double trouble,
And trouble others too."

In the present unsettled state of the country how appropriate becomes the language of the thirty-third Psalm. First of all, it sets forth the greatness of God's word and works. "For the word of the Lord is right, and all His works are done in truth." "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of

them by the breath of His mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap. He layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord ; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spake and it was done ; He commanded and it stood fast." How different in man's case. What uncertainty looms in the future as we look forward into 1910, and try and forecast the result of man's efforts. He cannot speak and it is done ; nor command and it stands fast. His stoutest words are often idle, and His strongest efforts futile.

How true also the next verse (10) "The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought ; He maketh the devices of the people of none effect." How seldom that which man proposes to himself he sees accomplished. How much to discount his best intentions. But, on the other hand, how true is verse 11. "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations." And His counsel is that the kingdoms of this world shall yet become the Kingdoms of Christ.

How necessary to remember what follows in this Psalm in view of all the unrest amongst the nations and their warlike preparations. Should we be so anxious about Dreadnoughts if we believed such words as these : "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord ; and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance. . . . There is no King saved by the multitude of an host ; a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. An horse is a vain thing for safety"—and so really is a Dreadnought—"neither shall he deliver any by his great strength. **Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy ; to deliver their soul from death ; and to keep them alive in famine.**" May the land in which we live not forfeit this divine protection. No foe can reach us, and no harm can touch us with these mighty hands in front of us. But how long will this continue if England goes on declining from His ways, slighting her privileges, forgetting to Whom she owes all her greatness, and giving up the faith of which her kings are said to be the defenders. May God's faithful people at all events remember that His eye is upon them, and may they in these times of distress and difficulty hope in His mercy. May their language be : "Our soul waiteth for the Lord : He is our **help and our shield.**"

**"Let Thy mercy, O Lord,
be upon us ;**

According as we hope in Thee."

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS:— A Simple Exposition.

CHAPTER IX. 1—14.

DIVINE SERVICE.

THE subject of this passage is divine service, and how we are fitted for it. "The first covenant had also ordinances of divine service," it says, verse 1, and in keeping with the whole tenour of the epistle it goes on to shew the superior character of divine service in this dispensation. How often the statement meets the eye, that divine service will be performed at a certain time; but we may well ask, Is divine service properly understood? Does not much of what is called by that name partake more of the character of things belonging to Judaism rather than Christianity? Let us try and understand what was the character of the divine service before the mind of the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews.

He begins by referring to the Tabernacle. "*For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all, which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone, once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people. The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing*" (vv. 2-8). Now here, evidently, the great point is that while this order of things subsisted there was no way for God's people into the holiest.

Now why, if the high priest was able to go in, was not the way opened? The reason is that, though able to go in, he could not remain. He merely went in with the blood, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and having sprinkled the blood on and before the mercy seat, he immediately came out again. And the reason was, the blood he carried was not of sufficient value.

And so our passage goes on to tell us it was “ *a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the **service** perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, &c. But Christ being come . . . by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained (or found) an eternal redemption.*” This is the contrast, that Christ has found an eternal redemption, *i.e.*, His blood is of such inestimable worth that the act of entering the holiest is not repeated every year, but He has entered in **once**.

This, then, is the first step towards the realisation of what divine service means, from a Christian standpoint. Christ has entered in and remains. In virtue of His Person and work He has an abiding place in the presence of God. But a second step is necessary. It is essential that we should know the full effect of this work in its application to ourselves. The offerings of old “ *could not make him that did the **service** perfect, as pertaining to the conscience.*” But what does it say as to the work of Christ? “ *For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to **serve the living God***” (vv. 13, 14). So on the one hand Christ by His own blood has found an eternal redemption, and has entered in, thereby opening the way for us, because He remains in; on the other hand, that same blood purges our conscience in order that we may serve, as worshippers, the living God.

We notice thus how service—service in the sense of approaching God as worshippers—is kept before our minds throughout this entire passage. And, so far as our portion on this occasion carries us, we see that two things must be apprehended before anyone can take part in divine service intelligently and acceptably: on the one hand, that the way into the holiest **is** made manifest, for Christ has entered in and remains there; and on the other, His offering is of such value to God that the believer finds perfect and eternal rest in it for his conscience.

But in order that we may fully understand this last fact it is necessary we should dwell a little more particularly upon the wonderful character of the offering of Christ on the cross as presented to us in verse 14. On the one hand we are told that the gifts and sacrifices

in connection with the earthly tabernacle could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the *conscience*; on the other hand the blood of Christ purges the *conscience* from dead works to serve the living God.

All that Christ was in the glory and perfection of His person was offered to God in death. So worthy was He that the Holy Spirit is the One, as it were, Who presents Christ. And all this, with the additional fact of being without fault, tells us how acceptable and how sweet that offering was to God. That was not a dead work, for it was accomplished by the eternal Spirit. It was according to God's own nature, Who is a Spirit, and it was sufficient for the Eternal Himself. But all this—all that God's Son was to Him—God credits us with. It is just as if we had offered it all. And it is when we see this—when we see what Christ was able to give to God on our behalf—we bow the head and worship. The conscience sees that all has been done, for all has been given that even God could require, and therefore the conscience rests in those three words uttered by the One Who had the right to say them: “ **It is finished.**”

Does not “ divine service ” become a delight and a reality when it is seen that we do not come to bring any works of our own as the *ground* of our approach, but that we come on the ground of what has already been given? Conscience now no more charges us with the inadequacy of our own works, for all rests on a perfect work rendered by another, and as we learn how well pleased God is with Christ, and how gracious to us, spontaneous worship is the result. But we may now for a moment go back and see how the figures of the earthly tabernacle proclaim to us, with the light that Christ has brought, something more of the meaning and blessedness of access to God. All that was darkness to them is light to us.

We are, to begin with, in the light and under the blessing of the new covenant. In that covenant there is a writing on the heart instead of on stone. It is now what God has done for us, and is ready to be to us, instead of His demands upon us. “ I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people.” In this way God becomes known, and known in grace. “ And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” It is in this way God is known

to us in His forgiving love. "Who is a pardoning God like Thee, or Who has love so rich and free?" Is not "divine service" a pleasure when God is known thus?

And do not the vessels of the tabernacle speak of the way in which God has come out to us in order that we may go in to Him? And they are presented in different order here to that which we find in the Book of Exodus, and no doubt with a reason. The first is the candlestick, for light is the first thing I need, and Christ is my light as to everything. What know we about God and His thoughts concerning us apart from Him? Then comes the table, and the shewbread, God's perfect provision both for Himself and His people; so that we are fed; and His delight is in us. The twelve loaves were always on the table, under His eye, and the frankincense upon them. Next we come to the holiest of all, and find the golden censer, which tells us of our approach. And we need not fear, for the cloud of incense covers the mercy seat. In other words the personal perfections of Christ are ever under the eye of God, so that in the holiest nothing but Christ is seen. And then the ark of the covenant, the highest type of Christ as the One in Whom all God's counsels and purposes are made good. "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do Thy will, O God." It is "Jesus crowned with glory and honour." The One Who sustains everything for God—Priesthood, Government and Judgment. And we are also told what was in the ark. "The golden pot that had manna." Christ's life of dependence and obedience on earth ever remembered. It is preserved in the four gospels, and as we feed upon them the same grace that once appeared in Him is reproduced in us. "And Aaron's rod that budded." Priestly power in resurrection according to the power of an endless life. In these two things, the life of Christ on earth recorded for us, and Christ on high interceding for us we have divine provision for those who are strangers and pilgrims down here in a wilderness scene. And one thing more: "the tables of the covenant," speaking of the One Who could truly say, "Thy law is within My heart." While over all this "the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat." God rich in mercy. Thus all speak of Christ in connection with His varied glories, personal, official and moral. And it is as we learn to know Him we become fitted to take part in divine service.

To what glorious heights are we thus brought. What depths of mercy, grace and love we reach—"depths of the heart of God"—as we learn that if in Christ's death God has crossed the vast distance that separated us from Him, that same One now in His presence is the measure of our nearness. We are brought to God by a work that has glorified Him. And to those who by faith know this, a higher character of "divine service" is possible than was ever known amidst the shadows of ceremonial law. "For through Him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

NEW YEAR'S HYMN.

"HITHERTO THE LORD HATH HELPED ME."

"HITHERTO the Lord hath helped me":
Soul of mine, be of good cheer;
Waken memory, count the blessings
Which befell,—the bygone year.

"Hitherto the Lord hath helped me":
In my progress He hath shown
What was lacking, why I stumbled,
And His guidance made me own.

"Hitherto the Lord hath helped me":
In my sicknesses and care
He has always sent me succour,
Always listened to my prayer.

"Hitherto the Lord hath helped me":
Shall I falter now, or fear?
What He has done, still He will do
Now, and through the coming year.

M. E. R.

"There are none who make stranger mistakes than the pious when not walking in dependence on God. Their very piety gives them a stranger abhorrence of evil; and if there be not the power of grace, and the sense of their need of grace in God Himself guarding them, none will be more severe, none less just."

* * * *

"We must not fear to be thought eccentric, for what is eccentricity but being *out of centre*? and we must be out of centre as to the world if we would be adjusted to that other divine centre of which the world knows nothing."

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

“ The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather ; for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day ; for the sky is red and lowring. O, ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky ; but can ye not discern the signs of the times ? ” (Matt. xvi. 1-3).

HERE we find the Pharisees and Sadducees—the leaders of religious thought and the leaders of rationalistic thought—joined together in opposition to Christ and the truth. Naturally, these two sections of the community were bitterly opposed to one another (see Acts xxiii. 6-9), but they are now united in an unholy alliance as the common foe of Him Who declared that He had come to bear witness unto the Truth, and indeed was the Truth. The Lord recognises this as the end, as far as any acceptance of His testimony was concerned. And accordingly He offers them no further evidence of the divine character of His mission. Having designated them “ A wicked and adulterous generation,” and told them that no further sign would be vouchsafed, “ but the sign of the prophet Jonas,” “ He left them, and departed.”

This act was strikingly significant. The Lord had no more to say to such. He left them to their blindness and hardness of heart. In one word Christ saw, in this union against Him of the religious leaders and the rationalistic leaders of His day, the dawn of Israel's apostasy. It is for this reason He calls attention to “ the signs of the times ” ; and do we not need to have our attention drawn to them to-day for the very same reason ? Is there not a blindness and a hardness coming upon Christendom as it did upon Israel, and for the very same reason ?

In a remarkable book by Mr. Philip Mauro, called “ The Number of Man,” to which we shall have occasion to refer more than once in this article, he sums up his long and exhaustive statement of the present trend of things in the church and the world, in these few pregnant words : “ The substance of all that we have been considering is briefly this, that we have entered the dark shadow of the greatest national apostasy in all the history of mankind.”

We propose to give some evidence, drawn from other sources as well as the book referred to, that the above statement is true. And if in any measure it can be shown that the apostasy foretold

in 2 Thess. ii. 3-12 ; 1 Tim. iv. 1-3 ; 2 Tim. iii. 1-5 ; iv. 3-4, is upon us, it is needless to say how loud and imperative is the call to watchfulness against evil, on the one hand ; and to be looking for the Lord's return on the other.

I.

Let us see if there exists to-day any similar sign as in our Lord's day, that the religious and rationalistic teachers are uniting in their opposition to Christianity. We quote from the July number of "Our Hope," pp. 8, 9 : "Not far from where we write, in the town of New Rochelle, N.Y., there stands on a country road a monument erected to Thomas Paine, the author of 'The Age of Reason.' Recently a celebration was held at that place commemorating the one-hundredth anniversary of the death of the poor infidel. A number of addresses were made lauding Paine and his work. A preacher spoke likewise. He said 'that the freedom of thought in religion for which Thomas Paine stood is *what we have most of us come to*. In his own day vilified as an atheist, for his denial of Biblical infallibility, to-day he is looked upon as a defender of just principles of faith.' . . . Some years ago a professor who believes in the inspiration of the Bible read before a preachers' meeting certain extracts from a work, the name of which he did not announce. Many of the preachers, who were critics, declared themselves fully in accord with what the professor had quoted. They were quite astonished when he told them that he had read from Thomas Paine's 'The Age of Reason.'" Again, take the following, which we summarise from the September number of the same journal : One of the presidents of an American Theological College said quite recently "that there would soon be a new religion, that would be *the religion*." "It will admit neither a sudden conversion in this world nor a sudden paradise in the next." "Again, the new religion will not be propitiatory, sacrificial, or expiatory." "It will be of immense advantage if the religion of the twentieth century shall get rid of these things, for they give a wrong conception of God."

With such evidence before us, is it any wonder that the editor adds : "There can no longer be even the shadow of a doubt that the departure from the doctrine of Christ has not only fully set in, but that its progress is like wildfire and *beyond human control*." On p. 75 of "Our Hope" for August is the following startling announcement : "Recently . . . three candidates, who had completed the

Union Seminary Course, were examined. They did not believe in miracles, nor in the Deity of our Lord. They denied the fall of man, the virgin birth and the resurrection. Nevertheless these men were licensed to preach." We have recently received from America an account of the current teaching in the universities given by a gentleman who has visited the class-rooms from Cambridge to California. His conclusion is: "There is scholarly repudiation of all solemn authority. The decalogue is no more sacred than a syllabus." This minute and extensive scrutiny of teaching that multitudes of young men and women are called upon to listen to, reveals one of the most alarming features of the time, for what is received into the mind to-day will be carried out in practice to-morrow, and influence the life of the whole nation, if not the entire world.

Thus far we have dealt with America. Are things any better in England? In nowise. Here, too, we behold the professed teachers of Christianity joining hands with sceptics. Indeed it is hard to say who is foremost in denying every cardinal truth of revelation, the avowed sceptic or those who take the place of instructors in the Christian Church. We are all familiar by this time with the amazing fact that a leading Congregational minister can stand up and give the lie to every distinctive truth in the Bible. In fact Mr. Campbell in express terms repudiates the Bible altogether. His words are: "Never mind what the Bible says about this or that, if you are in search for truth, but trust the voice of God within you." He denies the fall, the need of atonement, and future judgment. "There is no such thing as punishment, no far-off Judgment Day, no great white throne, and no Judge external to ourselves." When a so-called Christian teacher can propagate such a lie, when he can make statements which shock the moral sense of every true child of God, and can yet maintain his position (for his congregation have publicly upheld him and declared its confidence in him), it is quite clear that the apostasy is fast ripening to its ultimate development.

Let us now hear what the avowed infidel has to say about such teaching. 'Mr. Campbell is a Christian minister, and I am an infidel editor, and *the difference* between his religion and mine is *too small to argue about.*' "The New Theology," says Mr. Blatchford, "is 'God and my Neighbour' with the soft pedal on. It is Thomas Paine in a white tie . . . the Ingersoll fist in a boxing glove." Again, he says, "Beyond these differences (mentioning several minor points)

I am as much a Christian as is the Rev. R. J. Campbell ; and the Rev. R. J. Campbell is as much an infidel as is the editor of the *Clarion*. Mr. Campbell rejects the doctrines of the fall and the atonement. He denies the divinity of Christ, the virgin birth, and the resurrection. He denies the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible, and he rejects the idea of divine punishment and an everlasting hell. So do I."

Have we realised what all this means? Do we not see that the falling away (*ἀποστασία*) has begun in real earnest ; that the same combination is to be witnessed to-day as during the last days of Christ on earth, when He upbraided them for not discerning the signs of the times? What does it mean but the fulfilment—the literal fulfilment before our very eyes—of what scripture has foretold in the passages already cited? And is it not a call to us to look more steadfastly toward heaven from "whence also we look for the Saviour."

The attitude of a vast number of preachers and teachers toward the Bible is another evidence of the growth of the Apostasy, and that the religious and rationalistic leaders of our day are amalgamating.* To quote from the book ("The Number of Man") already referred to: "It is therefore essential to the success of Satan's last and greatest undertaking, that the way for it should be prepared by discrediting the Bible. This, doubtless, is the mission of the Higher Criticism, which, notwithstanding that the emptiness of its pretensions and worthlessness of its 'results' have been thoroughly exposed, has nevertheless succeeded in spreading among the masses of church-goers and others the idea that the doctrine of an inspired and authoritative Bible has been discarded by all competent scholars ; and that the few who cling to that antiquated notion are either ignorant, feeble-minded, or fanatical." This has caused widespread doubt among not only educated people, but those who are unable to sift these matters for themselves. In conversation with two working men the other day in the train, we discovered that though neither of them appeared distinctly hostile to Christianity, yet both seemed imbued with the idea that the Bible was not altogether trustworthy. People are not likely to give much heed to the claims of Christianity where this is the case, for if the

* It is stated that more than half the chairs in the theological seminaries of the United States, of Britain, and of Germany, are already occupied by Higher Critics.

Bible cannot be credited, or at all events is open to question, then authority, worth calling the name, there is none.

II.

Let us now consider a second feature of the Apostasy. *It is the abnormal number of "divers and strange doctrines" that are abroad.* This special feature of the Apostasy is clearly foretold in scripture. Not only does 2 Thess. ii. speak of "a falling away," but it goes on to tell us that, "*for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.*" And in 2 Tim. iv. it states not only that teachers should turn away the ears of people from the truth, but that they "*shall be turned unto fables.*" These lies, and these fables are everywhere. Spiritism, Modernism, Christian Science, Theosophy, Millennial Dawnism, with a hundred other cults of various descriptions, abound, and press their claims on every hand. And, what is more, they are accepted. Let no one be surprised that they spring up within the Church itself. It was long ago foretold in the words of the Apostle Peter: "There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them . . . and many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." So it is to-day, the way of truth is despised, and is being forsaken, and consequently they who do this are being given up to strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. What need for everyone of us to be on the watch.

Could there be more convincing evidence of the state of things we have described than the existence of that bureau for communication with the dead opened in London a few months ago by a well-known man, the son of a Christian minister? The conscience of England felt outraged only a little time since when accounts were published of interviews with leading statesmen no longer living. What is this but doing what God counselled His people of old not to do. "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter; **should not a people seek unto their God?** on behalf of the living should they seek unto the dead? (R.V.) To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. viii. 19, 20). How clearly we see from this that when familiar spirits are resorted to, it means God has been forsaken.

III.

So far the things we have been considering, bad as they are, all connect themselves with professing Christians. And it is of the utmost importance to bear this in mind because the Apostasy, primarily, applies to Christendom, and not to the world as such; but in order to have a more complete picture we will just refer in the briefest possible way to the various movements, and the present trend of things, in the world.

No one can doubt that *Socialism* has made immense strides during the past decade. Many ministers of the gospel look upon it from a religious point of view, and, indeed, proclaim it to be a religion. Yet Socialism in itself is decidedly anti-Christian, having its own views of things which are diametrically opposed to the teaching of Christ and His apostles. The fancied good of the greatest number of people, is their law, and this is to be reached in their way, whether it harmonises with the law of God, as contained in the Bible, or not. We say *fancied* good, because material betterment is the end and aim of Socialism; while anyone who knows the truth about man and his history is aware that, instead of being at his best, he has been and always will be at his worst when most prosperous. The remarkable thing about the New Theology is that it looks upon the great labour movement as an ally—both are moving in the same direction, and both have pretty much the same aim. The exaltation—the worship of man underlies both. And as Mr. Philip Mauro points out in his remarkable book, all the various agencies at work in the world to-day are not so much different movements as they are various phases of the same movement. And this seems to prove, as he asserts, that there is one master mind at the back, controlling all, that is, the prince of the power of the air. And he will bring on the scene at the appointed time the man that is wanted, for this is what Socialism owns it needs, one able to direct and bring about the various and far reaching changes it proposes. This is what the world waits for, and this is what the Bible tells us it shall have, but it will be the Anti-Christ.

The extraordinary development of the resources of the world is surely another sign that the end is not far off. This development has never been so rapid or extensive as during the last thirty years. It is needless to mention all the mighty inventions which are of recent introduction, and which not only have changed the conditions of

existence, but tend more and more to blind man to his own true condition as a poor, lost sinner. We might refer to the increasing desecration of the Lord's Day as a further evidence of the immense changes that are rapidly taking place in public opinion. A few Sundays ago there were between thirty and forty concerts given on that day in London alone. A railway official declared that the Sunday evening traffic was becoming the largest in the week, and competing for supremacy with Saturday night. We were told the other day, that at a certain fishing village not far from a large midland centre only one man fished on Sunday a few years ago, and he was so ashamed of it that he took his basket and rod down to the place on Saturday night, and, to-day, special excursion trains are run carrying hundreds of fishermen out to this spot.

But we have no more space for any further enlargements upon "the signs of the times." It may all be summed up in one word: The world's progress is becoming more and more man's theme and object; while sin and its consequences, God and His claims are being ignored.

In view of the rapid fulfilment of what the Bible has predicted, our closing words shall be addressed to three classes. First, those who have **not yet felt their need of salvation**. Remember that the Bible, which is the Word of God, is being fulfilled before your very eyes. We have cited the passages, and then stated the facts as they exist in the world and in the church to-day. That word will as surely be fulfilled in the case of every one who turns a deaf ear to God's gracious offers in the gospel. The hours during which those offers are being made, and during which they may be accepted, are fast running out. It is the acceptable "year" of the Lord now, and the "day" of salvation, but do remember that a "day" and a "year" only represent limited periods; and beyond this there is another day spoken of, "the day of vengeance of our God." "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." We fear that many in this favoured land are living without God, and without His gospel. "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?"

Second. Those who believe. We would remind such of the words of the Apostle Paul which follow upon the dark picture of the Apostasy which he draws in 2 Thess. ii. 3-12. In verse 13 he says : " But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. . . . Therefore, brethren, **stand fast.**" And, let us add, not only *stand fast*, but "**hold fast.**" " Hold that fast which thou hast that no man take thy crown." If the foregoing words are true of you, *you* cannot be lost, but you may lose your reward. And may all that we have been saying lead you to " Lift up your head, for your redemption draweth nigh." Seek not the world, but " seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."

Lastly. A word to preachers. Yours is, if possible, a more solemn business than ever. Preach with all the conviction that the time is short. Let all the earnestness, which impending wrath, the rising tide of apostasy, and the truth of God can give you, be yours. Remember that at the very time the Apostle foresaw and delineated the present departure from the truth he said, " Preach the word." And he brought Timothy, where he surely brings you to-day, into the presence of " God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His Kingdom." Let us stand in spirit there, and we shall not preach in vain.

" Not now but in the coming years,
It may be in the better land,
We'll read the meaning of our tears,
And there, sometime, we'll understand."

" We'll catch the broken threads again,
And finish what we here began ;
Heaven will the mysteries explain,
And then, ah then, we'll understand."

" Spirit is the intelligent part of man, the higher part, though by the fall it is corrupted. Man might be likened to a three-storey building which has all fallen into the lower storey—the flesh ; and so man is characterised by that, treated as flesh."

* * * *

" We are to learn *of* Christ, and to learn *Christ* ; He is both Teacher and lesson."

“THE DOOR WAS SHUT.”

MATTHEW XXV. 10.

By C. HICKMAN.

THERE are many doors that close upon men beside the one spoken of in the parable.

Let me enumerate a few :—

1. **The Door of Youth.**—When we begin life it seems as though this door never will close. But how quickly the years fly! Soon we begin to say with Moses, “We spend our years as a tale that is told.” In youth we do not want things that are dull and uninteresting. Now the gospel is aglow with light and sparkling with gladness. If a man would go through life with joyous heart and uplifted soul he needs to come to Christ while young. Then as he treads the pathway of divine wisdom he will find “her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

2. **The Door of Health.**—Vigorous manhood will not continue. Sooner or later weakness and disease will invade the frame. The tent is to be taken down, and so the pegs will be drawn and the cords loosened. While the muscle is strong, and the spirits are buoyant, men often think they can do without Christ. Yes, but wait till the sick-chamber is reached, and the physician whispers that the Door of Health is finally closed! A London bank clerk when forced to quit his employment because of failing eyesight, was so depressed at the closing of the Door of Health, that he laid violent hands upon himself, and rushed into a suicide’s eternity.

No man can afford to hear that the Door of Health is closed, unless he know Jesus the Great Physician, Who makes for His people their bed in their sickness, and strengthens with strength in the soul.

3. **The Door of Earthly Prosperity.**—Sometimes it is closed by a crash in the commercial world. Savings of many years vanish suddenly. Riches take wings, and fly away. But eventually all earthly possessions will be taken from our grasp. We are but stewards. Naked we came into the world and naked we shall quit it.

Hence the Saviour says, “Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.”

4. **The Door of Life.**—Upon each of us the Door of Life is closing *gradually*. Directly we begin to live we begin to die. The

candle burns slowly down to its socket, and the flame expires. Sometimes the Door of Life closes *suddenly*. How many sudden deaths there are. A merchant having been told of the death of another, said, "Well, as for me, I am so busy, I have no time to die." Then he went into the kitchen, and, stooping down to put on his boots, fell a corpse to the ground.

But whether the Door of Life closes gradually or suddenly, it closes *certainly*. There will be no opportunity to return and rectify any mistake.

If the Door of your Life were to close to-day would it close *happily*? Can you say, "I know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens?"

5. **The Door of the Grave.**—It is commonly stated "We must all die," but men do not add, "We must all be buried." Men shrink from the tomb, but cannot escape it. A little boy said he had been measuring tombstones, and had found one shorter than himself. Who has not, when walking through the cemetery, noticed that someone younger than himself had been interred?

But are you acquainted with Him Who said, "I am the Resurrection and the Life?" Can you say, "O death, where is thy sting?" "O grave, where is thy victory?"

6. **The Door of Hades.**—When the disembodied spirit enters eternity, the Door of Hades closes upon it. The soul is immediately ushered into Paradise, or thrust into the prison-house for the impenitent. The resurrection is awaited either in the company of Christ, or in the gloom of unutterable despair.

The Apostle Paul thought of the disembodied state with joyous anticipation, and said, "To depart and to be with Christ . . . is far better."

7. **The Door of Heaven.**—This is the one spoken of in the text above, and it may close at any moment in the face of the neglecter of salvation. "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh." "When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door," entreaties will be unavailing.

But, thank God, the Door of Salvation is now wide open. Jesus says, "I am the Door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved."

"The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin."

“THE WEALTHY PLACE.” *

PSALM LXVI.

“Thou, O God, hast proved us : Thou hast tried us we went through fire and through water ; **but** Thou broughtest us out into a *wealthy place.*”

IT is ever God’s design to bring His people into a wealthy place.

His word as to Israel of old was, “I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey” (Exodus iii. 8). It is not otherwise to-day. Our Lord said unto the woman of Samaria : “Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again ; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst ; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” Alas ! that we should often be content with something less than God has for us.

* * * *

How are we to reach this wealthy place ? The steps are described in the above Psalm. “*He turned the sea into dry land ; they went through the flood on foot ; **there did we rejoice in Him.** . . . Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved. For Thou, O God, hast proved us ; Thou hast tried us as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net ; Thou laidst affliction upon our loins ; Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads ; we went through fire and through water ; **but Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.**”*

The first step it will be seen is **salvation**. “He turned the sea into dry land ; they went through the flood on foot.” This recalls the incident of the Red Sea, and the marvellous deliverance of the children of Israel. It was their redemption which caused a song to ascend from the lips of the ransomed people such as had never been known before. “*There did we rejoice in Him.*” Our path to the “wealthy place” lies along the same road. We must know God’s deliverance. God would have every believer sing to Him for very joy of heart and in exultation as he sees the victory that has been wrought on his behalf. That victory has been described in New Testament language in Romans iv. 3, 23-25 ; and v. 1, 2. “**Abraham believed God**, and it was counted upon him for *righteousness.* . .

* The above (in full) can be obtained in booklet form suitable for letters, from the author, Russell Elliott, 34, Cliff Road, Hyde Park, Leeds. Ninepence per dozen ; or 5s. per 100 post free.

Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him ; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead ; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Here let it be noticed we reach the same point precisely as in Psalm lxvi.—“There did we rejoice in Him.” The question is, Have we reached it in our own personal experience? For it is very certain we cannot rejoice without knowing it. Now it is quite possible for one who has not clear views of the gospel, but still a believer as far as his light goes, to be practically where Israel was in Egypt, sheltered by the blood. But observe no song issued from those dwellings, though secure from God’s judgment. They had not full salvation, for they were still in the *land* of bondage, and not actually freed from their enemies. How different, when on the other side of the Red Sea, they saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. There they saw the great work that God had done, and they sang.

It is precisely this that we see in the portion of scripture already quoted from the epistle to the Romans. We see the great work God has done for us. It was He Who “raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead” (v. 24); it was He Who delivered Him “for our offences and raised Him again for our justification” (v. 25). The only difference between Israel and ourselves is this: they saw it with their eyes; we see it by faith. God tells us what He has done because it is a thing we never could see. Had we seen Jesus actually dying we should not have understood the meaning of it without being told. So God tells us the meaning and expects us to believe what He says. And when we just accept what is said at the end of Romans iv., because God says it and not because we feel it, then we have peace with God, and our experience will be, “*There did we rejoice in Him.*” For He tells us how He Himself has delivered us from all our enemies. It is all for those who confess Jesus as their Lord.

In verse 9 are given two other reasons for rejoicing in God. “**Which putteth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.**”

But having reached this point now comes something else—we have to be proved. “**Thou, O God, hast proved us.**” This was so in Israel’s history. The rejoicing came first, the wilderness re-echoed with the song of triumph ; and then, what followed ? “ They went three days in the wilderness, and found no water.” The song died upon their lips. And those wondrous words, “ Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously ” were displaced by murmurs. Thou, O God, didst *prove* them. Why was this ? There was an enemy *inside* that needed to be subdued as well as outside. God had dealt with the latter. He had sheltered them when the destroying angel passed through the land (Ex. xii.) ; He had overwhelmed the Egyptians in the Red Sea. But God knew there was an enemy—the flesh—inside His people. And He was too faithful not to deal with *them* about that, as He had been too faithful not to deliver them from all that was opposed to them and Him from without.

And this is what we all have to learn, that there is a lurking enemy within—the enemy of God and our own true happiness, and spiritual progress—the flesh, self—call it what you will. And the painful part comes when God has to deal with us about all that is in our own hearts. But God loves us too much not to do it, and it is just here we learn how much He does love us, and His love becomes a reality. All that He will be to us in the tribulation which so tries and tests us ; this is the blessed experience we get. For after speaking of rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, the Apostle Paul adds, “ And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also ; knowing that tribulation worketh patience ; and patience experience ; and experience hope ; and hope maketh not ashamed ; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.”

And God proves us because He will have reality. It was all very well for Israel to sing because their enemies were put down, but were they willing to have the flesh, which is enmity against God, put down within themselves ? Would they submit to Jehovah’s training ? Would they consent to become what He wanted them to be ? It was for this He made them feel their need—but it was only their need of Him—and that need only brought to light deeper unfoldings of His goodness. It was a sore trial to have no water, and, if possible, sorer still to come to Marah and find the waters bitter. But, oh, what a revelation of God that He can **make** every

bitter thing sweet! God *shewed* Moses a tree which when he cast it into the waters they became sweet. So God would show us a tree—the Cross—and have us sound the depths of the love which that death reveals. God has shewn it to us in Romans v. 6-11. Are we not already reaching the wealthy place when we have had an experience of this? God indeed proves us, that we may learn ourselves, and that we may also learn Him, until, in learning Him, we become unconsciously transformed.

This is the thought surely in the next statement, "**Thou hast tried us as silver is tried.**" Silver is tried until the one who sits beside it can see his own image reflected. . . . What comfort, too, in the thought that it is "as silver." God sees something precious there, something worth preserving, and worth purifying. This is why so many unconverted people escape chastening. They have not been born again, they are out of Christ, and God sees only base metal. Silver speaks of what is precious. Oh, it is because we are precious to God that He tries us.

* * * *

But there are further dealings. The trials and testings are not all exhausted by the figure of silver. "**Thou broughtest us into the net.**" Does this refer to Israel's forty years wandering in the desert? It was the result of their own self-will. Had they been fit for it, they could have reached the land in a few days. But they rebelled against God, and contemned the counsel of the Most High. When He wanted them to go up and possess the land they refused. When He told them not to go they went. Do we know anything of the net? To be shut up to circumstances, hemmed in on every side. No liberty to do as we like. A man in a net can do very little; the more he struggles the worse it is for him. Under such circumstances, the only thing is to be still and wait. Did not the Apostle Paul know something of the net as the result of his last visit to Jerusalem?

* * * *

It is not, however, always circumstances that try us, or shut us in. What is the next means of bringing us into the wealthy place? There is ill-health. "**Thou laidst affliction upon our loins.**" God lays His hand upon our strength, and turns it into weakness, then out of weakness we are made strong. Is not Job an instance of this? But what a wealthy place he reached. "The Lord gave

Job twice as much as he had before. . . . The Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning" (Job xlii. 10 and 12). Jacob is another example of the same thing. God cannot allow His child to meet Esau as a supplanter, and so He changes his name from Jacob to Israel—a Prince. But then, neither must He allow Jacob to think anything of himself, and so the hollow of the thigh must be touched. And when the thigh is out of joint, then comes the change. "As a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." The wealthy place is reached. "The sun rose upon him." It was a new day for Jacob. A new history had begun. "And he halted upon his thigh." The place of weakness is the place of power. The scheming, planning Jacob is changed; he has said, "I will not let **Thee** go," he has found all he can ever want *there*.

What a wealthy place Paul reached by the same road. He not only knew the net, "but God laid affliction upon his loins," in the shape of that thorn (or stake) in the flesh. Oh, how he longed to have it removed, but it was to lead to something, and so it was left with him, until at last he hugged it rather than asked to have it taken away. What made the difference? Christ had spoken to him those wonderful words, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." "My grace," "My strength," all at the disposal of the apostle. What wealth! "Therefore, I take pleasure," he says, "in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecution, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor. xii. 7-10).

Is God dealing with you in any of these ways? Have you been put to the proof? Do not resist, or try to escape. Remember **the potter can make nothing of untempered clay**. It must be suitable to his purpose before he can do anything with it. If God is proving you He is conferring upon you the greatest honour because He wants to fashion you to suit His purpose. A gentleman was standing watching a potter at work, and noticed that he took all his clay from one mound, and not from another, for there were two mounds of clay near to his wheel. He asked the reason of this. The potter replied: "This clay is disciplined, tempered, prepared for use, the other is not." Then he took a small bit of the untempered clay, threw it into the larger lump which he had in his hand, and said, "Now if you will watch carefully, you will see that

before I have finished my work, that small bit of untempered clay will spoil the vessel I am proposing to fashion." The gentleman watched intently as the potter threw the clay upon the wheel. The vessel was responding to the potter's touch, and was growing into a shapely and symmetrical thing, when, all at once, without a second's warning, it bulged, and all the shapeliness was gone.

And so we have to be proved to see if there is suited material, and then tried as *silver* is tried. And then, a further, and still further process: brought into the net, and affliction laid upon our loins. All part of those wise and gracious dealings that have one end in view, not to mar us but to make us.

And if anything more is needed, we surely find it in the two remaining experiences: "**Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water.**" The heat of the furnace seems to grow more intense, the testing more severe, as the end of the process is being reached. Could there be anything more humiliating than for men to ride over our heads? To be treated as the very dust of the ground. To become a mere carpet for people to walk upon. To see others getting advantage over us; preferred before us; honoured instead of us; this is, if anything, hardest of all to bear. The great apostle to whom we have already more than once referred—Paul—seems to have known something even of this. Listen how he writes to the Corinthians, "For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last . . . we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." In spite of the great work he had done among them, he received but scant acknowledgment from the Corinthians. They even preferred "false apostles"; and he even has to say to them, "I ought to have been commended of you" (see 1 Cor. iv. 9-13; 2 Cor. xi. 13; xii. 11). Yet he could say to these very people as descriptive of himself, "As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

The last phase is now reached: "**We went through fire and through water; but Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.**" All forms of dangers and distresses seem comprehended in "fire" and "water." The smith at his work uses the fire first in order to make his metal malleable; and then, after the hammering, plunges it into water. Steel acquires a hardness, it is said, by being suddenly cooled as by dipping in water. Many have been through this process,

and what experiences they have had of God, both in the "fire" and in the "water." "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." The "fire" and the "water" often lie on the road to the wealthy place. It was the one who could say, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep," who could also speak in the very next chapter of the abundance of the revelations, and being caught up to the third heaven. The road to Paradise lay through all this. But what a wealthy place to reach!

Such is the way to the wealthy place, and it is the same in differing degrees for all. "Thou, O God, hast proved us; Thou hast tried us as silver is tried; Thou broughtest us into the net; Thou laidst affliction upon our loins. Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water; but Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place." We may well be thankful for the "but." But for that, we might often give way to despair under God's dealings. But God's "buts" have large begettings. There *is* an end to our sorrows, but no end to His goodness; an end to our trials, but none to our triumphs.

Just a word in closing as to the marks of being in the wealthy place.

Notice in the first place, what the Psalmist says in the next verse (13): "**I will go into Thy house with burnt offerings; I will pay Thee my vows.**" The wealthy Christian is one who has something to offer. . . . The burnt offering speaks, in the first instance, of Christ offering Himself wholly to God to do His will. Do we often come to God to speak to Him about this? God delights to be reminded of it. He does not ask us to bring bullocks, but to speak to Him of the One Who was the answer to, and fulfiller of all types. It is "the fruit of our lips" He wants. As it says in Hebrews xiii. 15, "By Him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His Name." But the heart must feed upon Christ before there can be this "fruit of our lips." . . .

A wealthy Christian, too, is one who pays his vows. **“I will pay Thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.”** Now while in the New Testament there is hardly any reference to vows (in striking contrast to the Old) and no hint that they are obligatory, because, no doubt, God wishes everything to be the spontaneous outcome of His own grace, yet, in trouble you may have been made to feel that you had not in the past rendered to God all that was due to Him. Well, you have been delivered. Have you done what you resolved to do? Have you paid your vows?

Then follows another mark of a wealthy person in verse 16. **“Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul.”**

In the last verses of our Psalm we have another mark of one who has reached the wealthy place. He obtains answers to his prayers. **“I cried unto him with my mouth, and He was extolled with my tongue verily God hath heard me, He hath attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me”** (vv. 17-20). This is closely connected with declaring what God has done for our soul. How blessed when we have a rich experience of answered prayer. If you can go to God and get what you want, you are indeed in a wealthy place. Especially when we have to do with One, Who, if He denies us the thing we sought, sends us something better. There are two things to be remembered. Do not let us forget the latter part of verse 17—to extol Him. We so often go and ask, and forget to praise Him for all He has done for us already. **“In everything by prayer and supplication,”** but let it be also, **“with thanksgiving”** (Phil. iv. 6). And then verse 18, **“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”** We are dwelling in a barren place, instead of a rich place, if we regard iniquity in our heart. Our lips become more or less dumb, and our heart cold, and our prayers are unheard. And all the process by which God leads us to the wealthy place, which we have been considering, is intended to deliver us from regarding this iniquity in our heart, and to enable us to declare what God has done for our soul.

Let us arise then and possess this land, and dwell therein. The way to it may, at times, be thorny, and the road sometimes rough and circuitous, but the end of the journey will make up for all ; while

the furnace, and the net, and the crucible by the way are intended to give us fresh proofs that God loves us too well to leave us unproved and undisciplined.

There is no royal road to the wealthy place. Apostles, prophets, martyrs, and the saints of all time have reached it by the same path. Paul describes it in that passage where he says, "we glory in tribulations also," because, as he tells us, the love of God was shed abroad in his heart. And he and Silas exemplify it in the dungeon at Philippi, when, with their feet in the stocks and their backs bleeding, they prayed and sang praises to God. Men who could do this must indeed be wealthy. No amount of money could give people such joy under such circumstances. Nor was this some ecstatic moment never to be repeated. Hear the same apostle as he writes to the Philippians from his prison in Rome: "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them as refuse, that I may win Christ." A man who will willingly lose his all, and then, having lost it, far from wishing to regain it, count it as refuse, must indeed possess something worth the having. He can tell them to "be careful for nothing"; he can speak of "the peace of God which passeth all understanding"; and, finally, "I have learned," he says, "in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content"; "I have all and abound: I am full"; "My God shall supply all your need."

Here is the wealthy place, and what it costs us to reach it is but as dross compared with what we attain. And when we see the end God has in view, does it not help us to understand those otherwise mysterious providences which He permits. All that so unexpectedly darkens our lives, which we think we so little deserved; all those calamities which seem heavy enough to crush us, and which we deem so uncalled for—all those sorrows which fill the eyes with tears and make the heart ache—these, and such like, are designed, if only we would accept them from a loving Father's hand, to bring us to the wealthy place where God becomes our satisfying and everlasting portion.

"I live, yet I seem to myself to be dead,
Such a riddle is not to be found;
I am nourished without knowing how I am fed,
I have nothing, and yet I abound."

THE BIRTHDAY OF JESUS CHRIST.

BY W. H. DORMAN.

ALTHOUGH the 25th December has been recognised by the Church for many ages as the day on which the Lord was born, it has been generally believed that this is only an ecclesiastical tradition devoid of any substantial support, and that it cannot be traced back earlier than the third century. However, in very carefully following the events of the earliest days of the Lord's entrance into His life of public ministry I was surprised to find that it is hard to come to any other conclusion (putting together the combined testimony of the three Evangelists who deal with that period), than that His birthday must have fallen near that time of year, and I feel little doubt that Christmas Day is really the anniversary of the Lord's birth.

The first date that we have in the early public life of Jesus is given us in John ii. 13, in the words, "And the passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." We will now follow step by step the events which took place between the Lord's baptism and that first Easter when in the language of John, "He came to His own things, and they that were His own received Him not"; and then try to form some idea of the time that must have elapsed between those two points.

Luke iii. 23 tells us that Jesus, when He began to teach, was about thirty years of age, and if we remember that thirty years was the age when the Levite took up his service according to the law, there is little doubt but that that divine order was recognised by Jesus, and that He was just turned thirty when He commenced His service. That is to say that He had just passed His thirtieth birthday when He came to John to be baptised. After His baptism He went away into the wilderness to the scene of the temptation, where He remained for six weeks. In John i. 29 we find Him returning out of the wilderness to John, and He stayed in that neighbourhood for two or three days, and John i. 43 tells us of His departure westward and northward, His journey ending, as we learn from Luke iv. 16, at Nazareth. On the first Sabbath after His arrival, as I suppose, He opened His ministry in the Synagogue there. Luke describes His first discourse and the reception He met with, and also

says in verse 31, He came down to Capernaum. But for what passed between that Sabbath and His arrival at Capernaum we must be indebted to John, who describes for us the marriage in Cana at which he says Jesus' *disciples*, as well as his mother, were present. Now as He could not have had disciples until He had begun to be a teacher, it is obvious that the marriage in Cana must have taken place after His public advent in that character. It is evident also that the interview with Nathanael took place at that time, for everything points to the personal status of Jesus having changed, and that He had already assumed the functions of His mission. Both Luke and John tell us of His leaving Nazareth and going to reside in Capernaum, where He went with His mother, His brethren and His disciples, and that town afterwards is spoken of as His own city. Doubtless the reason of His leaving the town where all His life up to that time had been spent was the rejection that He met with when He first publicly announced Himself as "the Lord's Servant" (in Isaiah), the Messiah of Israel. He declared that "a prophet is not without honour save in His own country, and among His own kin." John ii. 12 tells us that He abode in Capernaum not many days, that is to say, I suppose, that He settled His mother and family in their new abode, for it would seem that by this time Joseph was dead, and He as the eldest son was head of the household. John also tells us that this was just before the passover, and that Jesus went up so Jerusalem to that feast.

We will now try to form an idea how long these events would take. From the time that Jesus came to John, including His visit, His journey into the wilderness, His stay there, His return, and His little stay by Jordan till He went on to Galilee, could hardly be less than eight weeks. The journey to Nazareth would take nearly another week. His stay at Nazareth, which included His Sabbath at the Synagogue, and visit to Cana, and intercourse with Philip and Nathanael, and His family removal to Capernaum, could be hardly less than three weeks. Then if we allow a fortnight for His stay in Capernaum, including His journey to Jerusalem, we should have about fourteen weeks. The time from Christmas to Easter varies, but is on the average about fourteen weeks.

It is not pretended that these estimated times are at all exact, but I think it is evident that they must be approximate, and that we have good reason to believe that the day which throughout the

Christian world is set apart for the remembrance of the Lord's coming into this world is really the anniversary of His birth in Bethlehem. We have so long been in the habit of thinking that there was no real evidence that Christmas Day was the Lord's birthday, that it is immensely interesting to find that the testimony of the New Testament leads one to believe that that actually was the day.

THE STORY OF A PRAYER FOR LORD BYRON.

FROME, SOMERSET, *Nov. 21st, 1821.*

“To the Right Hon. LORD BYRON, PISA.

MY LORD,—More than two years since, a lovely and beloved wife was taken from me by a lingering disease, after a very short union. She possessed unvarying gentleness and fortitude, and a piety so retiring as rarely to disclose itself in words; but so influential as to produce uniform benevolence of conduct. In the last hour of life . . . her last whispers were ‘God’s happiness! God’s happiness!’ Since the second anniversary of her decease, I have read some papers which no one had seen during her life, and which contained her most secret thoughts. I am induced to communicate to your lordship a passage from these papers, which, there is no doubt, refers to yourself, as I have more than once heard the writer mention your agility on the rocks at Hastings.

“O, my God, I take encouragement from the assurance of Thy word, to pray to Thee on behalf of one for whom I have lately been much interested. May the person to whom I allude (and who is now, we fear, as much distinguished for his neglect of Thee, as for the transcendent talents Thou hast bestowed on him), be awakened to a sense of his own danger, and led to seek that peace of mind . . . which he has found the world’s enjoyments unable to procure. Do Thou grant that his future example may be productive of far more extensive benefit than his past conduct and writings have been of evil. And may the Sun of Righteousness, which we trust will, at some future period, arise upon him, be bright in proportion to the darkness of those clouds which guilt has raised, and soothing in proportion to the keenness of that agony which the punishment of his vices has inflicted on him . . .”

HASTINGS, *July 31st, 1814.*

To this communication Lord Byron sent the following reply :—

“ PISA, *December 8th*, 1821.

“ SIR,—I have received your letter. I need not say that the extract which it contains has affected me, because it would imply a want of all feeling to have read it with indifference. Though I am not quite sure that it was intended by the writer for me, yet the date, the place where it was written, with some other circumstances which you mention, render the allusion probable. But, for whomsoever it was meant, I have read it with all the pleasure which can arise from so melancholy a topic. I say pleasure, because your brief and simple picture of the life and demeanour of this excellent person, whom I trust that you will again meet, cannot be contemplated without the admiration due to her virtues, and her pure and unpretending piety. Her last moments were particularly striking ; and I do not know that, in the course of reading the story of mankind, and still less in my observations upon the existing portion I ever met with anything so unostentatiously beautiful. Indisputably, the firm believers in the gospel have a great advantage over all others : for this simple reason, that, if true, they have their reward hereafter ; and if there be no hereafter, they can but be with the infidel in his eternal sleep, having had the assistance of an exalted hope through life, without subsequent disappointment, since (at the worst of them) out of nothing nothing can arise ; not even sorrow.

“ But my business is to acknowledge your letter and not to make a dissertation. I am obliged to you for your good wishes ; and more obliged for the extract from the papers of the beloved object whose qualities you so well described in a few words. I can assure you that all the fame that ever cheated humanity into higher notions of its own importance, would never weigh on my mind against the pure and pious interest which a virtuous being may be pleased to take in my welfare. In this point of view, I would not exchange the prayer of the deceased in my behalf for the united glory of Homer, Cæsar, and Napoleon, could they be accumulated upon a living head. Do me the justice to suppose, that I see and approve the better things, however I may follow the worse. I have the honour to be, your obedient servant,

BYRON.”

THE FAITH AND THE FLOCK

Vol. II.—No. 2.

FEBRUARY, 1910.

PRICE—TWO PENCE.
INCLUDING CHART.

EDITORIALS.

ACCOMPANYING this number is a Chart in three colours, specially prepared and printed for this magazine. It is a reduced facsimile of one devised by Mr. G. W. Heath, who has also written an introductory article. It is copyright, and cannot be reproduced except by arrangement. It is supplied for one penny to our regular subscribers, and the Magazine, including Chart, can be purchased by anyone for twopence. Will those of our readers who receive their copy direct from Messrs. Partridge & Co., through the post, kindly remit three halfpence per return, when it will be sent to them if they have not already received it; others can pay the local bookseller on receipt.

* * * *

Month by month we hope to publish explanatory articles of the above Chart from the pen of Mr. Walter Scott, so well known in connection with the treatment of these subjects. In this way our readers will be carried through the entire book of Revelation, and we believe the articles and Chart combined will greatly assist in their understanding it. Many, it may be, have, so far, never had

a clear conception of the contents and teaching of this marvellous book, nor have they been able to grasp the meaning of the symbols. Now is their opportunity. If they will carefully and prayerfully follow the clear and concise exposition that will be given, with Chart in front of them, we believe they cannot fail to be greatly enlightened. It is thought best to give, first of all, some general indication of the character of the book, and this will be found in two introductory papers herein. This method will also give our readers time to become acquainted with the Chart, and thus prepare them for the detailed description which is to follow.

* * * *

This special number will give our readers an opportunity of making the magazine known, which we trust they will not let slip. It is helping many. Numbers of testimonies have reached us of the good being done. Will you not help on the good work? The most cheering letters sometimes come to hand, both from at home and abroad. It greatly rests with you as to how far this usefulness is extended. The number taking it is not a tithe of those who would like to have such a magazine in their hands. One writes from abroad: "There is a book called *The Faith and the Flock* sent to me regularly, and it has helped me much. I am sending for the bound volume No. 1, and two subscriptions for 1910, as it is clearing up some long standing difficulties." Another: "I like the magazine very much . . . One old lady I lent it to liked it so much that she ordered one for herself." A third: "I think your magazine is excellent. I have read——and other pieces with much instruction and delight." These are only a sample, but they are given to encourage our friends to seek to enlist the interest of others, and, also, that God may be glorified for what has been accomplished.

* * * *

Instead of a letter addressed to young people there will be found some remarks on the hymns of Dr. Isaac Watts, which we hope will be found of interest not only to the young, but to readers of all ages. It is from one who has led a long, active, and successful life, who is well acquainted with literature, as well as with law, but who finds now, in the evening of his days, the truths set forth by Dr. Watts his greatest comfort. The Editor publishes this address (a summary), first, because of the many interesting allusions, secondly, because of the quotations from some of the finest hymns in the English

language, but thirdly, in the hope that the example of the author may encourage young people to do what he did in his youth, and which now in age proves such a solace, that is, commit some of the best known hymns to memory. We fear this is sadly neglected in these days.

* * * *

Matthew Arnold, himself no mean poet, pronounced the hymn "When I survey the wondrous Cross" to be the finest in the English tongue. During his life he wandered far away from the usual orthodox lines. But there is one pleasing episode in connection with the last days of his life. The Sunday before he died—for he passed away with comparative suddenness—this hymn was sung at the service he attended. From some remarks he made, it evidently produced a great impression on his mind, and as he came downstairs to dinner, he was heard humming the tune. Before the week was over, he was gone.

* * * *

We wish to call the attention of our readers to a very interesting production called "Wonderful Thoughts from God's Own Word," in poetry. It conveys Bible truth—of which it is a survey—in a very simple and edifying form, and in a style which is an agreeable change from the ordinary method. The price is only threepence, and can be obtained from Messrs. S. W. Partridge & Co., 8 & 9, Paternoster Row, E.C. The author is Mr. C. W. Cadle.

* * * *

Mr. E. H. Broadbent, who was taken seriously ill in Siberia some time ago, is now home again and much better. He writes to a fellow labourer as follows:—"My recovery has been rapid, and I think the illness will leave no harmful traces. Such experiences, where we are entirely cast upon God, are of great value as a means of impressing the reality and power of His presence, when everything else seems to have vanished. The mind apprehends many things in the Word which must then be converted into actual possession in the heart by means of experience. It is admirable how the Word and experience are never at variance, but always confirm one another." All who know our brother will rejoice in God's goodness to him.

* * * *

The exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews will (D.V.) be continued in our next.

THE BLESSED HOPE.

ACTS I. 10, 11.

- “ THIS same Jesus,” listen, Christian,
 To this precious word
 Spoken by the Angels bright,
 As they stood in lustrous white,
 Where the dear disciples still
 Lingered on fair Olive’s hill,
 Loth to lose their Lord.
- “ This same Jesus,” sweet the message,
 “ He again shall come ;
 Just as ye have seen Him go
 In a cloud ; yes, even so,
 Blessing with His latest word,—
 Thus again shall come your Lord
 From His radiant Home.”
- “ This same Jesus,” let us say it
 O’er and o’er again ;
 He who walked in Galilee,
 Drew the children to His knee ;
 Healed the sick, relieved the poor,
 Though of wealth he had no store,
 Scant His fare, and plain.
- “ This same Jesus,” now in glory,
 Whence He shall appear,
 Crowned with honour, seated now
 On the throne ; before Him bow
 All the radiant hosts of Heaven,
 Power and might to Him are given,
 Though rejected here.
- “ This same Jesus,” He is coming,
 Coming very soon ;
 Are we ready Him to meet,
 Ready with a welcome sweet ?
 Do we watch along the way
 For His coming day by day,
 Morning, night and noon ?
- “ This same Jesus,” do we know him,
 Know Him on the throne ?
 Known as Saviour first of all,
 Then as Lord ; yea, *Lord of all*,
 Priest, and King, and Shepherd-Friend
 Bridegroom, loving to the end,
 Coming for His own.
- “ This same Jesus,” “ This same Jesus,”—
 Ring the sweet joy-bells,
 Jesus, just the very same
 As we’ve known Him, bless His Name !
 He will come, perhaps to-day.
 Let us watch and let us pray,
 While our praise up-swells.

ANNA WOODCOCK.

AN OUTLINE OF "THE REVELATION."

Introduction.

By WALTER SCOTT.

THERE are clear indications that we are on the eve of the Coming. Faith rests on God's Word, not on signs, yet these latter are highly significant, such as the budding of the fig-tree, the national re-appearance of Israel, just before the end (Matt. xxiv. 32, 33), and the present condition of the Christian Profession exactly before the rise of the personal Antichrist, or, Man of Sin (2 Thess. ii.). But, beloved Christian reader, "signs" do not constitute your Hope. What wait we for? The Lord Himself would have your heart, your spirit, your whole being wrapped up in those grand words—

"I will come again and receive you unto Myself" (John xiv. 3),
and

"Behold, I come *quickly*" (Rev. iii. 11).

Lean all your weight of faith and hope on those soul-stirring words!

"The Revelation" is just the book for the hour. Its reading will bless you, and its study arm you for immediate conflict, while preserving from surprise as events unfold themselves in rapid succession. Personally, we have no fear of what is coming, no dread of what may happen. *We know* the end from the beginning. The course of events is mapped out in orderly sequence in the prophetic pages of the Divine Word. The full and final result of all now transpiring in the Church and in the world, yea the doom of the professing Church,* and of the world itself, are unfolded in this remarkable book of human destiny. Not only has the midnight cry been sounded, "Behold, the Bridegroom (omit 'cometh'), go ye out to meet Him" (Matt. xxv. 6), but we are a step nearer the goal of Christian desire. The general dread all over is expressed in the earnest and pleading request of the foolish, unsaved Virgins, to their wise companions, "Give us of your oil, *for our torches are*

* The Church as the House of God, or the public profession of Christianity wherein the Holy Ghost dwells and acts is given over to judgment (1 Peter iv. 17). True Christians are "caught up." The mass of spurious professors is "spued out." Both acts are the necessary consequence of the Lord's descent into the air. The Church as the Body of Christ is a divine work from its conception (1 Cor. xii. 13) till its establishment in glory (Eph. i. 22, 23), and consequently cannot become a subject of judgment.

going out." But God alone is the Dispenser of Grace. In the midst of their perplexity, the Bridegroom *came*. Beloved, He is just at the door! Hark to his footfall!

Our divinely assured portion is grace *upon* us, and peace *within* (Rev. i. 4, 5), and thus we calmly contemplate the future. The marvellous disclosures unfolded in this book of plan and purpose fill us with a certain moral greatness; that we—sinners, only sinners saved through grace—should be privileged to enter Heaven's Watch-tower, and from thence survey the future—one of mingled judgment and glory. This high honour is not the privilege of the few, but is freely open to all God's people irrespective of attainment, education, or age.

Governments have their very existence threatened on every hand by the wild and determined forces of Anarchy and Socialism, the end of which is plainly foretold in Rev. vi. 12-17. The re-organisation of the social system on a democratic basis, and in which all are reduced to one dead level. The end of all these socialistic ideas—for they will never be realised—is declared in Rev. xiii. Universal submission to a Devil appointed authority, or death in case of refusal, lies before the peoples of Christendom. The professing Church, now the home of the Holy Ghost, becomes at the close—and when rejected by God—the dwelling place of the demon host of hell (Rev. xviii. 2). But why multiply? "The Revelation" is the book of eternal *results*, as "Genesis" is the book of *sources*; the former gives the end of all things, the latter the beginning of things.

When man has played his last card, and gone over the theatre of human history ending in shame and judgment, *then* the triumph of God, and the Kingdom of God, and the Rest of God over the rebellions of men and angels are celebrated in the songs of the redeemed in the heavens and earth, "Alleluia," *sing* we, and *say* angels, "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." This, then, is our grand outlook and in which we shall have our part.

(*To be continued.*)

"Here I find that though my sins hindered me from going to God, they could not hinder God from coming to me."

NOTES OF A LECTURE
ON
THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION OR
THE APOCALYPSE,

Given with the aid of the accompanying Chart.

By G. W. H.

WHEN we take in our hands the precious book or collection of books we call the Bible, we hold the *only* record the world has of its most wonderful *past of creation*—the attempts to explain which otherwise than as the Bible explains, would be the riddle of the present—and also the *only* valid unfoldings of that otherwise mysterious *future* still before us (you and me), Israel, the Nations of the World, the Earth and the Powers of Light and Darkness.

If in the first book—Genesis—we have the beginnings revealed of everything seen and tangible, so most surely have we in this last book—The Revelation—glimpses given us of those terrible judgments, yet future, which will be God's way of cleansing the scene of the foul blot and ravages of sin, in order to the setting up of that kingdom of righteousness and peace so perfectly after God's heart and mind.

We know that judgment is God's strange work, and yet the necessity for this strange work is only too manifest. Is it not worth notice that John, "the beloved disciple," the one who possibly nestled more closely to the heart and bosom of Jesus than any of the others, the one who fills his Gospel and Epistles with the warmth of divine love—that this one should have been chosen of God as the vessel to make known in the most wonderful way and in the most wonderful language, the most awful judgments the mind of man could conceive?

If John, "the beloved," and the loving, writes of judgment, what an awful necessity that judgment must be!

One can understand with what joy this same writer would declare in the Gospel, chap. v. verse 24, "He that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me hath everlasting life and shall

not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life." Also in his Epistle, "Herein is love with us made perfect that we may have *boldness* in the *day of judgment.*"

The title of the book—"The Revelation"—clearly indicates its character. "The Revelation" or Apocalypse. "The Revelation" signifies the veil rolled aside; Apocalypse is a Greek word meaning "I reveal."

We are all well aware that the Old Testament is rich in prophetic utterances, and these from the mouths of many Prophets. But the only prophetic book in the New Testament is the one we are now hoping to study with the aid of our Chart. May I ask your very earnest attention to it? Difficult it may be, but you shall surely reap a harvest of blessing if you give it your careful consideration.

Turning to the book itself, we find it to be the record of a number of visions (they are portrayed on our Chart) of the most striking character, and all of them, except the first, chap. i. vers. 12-18—referring to the FUTURE. at the time John wrote

All that the book unfolds was seen by John *at one time*, and on *one day* (chap. i. 10), "the Lord's Day," the first day of the week, the day we are privileged to keep and dedicate to our living Lord.

John was "in the Spirit" in living touch with heaven and heavenly persons and things, and was led in vision into what might be called "the day of the Lord," and was told at once to "*write*" in a book in order that you and I might have fellowship with him in what he saw.

Much of the book is occupied in telling us what will surely happen to the professing Christian world in its closing hours; that time of "tribulation" which shall fall on all the world, and from which you and I, and every true saint of God will be delivered (chap. iii. 10), and this not because we are better than others, but simply because of His sovereign love and electing mercy.

The book has been well called "God's Searchlight," revealing Heaven, Earth, the Abyss, the Lake of Fire, Time, Eternity, Angels, Men, Demons, the Church, the Professing Church, Israel, and the World; it is the book of eternal destiny.

These terrible visions are relieved some thirty times by the mention of "the Lamb." The judgments fall on those who have

refused the offers of mercy which God can offer righteously through the work of the "*slain Lamb*," and, so, again and again right in the very midst of scenes of judgment, we find "the Lamb," the One who bore the fiercest judgment in order that you and I might escape it for ever. Surely our hearts praise and bless and worship Him!

I might here say the name of "Father" occurs several times, but God is never presented as "Father" to any of the actors mentioned in the book. It is always "His Father," or "My Father," that is, Christ's. (See chap. i., 6, chap. iii., 21.)

The importance of every part of this book is proved by the way it is guarded and divinely attested (chap. xxii., 6-9).

Then again, most carefully remember that "he that readeth" and "they that keep" the sayings of the book are singled out for special blessing (chap. i., 3, chap. xxii. 7).

In spite of what we have read of all the care God has taken for the preservation of the Book and the blessing of those who read it, I suppose no portion of the sacred volume is so little read. People say the language is so full of symbolism that it is almost impossible to understand it. But surely the most interesting and instructive speakers of the day fill their speeches with the charm and force of symbol? We have here the symbol of a Dragon, a Beast, a Lion, a Mountain, a Vial, a Trumpet and such like, all conveying most complete ideas to the mind.

Then further, there are critical readers of the book, unspiritual men, who ridicule the whole as the vapourings of a distorted mind. Others, the true critics, have ranged themselves into two schools or camps, and this helps to add somewhat to the confusion.

These two camps are known as the "Presentists," or Historicals, and the "Futurists," or Prophetics.

The Presentists read the book as a kind of history, fitting in vision after vision, seal after seal, vial after vial, trumpet after trumpet, to the history of the world, or rather that part of it known as the "Roman Earth" from the time of John down to the present day, and, I may say, leaving only a very small portion of the book to be yet fulfilled.

I am sure this is not the correct interpretation of the book and its visions, but it is well known that history in the most wonderful

way repeats itself, and there may have been events in history forming a partial fulfilment, which only become the shadow of a deeper one.

The Futurist or Prophetic School of interpreters, say, and I am sure they are right, that all except the first three chapters refer mainly to the *future*.

I am persuaded that God has given us this book to serve us as a lamp in a dark place, "until the day dawn and the Day-star arise in our hearts."

Of course, the future for you and me and all the dear saints of God, since our Lord took His seat on high, and for all the Old Testament saints who died in the faith, is the "rapture," that of our being caught up (like Enoch) to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. iv. 13-17). This is our future.

The visions and prophecies of this book, excepting chap. iii., refer to the events anterior to as well as that short acute period mentioned in Daniel ix. 27, and will be fulfilled between the translation of the Church to glory and the appearing of Christ in judgment in order to the setting up of His kingdom. What and who are staying then the opening of the judgments unfolded in this book? The Church and the Holy Ghost (2 Thess. ii. 6, 7).

When the Church has gone (and it is going very soon; are we all ready?) then very rapidly Daniel's last or seventh week will open. The week is cut in halves (Daniel ix. 27). The details of the first half of the week are not clearly stated in Scripture, but Isaiah xviii. tells us of the return of Judah, and how this will come about, and which will no doubt occur during the first half of the week of seven years.

The last half of the week will open by an attempt to force idolatry on the Jews who have been taken back to their land according to Isaiah xviii., Daniel xii., 11, and Matthew xxiv., 15-35, which scriptures indicate very exactly this period.

If we examine the book by the aid of our Chart, we shall see it is divided into three main subjects or, rather, periods (Rev. i. 19).

- (1) The things which thou (John) hast seen.
- (2) The things which are.
- (3) The things which shall be after these.

The book of twenty-two chapters may be divided into two great parts:—Part I., chaps. i. to xi. v. 18; Part II., chaps. xi.

v. 19, to xxii. Eleven chapters in each part is an easy way to remember the division.

Note also the twelve Sections. We know twelve is a numeral indicating Government on the Earth, and this very especially in relation to Israel.

Then there are three parenthetical periods. These occur :—

- (1) Just before the last seal (chap. vii.).
- (2) Just before the last trumpet (chaps. x., xi., 1-13).
- (3) Just before the last vial (chap. xvi. 15).

Oh, how eloquently these parenthetical pauses speak of the boundless mercy of God, “not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” The most extreme torment of each period of judgment is about to fall, and He pauses; will men consider and be wise in time? *

“Some Christians seem to think that *morality* is their standard, and not spirituality. If the literal decrees of the decalogue be not invaded, this seems sufficient; and if the *letter* of the Word be not transgressed, nothing else is thought of. They forget that the letter of the Word is not the believer’s *only* guide. They are spiritual men, and it is with the *spirit* of the Word they have to do, and not with the letter only. If the Christian makes the *letter* of the Word his rule, he will find it fail him in most matters in which he seeks its guidance. His specific case will not be found there. But if, as a *spiritual* man, he is led by the *spirit* of the Word, he will never go wrong. When a believer in Jesus takes the low ground of *morality* as his rule, he takes common ground with the man of mere natural religion. And yet, how generally this is done. Hence the low state of spiritual life among many of us. Hence the repeated apologies for so many engagements and amusements not *literally* condemned by God’s Word, but questionable, and which are evidently implied in the *spirit* of that Word. Oh, how vast is the difference between the Christian who makes the *letter* of the Word his rule, and the one who is walking in the *spirit* of that Word! The one seems to say, ‘How far can I *conform* to the world without forfeiting my Christian character?’; the other asks, ‘How far can I *keep out* of the world without becoming ascetic or eccentric?’ ”

* Articles will appear in this Magazine from the pen of Mr. Walter Scott from month to month on the Book of the Revelation, in detailed explanation of the Chart.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY W. W. FEREDAY.

THIS is that great foundation truth of Christianity which, when boldly proclaimed by Luther and his companions in the sixteenth century, delivered the half of Europe from Papal tyranny and deception, and shook the pontifical throne to its foundations. Let us be clear as to the meaning of the terms we use. What is meant by the term "justification"? To justify a man is to reckon him righteous, free and chargeless before God's throne. Nothing is easier than to *reckon* righteous one who *is* righteous. Any magistrate in the world is competent to do it. It would be simply acquitting a man against whom no accusation can be sustained. But the Gospel tells us of justification for "the ungodly," which is a very different matter.

It is important to distinguish between justification and forgiveness. However intimately these may be related, they are not one and the same thing. I could forgive one who had transgressed against me, but it is not in my power to justify him, however kindly disposed my heart might be towards him. For example, if a man stole my watch, I could pardon the offence, and refuse to prosecute him, but the disgrace of the act remains, in spite of my mercy. I cannot clear him if I would; and, in consequence, he would never, perhaps, feel quite at home in my presence. Solomon, in his prayer at the dedication of the temple, entreated Jehovah that whenever causes came before him in His house, He would condemn the wicked and justify the righteous. Then he requested that whenever the people of Israel sinned, and turned to God in acknowledgment thereof, He would forgive them (1 Kings viii. 32-34). Justification for the righteous and forgiveness for the guilty; for nothing beyond these did Solomon make intercession. The charm of the Gospel is that it tells us of justification for the ungodly; of righteousness for men apart from works (Rom. iv. 5-6). Justification goes beyond forgiveness. The latter is the annulling of the penalty of sin; the former is an unimpeachable standing before God. This is the fruit of the new position into which divine grace introduces the believer; "in Christ" is God's grand account of it.

Justification is essentially a Pauline doctrine. Peter preached forgiveness (Acts ii. 38, x. 13), but Paul went further, and proclaimed justification in addition to forgiveness.* Acts xiii. 38-39 is a familiar example of this.

Justification by faith can only be of interest to men who are consciously guilty. How is it with ourselves? If there is one thing more than another that is characteristic of flesh everywhere, it is the tendency to excuse sin, and to shirk the honest confession of it. The Pharisee of Luke xviii. 10-12 scarcely regarded himself as absolutely without stain, but he was at least a better man than the publican! So he felt, and so he said in the divine presence. But comparative guilt is not the question. It can avail a man nothing that there are sinners in the world viler than himself. "Guilty" or "Not Guilty," is the challenge of the throne. In Rom. i.-iii., the apostle discusses the moral condition of men everywhere. He takes up first the case of the Gentiles (chap. i. 17-32); then that of the philosophers amongst them (chap. ii. 1-16); and, lastly, the case of the Jews, to whom God had granted His word, and many other priceless privileges (chaps. ii. 17, iii. 18). The result of the enquiry is to stop every mouth; all the world is brought in guilty before God. The man who has learned his own guiltiness will be only too ready to pray with David: "Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified" (Ps. cxliii. 2). There are various false ways in which men seek after righteousness, or justification. Let us glance briefly at some of these before we turn to God's wonderful way of grace. (1) Justification is not by natural descent. The Jews of our Lord's day boasted of their relationship with Abraham. "We be Abraham's seed" (John viii. 33). But what could this avail them when God was dealing with them? John the Baptist struck a heavy blow at their false confidence when he said: "Think not to say within yourselves, 'We have Abraham to our Father'; for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Matt. iii. 9). And the Lord Himself warned His Jewish hearers thus: "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven. But the children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing

* *i.e.*, as to the terms used (Ed.).

of teeth" (Matt. viii. 11-12). The Holy Spirit also struck at the same pride of descent in Rom. ii. 28: "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly." Is there such a thing as confidence in mere fleshly descent in the present day? Most assuredly there is. Many a man when approached as to his position in relation to God, will turn and say: "But I am neither a Turk nor a heathen. I belong to a Christian nation." A man may indeed belong to a "Christian" nation, and even be the descendant of a line of truly converted souls, and yet perish. Individual faith in the Lord Jesus will alone suffice for salvation and blessing. (2) Justification is not by works of law. Here Israel has ever stumbled badly. "Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained unto the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but, as it were, by works" (Rom. ix. 31-32). The Pharisee of Luke xviii., and Saul of Tarsus may be cited as examples illustrative of this. Many err in the same way to-day. If they do not actually take Moses' name upon their lips, and make their boast specifically in his law, the same principle is only too really the confidence of their souls. Good resolutions and amendment of life are their hope and plea. But Rom. iii. 20 shews the futility of such a principle. "By deeds of law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (3) Justification is not by ordinances. Circumcision was Israel's boast in the first days of the Gospel. This the apostle effectually disposes of in Rom. iv. 10-11, where he shews triumphantly that Abraham had righteousness reckoned to him by God while he was yet uncircumcised. "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision" (Gal. v. 15). It is not now the ancient rite of circumcision, but the sacraments of Christianity in which men so mistakenly put their trust. The fact that they were once baptised, and proclaimed "members of Christ," etc., and that they have since been regular "communicants" is the confidence of multitudes in Christendom at this hour. Awful delusion! How deadly the peril of all who are thus deceived!

(To be continued.)

"In receiving Jesus, we receive all that He is; notwithstanding that at the moment we may only perceive in Him that which is the least exalted part of His glory."

THE HYMNS OF DR. ISAAC WATTS.

By WILLIAM WILLIS, K.C.

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AT the Coronation of King Edward VII., one of the most interesting movements was the march of the priests, who, to fine music, and with powerful voices, sang—

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our Eternal home.

A gentleman standing next me asked whose lines the priests were singing. I told him that the hymn was composed by a man who, in his own day, was called a schismatic; that his father was imprisoned for his Nonconformity, in the reign of Charles II.; that the man who wrote the lines was taken, when a babe, by his mother to the prison gates, in order that the child might receive the blessing of his father, uttered through the gratings of the cell where he was confined; that the mother frequently sat on a stone by the prison wall, and suckled the child, while the father prayed and blessed. I told him that the name of the poet was Isaac Watts. He expressed his surprise, and stated that all he knew of Isaac Watts was that he had written some lines about "the little busy bee."

This gentleman, as to his ignorance of Watts, does not stand alone, for many with whom I converse, when I mention the name of the poet, know nothing but portions of the hymns which he wrote for infant lips. Instead of Watts being merely a writer of verse for children, he composed psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, which raised the worship of the sanctuary to the loftiest height; he was a preacher of no mean order, a philosopher, and a theologian. Dr. Johnson, writing of Watts, says, "few men have left behind such purity of character, or such monuments of laborious piety. He has provided instruction for all ages, from those who are lisping their first lessons to the enlightened readers of Malbranche and Locke; he has left neither corporeal nor spiritual nature unexamined; he has taught the art of reasoning and the science of the stars."

I have been acquainted with Isaac Watts from my earliest childhood, and began my acquaintance by learning—

When ere I take my walks abroad,
How many poor I see.

But I was led on by a mother's love, and a father's intelligence, to know all the works of Watts, his pure and noble life, and to commit to memory portions of the hymns he wrote for public worship. To-day, there is scarcely any writer who so constantly contributes to the strength and energy of my spiritual life as Isaac Watts. He was so highly esteemed by Dr. Johnson that he requested portions of Watts' poetry should form part of the edition of "The Poets," to which Johnson supplied a sketch or memoir of each of the poets, whose work appeared therein.

HIS BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE.

Watts was born at Southampton, July, 1674. Milton was descending to the grave when Watts was born. The lives of these two eminent Christians cover 140 years of momentous English history. Although Watts' career was unostentatious, and barren of popular interest, it was significant and eventful for the future of Christian worship. The home into which he was born was full of sacred joy. Watts early showed, by his mental endowments, by his mastery of Latin and mathematics, and by his power of song that he was destined to a brilliant career. He not only began soon to fear God, and love the Saviour, but to delight in all the indications which Nature gave of a supreme and blessed Creator. He himself tells us that when about fourteen years of age he fell under considerable conviction of sin, and when fifteen trusted in Christ for his salvation. When about sixteen years of age, he passed into the academy of the Rev. Mr. Rowe, of Stoke Newington.

Watts decided to devote himself to the work of the Christian ministry. His health was very variable, and he sometimes suffered from great bodily weakness. He was of small stature, but greatly dignified in his delivery; and his discourses, delivered with scarcely any gesture, produced the most powerful effect upon those who listened to him. Many distinguished men were amongst the members of his Church. Both Sir John Hartopp and Sir Thomas Abney, Lord Mayor of London, were members of the Church of which Watts was pastor. Sir Thomas lived at Stoke Newington, and in a time when Watts was suffering from great weakness, he received Mr. Watts into his home for the purpose of affording him kind attention and change of air, and the privilege of spending a week beneath his hospitable roof. From that moment Watts never left the home of Sir Thomas Abney. In all the annals of hospitality there is hardly

such another case. Dr. Johnson styles it "A coalition, a state in which the notions of patronage and dependence were overpowered by the perception of reciprocal benefits."

Watts is a great and noble poet; Christ was to him the greatest excellency in heaven and the greatest excellency on earth; and whilst many in past times paid but little respect to his hymns, his verses beginning—

O God our help in ages past

are sung very frequently at the funerals of great and distinguished men, and even in the midst of the joys of a coronation. He has attained to great fame. Mr. Spurgeon, the great evangelical preacher, often quoted Watts in his discourses, and styles him "the poet of the sanctuary."

The first hymn he composed for the purpose of improving the worship of the Church was the grand and noble ode, from which a few verses may be quoted—

Behold the glories of the Lamb,
Amidst His Father's throne:
Prepare new honours for His name,
And songs before unknown.

Now to the Lamb that once was slain,
Be endless blessings paid;
Salvation, glory, joy remain
For ever on Thy head.

Many of the saints of God, when dying, have found Watts' words expressive of their reliance upon a Saviour's love. William Knibb, Dr. Carey, Joseph Gutteridge, all uttered, as they sank to their rest—

A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On Thy kind arms I fall;
Be Thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus, and my all.

Watts, in consequence, perhaps, of some theological changes, is not so much studied as he was, and the familiarity with his poetry has become less. In my early days he was the centre of all joyous worship, whether in the sanctuary or at home. My mother early induced her children to commit portions of his psalms and hymns to memory. She would gather four or five of us at her knees, whilst she gave out the first line of a verse, and waited to see which of her children could first supply the second line, and complete the verse itself. Perhaps I may say I was fairly successful in the test to which my mother invited me, but my elder sister took the palm,

and with a memory almost unrivalled, a quickness of intellect in which few have excelled her, she knew nearly the whole of Watts' psalms and hymns. I heard these psalms and hymns of Watts' sung in my home, and almost every Sunday morning we used to sing the ninety-second Psalm, first part—

Sweet is the work, my God, my King,
To praise Thy Name, give thanks and sing,
To show Thy love by morning light,
And talk of all Thy truth at night.
Sweet is the day of sacred rest,
No mortal cares shall seize my breast ;
O may my heart in tune be found,
Like David's harp of solemn sound !

SOME RECOLLECTIONS.

On many occasions I have been deeply impressed with the beauty and force of Watts' hymns. One of the earliest was, when a boy, at the college, Huddersfield. In 1849, the cholera was prevalent, and afflicted many in the West Riding of Yorkshire. People were very sorrowful and very sad, and at the place of worship, the funeral garments of the mourners were in all parts of the Chapel. In the midst of this sorrow and doubt, I heard given out, in clear, comforting voice, the ninety-first Psalm, first part, of Watts—

He that hath made his refuge God
Shall find a most secure abode ;
Shall walk all day beneath His shade,
And there at night shall rest his head.
Thrice happy man ! thy Maker's care
Shall keep thee from the fowler's snare ;
Just as a hen protects her brood,
From birds of prey that seek their blood,
Under her feathers, so the Lord
Makes His own arm His people's guard.
If burning beams of noon conspire
To dart a pestilential fire,
God is their life, His wings are spread
To shield them with a healthful shade.
If vapours, with malignant breath
Rise thick, and scatter midnight death,
Israel is safe : the poisoned air
Grows pure, if Israel's God be there.

I never in my life saw such a change effected. Every man seemed to grow strong, and every woman trustful, as the congregation rose and sang with deep feeling.

I remember on another occasion, hearing Dr. Ackworth. He was preaching on the nature and character of Christ's death, and used a word, to me quite novel, but a word of which I have since

known the meaning, and which I have used myself; he spoke of the "vicarious sufferings of Christ." I have never lost the sound and beauty of the word "vicarious" as uttered by him, and never shall I forget the light cast upon that word by the concluding hymn. He gave out a hymn by Watts, the 142nd hymn, second book—

Not all the blood of beasts,
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain.

But Christ, the heavenly Lamb,
Takes all our sins away;
A sacrifice of nobler name,
And richer blood than they.

My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of Thine,
While like a penitent I stand
And there confess my sin.

My soul looks back to see
The burden Thou didst bear,
When hanging on the cursed tree,
And knows her guilt was there.

Believing, we rejoice
To see the curse remove;
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,
And sing His bleeding love.

In that same Chapel I heard James Parsons, of York, preach two or three times. He was one of the most effective and popular preachers of his age, and frequently wrought his hearers to a deep conviction, and a resolution to accept Christ, as their Saviour. I remember at the close of one of the passages of his discourse, having led his hearers to make the resolution, he invited them to use the language of the great singer of Israel, Watts.

It was at Ramsden Street I heard Dr. Halley, of Manchester, preach. With what impressiveness he read the Scriptures, realising every part. I remember his reading the twenty-sixth chapter of Matthew, and particularly that portion where the Saviour asks whether the cup, which He had to drink, might not be laid aside; and whether it was really necessary that He should die. Yet, said the sublime Saviour, not My will, but Thy will be done. Dr. Halley here paused, lifted himself erect, and uttered with the deepest emotion, these lines of Watts—

*This was compassion like a God,
That when the Saviour knew
The price of pardon was His blood,
His pity ne'er withdrew.*

(To be continued.)

THE PRIESTHOOD OF BELIEVERS (*continued*).

SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES.

THE special function of the Levitical priesthood was to "offer gifts and sacrifices" (Heb. v. 1, and viii. 3).

We also are ordained and consecrated to the same end. Thus, the passage from which our subject is taken reads: "A holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices" (1 Pet. ii. 5). But we must bear in mind, that although the Levitical priests were to "offer sacrifices for *sin*," it is never said that *we* are to offer sacrifices for *sin*; for Jesus, our Great High Priest, has done this "once for all." We read in Heb. x. 11-12, R.V., "Every priest indeed standeth day by day ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices the which can never take away sins: But He (Jesus) when He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God." Thus, as a natural consequence, those for whom this sacrifice was offered (as to removal of guilt) are "perfected for ever" (v. 14). Then follows a statement that "the Holy Ghost bears witness" to this in the promise of a new covenant (in v. 15-16) and v. 17 says: "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more," upon which the apostle draws a logical conclusion. "Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." No more, because there is no further need.

"*A broken spirit and a contrite heart*" (Ps. li. 17) are said to be sacrifices which God "will not despise," yet they by no means make satisfaction for sin. The heart is broken because of sin, but brokenness of heart does not remove sin. The means for the removal of defilement are found in v. 7: "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean."

This refers to an ordinance instituted in Num. xix., where a red heifer is slain and burnt to ashes.

These are gathered up, &c., and when an Israelite came into contact with *death* by touching a corpse, a bone, or a grave, and was rendered "unclean," he was to be sprinkled with running water (into which some of these ashes were put), and in this way he was ceremonially cleansed. We cannot fail to see that this slain heifer sets forth the death of our Lord, in that aspect connected with the judgment of sin in the flesh, which, being applied by the Spirit to

the defiled believer, is the only means of his being purified. The blood of this heifer was not taken into the most holy place, as was the blood of atonement, or even into the Tabernacle at all, but was "sprinkled" directly *before* the Tabernacle" (v. 4), thus suggesting that the defiled person should be reminded of the all-sufficiency of the blood, as maintaining him in suitability to God's presence. The blood removes guilt once for all, the ashes purify from defilement, contracted in our wilderness journey, and all in connection with God dwelling in the midst of his people. Professor Geo. Bush remarks that in v. 17 the words rendered "ashes of the burnt heifer" in the literal Hebrew are "Dust of the burning of sin," so that as C.H.M. says, "Sin is burnt to ashes, and the ashes remind us of the hatefulness of sin and the goodness of God." Also, how thoroughly it has been put away.

The apostle refers to this ordinance in Heb. ix. 13-14, R.V., "If . . . the ashes of an heifer sprinkling them that have been defiled, sanctify unto the cleanness of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish unto God, *cleanse* your conscience from *dead* works to serve the *living* God."

This is a beautiful application of Num. xix. It was *death* which defiled the Jewish worshipper, *dead works* defile the Christian worshipper. Surely the comparison between the *living* God and *dead* works is intended to mark the great contrast between *God* and our *works*. On the other hand, Christ offering Himself by the Eternal Spirit is what is altogether according to God.

The sacrifice of a contrite heart may therefore be reduced to *this*: The Spirit bringing to our knowledge the defilement we contract by sin, our heart smites us, and then the same blessed Spirit reminds us of the all-sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice, and says: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 9). It also reminds us that our old man has been crucified with Him, and that we may reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus.

Then shall we be enabled to offer

"SACRIFICES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Thus David, who prayed "Blot out," "Purge," "Wash," "Wash me thoroughly from my sins," closes by saying, "Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness" (*i.e.*, righteous

actions). This order is also observed in Mal. iii. 3: "He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them . . . that they offer unto the Lord offerings in righteousness" (R.V.). David also calls upon the sons of men to "offer the sacrifices of righteousness" (Ps. iv. 5). See how God expostulates with Israel in Is. i. 11-15 for offering sacrifices, &c., while living unrighteous lives, urges them to "put away their evil," promises to remove the "scarlet" and "crimson" dyes of their sins (v. 16-18), and shows them what kind of *sacrifices* He wishes them to offer (v. 17).

This is in keeping with Jas. i. 27, "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." There are many who help the fatherless, &c., but yet are steeped in *worldliness*. This is not God's way, He will not be satisfied with half a thing. In such cases others may benefit by our gifts, but God does not accept them. Matt. vi. 1 shows how a right thing may be done from a wrong motive, so that, as far as the *doer* is concerned, it is an utter failure.

The Apostle, in acknowledging the kindness of the Philippians, in their sending him help in his distress, says their gifts were "A *sacrifice* acceptable, well-pleasing to God" (Ch. iv. 15-18), and, again to the Hebrews, "To do good and to communicate, forget not, for with such *sacrifices* God is well-pleased" (Heb. xiii. 16).

SACRIFICE OF PRAYER.

Prayer is evidently alluded to as a sacrifice in Ps. cxli. 2. "Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as *incense*, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening *sacrifice*." God has "opened a door in heaven" itself (Rev. iv. 1), that amongst other things we may see what becomes of our prayers: for we read in Ch. v. 8 (R.V.) of "Golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints." Here, then, is the answer to David's request in Ps. cxli. 2.

(To be continued.)

"Speaking of ministers; we, ourselves, alas! unduly taken up with literature, or with news, or with business, have too little to bring forth from the fulness of the heart for the edification of those with whom we converse."

“WEIGHTY WORDS.”

THE following are amongst the last writings of an old saint, who in his seventy-seventh year, quietly reviews his past.

He was an eminent servant of Jesus Christ, a great controversialist, whose contributions to theological literature could not be contained in less than sixty octavo volumes.

1. “The temper of my mind hath somewhat altered with the temper of my body. When I was young I was more vigorous, affectionate, and fervent in preaching, conference, and prayer, than—ordinarily—I can be now. My style was more extempore and lax. What I delivered was much more raw, and had more passages that would not bear the trial of accurate judgment; and my discourses had both less substance and less judgment than of late.

“My judgment appears to be much sounder and firmer now than it was then. For though I am now as competent judge of the *actings* of my own understanding as then, yet I can judge of the *effects* better. And when I peruse the writings of my younger years, I can find the footsteps of my unfurnished mind, and of my emptiness and insufficiency, so that the man that followed my judgment then was more likely to have been misled by me, than he that should follow it now.

“My judgments of those points which then I *thoroughly studied*, is the same *now* as it was *then*, and those controversies which I then searched into with extraordinary diligence I find not my mind disposed to change. But in divers points that I studied slightly and by halves, and in many things which I took upon trust from others, I have found since that my apprehensions were either erroneous or very lame.

“I was very apt to start up controversies in the way of my practical writings, and also more desirous of acquainting the world with all that I took to be the truth, and I have perceived that nothing so much hindereth the reception of the truth as urging it upon men with too harsh importunity, and falling too heavily upon their errors: for hereby you engage their honour in the business, and they defend their errors as themselves, and stir up all their wit and ability to oppose you. In controversies it is fierce opposition which is the bellows to kindle a resisting zeal. When if they be

neglected and their opinions lie a while despised they usually cool and come again to themselves.

“ I am much more sensible than ever of the necessity of living upon the principles about which all Christians agree and uniting these ; and how much mischief men that overvalue their own opinions have done by their *controversies* in the church. How some have destroyed charity, and some have caused divisions by them, and most have hindered godliness in themselves and others, and used them to divert men from the serious prosecuting of a holy life.

“ I find it is much more for most men’s good and edification to converse with them only in that way of godliness which all are agreed in, and not by touching upon differences to stir up their corruptions ; and to tell them little more of your knowledge than what you find them willing to receive from you as mere learners—and therefore to stay until they *crave* information from you.

“ We mistake men’s diseases when we think there needeth nothing to cure their errors, but only to bring them the *evidence* of truth. Alas ! there are many distempers of mind to be removed before men are apt to *receive* that evidence. For in a learning way, men are ready to receive the truth, but in a disputing way they come armed against it with prejudice and animosity.

“ In my youth I was quickly past my fundamentals, and was running up into a multitude of controversies, and greatly delighted with metaphysical and scholastic writings, though I must needs say my preaching was still on the necessary points. But the older I grew, the smaller stress I laid upon these controversies and curiosities, as finding far greater uncertainties in them than I at first discerned, and finding less *usefulness* comparatively, even where there is the greatest certainty. And now it is the fundamental doctrines which I most highly value, and daily think of and find most useful to myself and others. They find me now the most acceptable and plentiful matter for all my meditations. They are to me as my daily bread and drink, and as I can speak and write of them over and over again, so I had rather read or hear of them than any of the school niceties which once so much pleased me. And this I observed it was with old Bishop Usher, and with many other men ; and I conjecture that this effect also is mixed of *good* and *bad* according to its cause.

“ The *bad* causes may perhaps be some natural infirmity and decay. And as trees in the spring shoot up into branches, leaves and blossoms, but in the autumn of life draw down into the root, so possibly my nature, conscious of its infirmity and decay, may find itself insufficient for numerous projects and the attempting of difficult things ; and so my mind may retire to the root of Christian principles. And also I have often been afraid, lest *ill-rooting* at first, and many *temptations afterwards*, have made it more necessary for me than many others to retire to the root, and secure my fundamentals. But upon much observation I am afraid lest most others are in no better case, and that at first they take it for granted that Christ is their Saviour, and that the soul is immortal, and that there is a Heaven and a Hell, &c., while they are studying abundance of scholastic superstructures.

“ The *better* causes are these : I value all things according to their *use* and *ends*, and I find in the daily practice and experience of my soul that the knowledge of God and Christ and the Holy Spirit, and the truth of Scripture, and the life to come, and of a holy life, is of *more use* to me than all the most curious speculations.

“ I know that every man must grow as trees do, downwards and upwards both at once, and that the *roots* increase as the bulk and branches do.

“ That is the best doctrine and study which maketh men *better*, and tendeth to make them *happy*. My soul approveth of the resolution of holy Paul, who determined to know nothing among his hearers,—that is comparatively to value and make ostentation of no other wisdom—but the knowledge of a crucified Christ, to know God in Christ is eternal life. As the stock of a tree affordeth timber to build houses and cities, when the small though higher multifarious branches are but to make a crow’s nest or a blaze, so the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, of heaven and holiness, doth build up the soul to endless blessedness, and affordeth it solid peace and comfort, when a multitude of school niceties serve but for vain janglings and hurtful diversions and contentions.

“ I would persuade my readers to study and live upon the essential doctrines of Christianity and godliness, incomparably above them all. And that he may know that my testimony is somewhat regardable, I presume to say that in this I as much gainsay

my natural inclination to subtlety and accurateness in knowing, as he is like to do by his, if he obey my counsel. And I think if he lived among infidels and enemies of Christ, he would find that to make good the *doctrine of faith* and of *life eternal* were not only his noblest and most useful study, but also that which would require the height of all his parts, and the utmost of his diligence, to manage it skilfully to the satisfaction of himself and others."

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

Saved we were when first we trusted
 In the ascended Son of God,
 Who on Calv'ry made atonement
 For our sins with precious blood.
 Wholly to God's grace ascribe it
 Yield yourselves to His blest sway,
 Let His spirit have dominion
 In your heart and lives each day

On the way towards our homeland
 Snares and pitfalls round us lie,
 While within we have a proneness
 To yield to the enemy.
 But *the Saviour*, who *hath saved us*,
 Daily shows His wondrous power ;
 "Hath delivered," "doth deliver,"
 Those who trust Him hour by hour.

And we look for *full salvation*
 When the race has been achieved,
 "Now is our *salvation* nearer
 Than the *hour* we first believed."
 Therefore trust we Him who *saved us*
 From the penalty of sin,
 Every day to *save and keep us*
 From its power without, within

Saved, yet being saved, thus are we,
 By the power of God's dear Son,
 Who can *save*, and *keep on saving*,
 "Unto uttermost" each one.
 When at home in bodies glorious
 We who have been "*saved by grace*,"
 Then *shall be* (o'er all victorious)
Fully saved, and see His face.

Oh what joy shall then possess us,
 When we're wholly free from sin ;
 From its penalty and power,
 And its presence too within.
 Then we'll praise salvation's Author
 As we never praised before ;
 Know Him fully, serve Him wholly,
Saved by Him for evermore.—G. G.

MAN'S RUIN BY THE FALL.

By GEO. HUCKLESBY.

HAVING seen that God has not only spoken, but has recorded in His Word that which He has uttered,* we will consider that which He has declared concerning "the Fall of man." The Word of God is our only Court of Appeal in this as in all other fundamental truths, for it is there alone we learn the true Origin and the real Destiny of Man. "To the Law and to the Testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them," thus, the scriptures form the test and touchstone of all.

It has been well said by some "Master in Israel" who desired to help the memories of his hearers, that "the three things to be preached above everything else are the three 'R's'—Ruin, Redemption and Regeneration." He spake wisely and well. For how will men seek salvation unless they feel their own ruin? Then, where is that salvation to be found save in God's Remedy, the Atoning Blood? And how could we ever love God or desire to serve Him except we were born again and cleansed from all the defilement of nature. It is a noteworthy fact that in the Holy Scriptures there are three *third* chapters which deal with these three Foundation Truths, the 3rd chapter of Genesis reveals Ruin; the 3rd chapter of Romans teaches Redemption, and the 3rd chapter of John sets forth Regeneration. Then we find all three of these truths taught in the 3rd chapter of Genesis. It records Man's Ruin by the Fall; it also reveals Redemption by Christ in the words "the Seed of the Woman"; it likewise teaches Regeneration in the words "I will put enmity between thee and the woman," God's regenerating power creates a hatred of evil in all the chosen seed.

The Story of the Serpent is no mere fable or allegory. If any part of the narrative be allegorical then we cannot be sure of any part being a naked matter of fact. To be honest and logical we must make the whole account allegorical. The Fall of Man, however, is not only declared in Holy Writ, but we read it on every page of human history, and we behold it demonstrated before our eyes day by day.

* See article last month entitled "The Holy Scriptures."

The first recorded act after that humiliating scene is the terrible murder committed by the firstborn of the race (Gen. iv. 8), and very soon we are told that "God saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. vi. 5). In 1500 years men had so corrupted the earth and filled the scene with violence that God had to purge it with the waters of the Deluge. Noah and his family were carried through the Flood, and went forth from the Ark to repeople the purged earth, and the reins of government were put by God into Noah's hand, but instead of governing Creation he failed to govern himself, and ere long we behold his descendants plunged into the darkness of idolatry. And ever since man has proved himself to be a fallen creature whether he be Heathen, Pagan, Jew, Turk or nominal Christian. What is said of Israel in Hosea xiv. 1 is true of all mankind, "Thou hast fallen by thine iniquity."

The word "fallen" tells us that the present condition of our race was not the original one, but that man has fallen from a higher to a lower state, and it is in Gen. iii. that we have alone the true record of that fall. In the Garden of Eden Adam sought to be independent of his Maker, and grasped at equality with God. The temptation was, "Thou shalt be as God," and Adam was not content with being a man, and abiding in the only true place and spirit of a man, but became disobedient, and by his disobedience fell from that exalted position in which God had placed him into the hands of a subtle and cruel foe. Evolutionists speak boastfully of the "Ascent of Man," but the Scriptures declare plainly the humiliating story of the "Descent of Man," as manifested in the history of the Jews, the moral degradation of the ancient heathen world (Rom. i. 18-32), and the deeper ruin that shall close the present age (2 Timothy iii. 1-7). The theory that man has evolved from something very inferior, and has gradually developed into that which he is to-day finds no place in the teaching of the Scriptures of Truth, but is the invention of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God. The Inspired Declaration is, that "God made man upright," and as such he was placed in his exalted position as lord of this lower creation from which he by transgression fell. Traces of his original greatness and glory are discernible even in his low and lost estate, just as the ancient greatness and original glory can be traced in the ruins of some old castle or in the remains of some ancient city. As

we speak of "a fallen man," or "a fallen woman," so God views the human race. The record of man's fall as given in Genesis iii. bears the stamp of Eternal Truth, and we dare not tamper with the Inspired Word, treating it as "mythical" or declaring it to be "allegorical."

The Lord Jesus put His Divine Seal upon Gen. ii. and iii., and the Apostle Paul by the Holy Spirit has placed the Stamp of inspiration on the same (Matt. xix. 4; John viii. 44; 2 Cor. xi. 3). The tempter was a real person, and the temptation was a real temptation, and the transgression was a real transgression.

Adam's sin affected not only himself, but the whole of his posterity (Rom. iii. 19; v. 12), which is seen in Cain's murder of his brother (Gen. iv.), the fearful corruption and gigantic evils of the Antediluvians (Gen. vi.), and in the dark deeds and fearful crimes of Postdiluvians (Psalm xiv. 1-3; Isaiah i. 5, 6; Isaiah lxiv. 6). The testimony of the New Testament confirms that of the Old, as in Mark vii. 21-23; Rom. iii. 9-19; Eph. ii. 1-3, and such will yet be made manifest at that final outbreak of evil which will take place at the closing scene of the world's history as revealed in Rev. xx. 8, 9.

Man's sin has affected the whole of Adam's possession as seen in Rom. viii. 19-22. Well might the Great Creator exclaim to our first parents "What hast thou done?" Man was fallen, God's fair handiwork was marred, the earth made to bring forth thorns and briars, the whole creation subjected to sighs and sorrows, to vanity and death.

Death has followed in the wake of sin (Rom. v. 12). The solemn sentence "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" has been carried out. Spiritual death, which is the separation of the soul from God took place immediately (Eph. ii. 1). Physical death is the separation of the soul from the body which followed in due course, as we read eight times over in Gen. v., "He died." Then the second death is yet to come which will be the separation of body and soul from God for ever, as is stated in Rev. xx.

"Sin in God's sight is a far more serious matter than it often appears to man. God views it in the light of his nature, man generally in the light of the consequences to himself.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

H.M.M. Ques. : *In Acts ii. 36 we find the statement that God hath made Jesus "both Lord and Christ." From the fact that the word "both" is used I learn that to be made "Lord" is different from being made "Christ." Can you help me as to what the difference in signification between "Lord" and "Christ" is? In 1 Cor. xi. 3 we read that the head of every man is Christ. Does this bear upon the subject at all?*

Ans. : In the gospels we find the title Lord very seldom used. The occasions where it is found are rare, but, we believe, very suggestive. From this fact we may learn two things. First, that Jesus was not made Lord *officially* until He was glorified. Second, we may gather from the instances where the title is employed its true significance. We believe this to be that as Lord all authority and administration are committed to Him. Take for example the opening of Luke x. "After these things the **Lord** appointed other seventy also." In conjunction with the title Lord, we find Him, here, sending out the seventy. Everything is under His authority and administration. And so it is added immediately (v. 2), "Pray ye therefore the **Lord** of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest." Not only did He send out the twelve, but here we find Him sending out the seventy, and He could have sent out seven hundred had He chosen. Further on in the same chapter we find (v. 17), "The seventy returned again with joy, saying, **Lord**, even the demons are subject unto us through Thy Name." Here, and from succeeding verses, we see how, as Lord, He has authority over all the powers of evil, and we learn also how the administration of all blessing is in His hands. "Rejoice," He says to His disciples, "because your names are written in heaven:" and "All things are delivered to Me of My Father, and no man knoweth Who the Son is, but the Father; and Who the Father is, but the Son, and He to Whom the Son will reveal Him." Then, again, following on the chapter, we see in the history of the Samaritan how everything is in His hands for blessing. As Lord He dispenses all, just as Joseph did in Egypt. But He must be acknowledged Lord, even as Joseph was. When the people cried to Pharaoh for bread, Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph. He had made him Lord. (See Gen. xii. 40-4).

Lord is a wonderful title. It was ever part of God's plan that man should be Lord. We see it foreshadowed in Adam. Adam was to have dominion ; and so we read he " Gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field." This was an evidence of his authority and administration. But he fell before Satan. Now what a change. Another comes upon the scene, who takes the place of Lord, and Satan falls before Him : " I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Two things combine in His Lordship : the complete overthrow of evil, and the establishment of good. And Who is this Second Man ? He is the Son. He knows the Father ; He knows the source of all good, and He can bring it in. So we find the statement, " All things are delivered to Me of My Father " accompanies this title of Lord. See also John iv., 1. He is seen in the episode which follows as the true Joseph, whose branches run over the wall. (It is not a little remarkable that it refers in v. 5 to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.) He acts as the administrator of the giving God, and offers to this poor outcast the living water. But what precedes this ? We must go back to the end of the previous chapter for the source of it all (vv. 35, 6). " The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand." It is this which constitutes Him Lord.

It is because He has all authority as Lord and all is committed to Him, that we are exhorted to Rejoice in the **Lord** always and be careful for nothing. If " Christ " were substituted here it would not have the same force. He is Lord of all (see Acts x. 36), and this title is particularly connected with blessing flowing out to the Gentiles, and the ownership of everything and everybody (Matt. xv. 27 ; Rom. xiv. 6-9). All authority and administration being involved in His title Lord, it is only when confessed as such that there is any blessing for man (Romans x. 9-13).

The title Christ is in a sense more limited in its scope. He is only Christ to those who are brought into relationship with Him. As Christ He is Head—Head of the Church ; Head of every man (not universal here, but relative) ; Head of all principality and power ; and as Christ He *will* be the Messiah of the Jews. It is more personal than Lord. He is preached as Lord to men. " We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord " ; or " *as Lord* " (2 Cor. iv. 5). As Christ He is the anointed Head of all who are

brought under Him for blessing (Rom. v. 12, 17). But He is Lord of all, and Lord *over* all, whether converted or unconverted; while one day every knee will bow to Him as such, including "heavenly and earthly and infernal" (beings).

J.K.M.E. Ques. : *If, as some hold and teach, that, Christ was not a priest on earth, what does Heb. ii. 17 mean?*

Ans. : It simply means it was a priestly act. Christ was not constituted a priest *officially* on earth, just as He was not constituted Lord on earth *officially*, though He was addressed as Lord and acted as Lord. It was after ascension He was made both Lord and High Priest. Heb. v. 5-10 is conclusive as to this. He is now a great High Priest. Was He ever that on earth? There was already a High Priest, if not two, when our Lord was here. He did not take the place of being a priest, for He said to the lepers, Go, shew yourselves unto the priest. Hebrews viii. 4 is in keeping with this, and is surely conclusive.

J.C.N. Ques. : *Why does it say in Matt. xii. 40, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth"? Our Lord was only two nights in the sepulchre, was He not?*

Ans. : If the Jewish method of reckoning time is taken into account the difficulty vanishes. They reckoned from evening to evening, and part as the whole. Thus we must begin our calculation from Thursday evening. In this way, to Friday evening would be one, Saturday two, and Christ rose the first day of the week, making three days and three nights.

P.F. Ques. : *If Zechariah xii. 10 and xiii. 6 both apply to Christ, why is it the latter is not referred to in the New Testament?*

Ans. : If verse 6, chap. xiii., is taken in conjunction with verse 7—for there seems an evident connection, the one presenting Christ suffering at the hands of man and the other at the hand of God—we think the difficulty disappears. Especially when it is observed that verse 6 refers to what is still future.

"I looked for the Church, and I found it in the world; I looked for the world, and I found it in the Church."

IMPORTANT CONFERENCE.—Meetings to confirm the faith of God's people in the vital truths of Christianity will (v.v.) be held in East Ham Assembly Hall, Barking Road, on February 16th and 17th, at 11, 2.30, and 7 o'clock. Mr. A. Mace, Mr. W. W. Fereday, Mr. Walter Scott and others are expected to take part. All Christians are earnestly invited to attend. Nearest station, Upton Park on the District Line. For further particulars apply to Mr. A. C. Hempel, 40, Shaftesbury Road, Forest Gate, E.

THE FAITH AND THE FLOCK

Vol. II.—No. 3.

MARCH, 1910.

PRICE—ONE PENNY.

EDITORIALS.

IN this number appears an article dealing with the first section of the Chart of the Book of the Revelation which was published as a supplement to our February issue. All will regret to hear that the writer, Mr. Walter Scott, suffered a breakdown in health before it was finished, and it had to be completed by other hands. He is, however, slowly recovering, and hopes to continue the series as announced.

* * * *

The articles which appeared in this magazine last year from the pen of Mr. W. W. Fereday, entitled "Balaam and his Parables," are now published in separate form, price 2d., and can be obtained from Messrs. Pickering and Inglis.

* * * *

In the footnote to article in February entitled "Man's Ruin by the Fall," the reference should have been to the November number. And on page 42 "seventh week" should have been "seventieth."

AN OUTLINE OF "THE REVELATION."

(Explanatory of Chart published with February number).

By WALTER SCOTT.

FIRST SECTION. CHAPTER I., 1—8.

THE INTRODUCTION occupies the first eight verses, and must rank as almost unequalled and second to none for fulness and variety of subject compressed into so brief a compass. We have first a *Preface* (verses 1-3); second a Divine *Salutation* and a suited response (verses 4-6); third a prophetic *Testimony* (verse 7); fourth the Lord's own announcement of certain Divine *Titles* (verse 8).

The Divine programme unfolded in this marvellous book of plan and purpose is indeed a revelation of thrilling interest. We have here the completion of all previous prophecy—spoken and written; here, too, are given the closing stages in the exciting drama of human history. The mysteries and wonders of time and eternity, of heaven, earth, and the lake of fire are herein disclosed. The veil is *rolled back*, the curtains *drawn aside* as the very word "Revelation" implies.

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ." *This* should have been the title of the book. It is not a Revelation *of* Jesus Christ personally, so much as a communication to Him from God of things which must shortly come to pass. At the same time the whole scheme of prophecy is here seen to converge on Jesus Christ and given to Him by God. Jesus Christ is the faithful custodian of the prophetic word of our God.

The direct object of the book is then stated. "To shew unto His *servants* things which must shortly come to pass." The word *servants* or *bondmen* is by no means confined to a special or official class of persons in the New Testament. All God's people are here contemplated not as priests, nor pilgrims, but as servants. Then Christ's angel and His servant John, are introduced as the mediums through and by whom the Revelation is passed on to us.

This seems a round-about way of communication. Distance and reserve are due to the fact that prophecy ever supposes a state of hopeless ruin. In this book the Church, Israel, and the world are regarded as apostate and fit subjects of divine judgment, while, of

course, a remnant in each, approved of God, *i.e.*, distinctly recognised, in the central part of the book (Chaps. vi.-xix.). God is here viewed as apart from His professed people as a whole, and speaking to "His own" through the intermediary of the prophet. "Who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, of all things that he saw." The deletion of the second "and" in the verse as in the Revised Version and other authorities is to be carefully noted. The meaning is that the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ are the two subjects of the book, and are embraced in the visions beheld by the seer. "All things that he saw" is not an independent statement, but constitute in brief the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. All were beheld in vision on one day (verse 10). The visions in Daniel and Zechariah were witnessed during the *night*. The Apocalyptic sights were seen during the *day*. Both the word and testimony are of a judicial character in keeping with the grand object of the book which is to shew the public intervention of God, as also the steps preparatory to Christ's assumption of His world-kingdom (xi. 15).

Then follows a word of cheer and encouragement to all who *read, hear, and keep* the words of the prophecy (verse 3). It is also a warning—a much needed one—against the neglect of this invaluable book, and every form of indifference with which it has been treated in all ages, and never more so than now. The book is guarded as no other Divine book, both at its beginning and at its close (see xxii. 6-9; 18-20). "*He* that readeth . . . *they* that hear . . . and keep." All cannot read. No doubt, however, the public reading of the Word of God—a Jewish and Christian custom—is referred to here (Luke iv. 16-20; Acts xiii. 15). To this public reading of the Word Paul exhorted Timothy (1 Tim. iv. 13). Read "the Revelation" in your assemblies and in your households. And do not confine the reading to the first three chapters, as many do, but if you desire the Lord's special blessing, then read in orderly sequence the whole book; read it also to others so that they too may share in the promised benediction. But why the imperative demand to read the book and hear it read? Not only is there blessing accruing therefrom, but the grand reason is stated in one emphatic declaration, "*for* the time is at hand." Every vision of every prophecy is about to be fulfilled. Prophecy leaps over times and circumstances and sets us down on the very eve of its accomplishment. The tread of the Master's footstep, almost the sound of

His voice is heard. "The time is at hand." Thus fitly closes this interesting preface to this delightful book—a book which has done more for the writer than tongue can tell. Does the expression "The time is at hand" seem inconsistent with an almost 2,000 years' lengthened delay? Ah! they count time differently in heaven. The years of earth are but moments in heaven. According to Divine reckoning the Lord has not been absent in the heavens two days yet (2 Peter iii. 8).

We have had a Divine benediction pronounced on all who read, hear, and keep the words of this book, now we have a Divine salutation addressed to "the seven churches which are in Asia," which in their totality comprehend the whole body of the redeemed. John's direct service to the Church now commences. It is the beloved apostle no doubt—for there is but one John to every Christian heart. The apostle who always in his gospel and epistles writes in the third person, is expressly named five times in this book (i. 1, 4, 9; xxi. 2; xxii. 8).

"The *seven* churches." "Seven" is the ruling number in the Apocalypse, and intimates what is morally or spiritually **complete**. The church is here regarded as a whole. There were more churches or assemblies in Asia than seven, but that symbolic numeral in its moral force sweeps the whole earth and contemplates in its range the Church of God on earth at any given moment. Now observe that ere the mutterings of the coming storm of judgment are heard, ere one threatening word is uttered, ere seal is opened, trumpet blown, or vial poured out, the God-head, each in His own Divine Person, unites in a message of grace and peace to the whole body of the redeemed on earth. This twofold blessing is the common property of all the saved, and is given and secured to us by God Himself. Grace, God's full, free, sovereign, unclouded favour, ever rests upon His own, and peace, their blessed, happy state within. Need we say, that, ere the horrors of the coming day burst upon the scene we shall have been "caught up." Every saint of God at the Coming is translated from earth to the air to meet the Lord. This Divine salutation is from Jehovah in the eternity and greatness of His Being—"which is," then "which was," intimating His relation to all the past, whether of things, angels, or men, "and which is to come," His connection with the future. What a tower of strength! and this God is our God, great in His greatness.

The "seven Spirits." The Holy Spirit is not presented here as the Comforter, but as the perfect agent in all God's ways. Then, "from Jesus Christ," Who is presented in connection with the past, present, and future. (1) "The faithful witness." What He was on earth. Faithful in all His rugged path. He never swerved in His pathway from the manger to the cross. He never compromised the claims of God nor adapted the Divine requirements to the caprice, or fear, or favour of man. (2) The present: "the first begotten of the dead"; and (3) the future: what He will be: "The Prince of the kings of the earth." The moment Christ is presented thus, there comes an immediate response from His own. "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Notice how all this brings out the characteristics of those who form the church. They are in the consciousness of Christ's love; the great proof of which has been given in His blood. They know that all their sins have been taken away. They are fully aware of their place of privilege—"a kingdom of priests," and they are intelligent as to the place that belongs to Christ, and anticipate with heartfelt desire the time when all will be His.

Such is their response to Him, but, then, turning, as it were, round upon the world, they bear this testimony: "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so. Amen." How solemn is this announcement; and how different the attitude of the world towards Christ to that of those who know what it is to be loosed from their sins in His blood.

Then, before the communication John has to make is opened, there is again a reminder that we are brought into the presence of One Who is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending—the Almighty. If everything is to be shaken, and all pass away that does not come up to the divine standard, yet He abides, Who *was* before anything existed, and *remains* when everything of man disappears. Almighty to uphold or destroy, and able to give effect to all that He purposes.

* * Owing to the indisposition of the writer, the Editor completed the Article. (*Ed.*)

SONGS FOR SAINTS.

No. 4.

“I will come again.”—John. xiv. 3.

Tune : Scotch Song, “Wull ye no come back again?”

BY WM. T. RAE.

Oh, come, ye ransomed sinners a',
 An' sing wi' me this sweet refrain,
 About that “bricht an' blessed hope”:
 The Lord is comin' back again!

Chorus.—The Lord is comin' back again!
 Oh, He's comin' back again!
 He's gane awa' tae heav'n sae braw,
 But oh, He's comin' back again!

Whin He wis here lang years ago,
 He said, in words sae clear an' plain:
 “Tae My Faither's hoose I'm gaun awa',
 But oh, I'm comin' back again!”

An' whin He comes He'll set us free
 Frae care, an' trouble, grief an' pain;
 We'll shairly loup for very joy
 Whin the Lord comes back again!

But oh, for them that never yet
 Ha'e made the Saviour a' their ain,
 There's nae sic joy'll fill *their* he'rts
 Whin the Lord comes back again!

So juist ye, sinners, come awa',
 An' sing the graund redemption strain;
 Accept the pardon offered ye,
 Ere the Lord comes back again!

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH (*continued*).

By W. W. FEREDAY.

LET us turn now to Rom. iii. 21, etc., where we learn God's wonderful way of grace. “But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His Grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth a propitiation

(propitiatory, or mercy-seat), through faith, in His blood." *God's* righteousness in contrast with *man's*; what God *bestows* in contrast with what man can produce. Let us carefully note that it is God's intervention here, not Christ's. It is not Christ throwing Himself into the breach between perishing men and an angry God, but God setting forth Christ as a mercy-seat to which every conscience-stricken sinner may freely come. It is of the utmost importance to observe this. There is a way of presenting the Gospel which represents Christ as all Grace, and God as full of severity. Little wonder, therefore, if some make use of Christ rather as a hiding-place *from* God than as the way to God. But this is really the Gospel distorted. What Rom. iii. teaches is that the very God against whom we have sinned, and whose wrath we might well fear, has Himself found a way whereby, in perfect consistency with the claims of His throne, He can justify even the most ungodly sinner. That way is expressed in the one word "Calvary." There indeed, "Mercy and truth met together; righteousness and peace kissed each other" (Ps. lxxxv. 10).

But while the blood of Christ is the basis of our justification (Rom. v. 9), His resurrection is the declaration of it. Hence we read, He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25). Christ's deliverance from the power of death is God's public testimony to the adequacy of His Calvary work on our behalf. Thus, in His discharge we read our own. His present position in acceptance and glory on high is the pattern of our own. This is the force of the magnificent statement in 2 Cor. v. 21: "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might become God's righteousness in Him." Let us away with every fear; while Christ retains His present position in the glory of God, no charge of sin can ever be laid against even the feeblest soul that believes in His name.

Faith is the instrument whereby we become justified. "We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. iii. 28). "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness, even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works" (Rom. iv. 5-6). I have read of a German elector who, when despatching some of his theologians to take part in one of the disputations in Luther's

day, charged them to stand to the word "alone"—"Justified by faith *alone*." As Paul said to Peter before the assembled saints in Antioch: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. ii. 15-16).

It has been alleged that James in his epistle somewhat contradicts this Pauline teaching of justification by faith. Even Luther spoke very disrespectfully of James' epistle on this account. But contradictions are impossible where all is divine. The true explanation is that while Paul speaks of the justification of the ungodly, James speaks of the justification of the believer. The one is before God; the other is before men. Before God faith alone counts, human doings being worse than valueless; but before men good works are essential, for how else can my fellows judge of the reality of my faith? The key to the James passage is the demand, "Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." It is not God who says "Shew me," but man to his fellow.

Peace with God is the first grand result of justification. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). Peace is not a comfortable feeling, nor a happy experience within; but the blessed knowledge, learned from the unerring Word of God, that Christ's perfect work has dispelled every cloud of judgment, and that every possible question between God and the Lord has been laid to rest for ever. Joy may, and does, fluctuate, but peace remains ever the same, being based on mighty facts outside of ourselves and our experiences altogether. From the blessed vantage ground of his new place in Christ, the justified man is able to challenge every foe: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth?" (Rom. viii. 33-34).

Nothing tells on the world like holiness of life. Men will let all your speaking and preaching, even though it were an angel's, go to the winds; but holiness of life none can gainsay. It is irresistible, and tells where nothing else will.

THE HYMNS OF DR. ISAAC WATTS

(concluded).

BY WILLIAM WILLIS, K.C.

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CHARLES Stovel, to whom I am chiefly indebted, under Divine grace, for all the happiness I have enjoyed on earth, was full of Watts' poetry. He frequently quoted him in the most impressive portions of his discourse.

I have heard him take refuge in a verse of Watts, when tried by difficulties and much oppressed. On one occasion, at the close of his discourse, with tears starting to his eyes as he described his difficulties and sorrows, he burst out into the glorious utterance—

The *Gospel* bears my spirit up ;
A faithful and unchanging God
Lays the foundations for my hope,
In oaths and promises and blood.

On another occasion, describing his early life when he was a baker's assistant, and speaking of the difficulties of his work for Christ on the Lord's day, and the exhaustion of physical strength to which it led, he said : " I was cheered when I thought of the lines of Watts, and threw myself under the counter in the shop to rest, singing the glorious words—

The hill of Zion yields
A thousand sacred sweets,
Before we reach the heavenly fields,
Or walk the golden streets.

How often, when encouraging the timid believer, did he quote the lines—

The feeblest saint shall win the day,
Though death and hell obstruct the way.

How he did delight, when inviting all the members of the Church to a faithful adherence to the Gospel, to break out at the close of his discourse into the following utterance—

Should all the forms that men devise,
Assault my faith with treacherous art,
I'd call them vanities and lies
And bind the Gospel to my heart.

Mr. Spurgeon frequently quoted Watts, and on one occasion I remember his addressing himself, in his powerful discourse, to one man then within his gaze, imploring him to lay aside his sins and

come to Christ. "But," said the preacher, "perhaps you say there is hell, and there are my sins, and these are the difficulties in my way." "Brother," he said, quoting Watts—

"Hell and thy sins resist thy course,
But hell and sins are vanquished foes;
Thy Jesus nailed them to the cross,
And sang the triumph when He rose."

THE EFFECTS OF HIS HYMNS ON CONGREGATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS.

Watts' hymns, occasionally during his lifetime, produced an immense effect upon the congregations who were called to sing them. An instance is found in the correspondence of Dr. Doddridge. In a letter to Dr. Watts, he tells him: "On Wednesday last, I was preaching in a barn to a pretty large assembly of plain country people, in a village a few miles off. After a sermon from Hebrews, sixth chapter, twelfth verse, we sung one of your hymns; and in that part of the worship I had the satisfaction to observe tears in the eyes of several of the auditory; and, after the service was over, some of them told me that they were not able to sing, so deeply were their minds affected with it. These were, most of them, poor people, who work for their living." I am not surprised by this narration, for the hymn which Dr. Doddridge gave out was the one-hundred-and-fortieth, second book. It is really the example of Christ and the saints:—

Give me the wings of faith to rise
Within the veil, and see
The Saints above, how great their joys,
How bright their glories be.
Once they were mourning here below,
And wet their couch with tears;
They wrestled hard, as we do now,
With sins, and doubts, and fears.
I ask them whence their victory came?
They with united breath,
Ascribe their conquest to the Lamb;
Their triumph to His death.
They mark'd the footsteps that He trod,
(His zeal inspired their breast):
And following their incarnate God,
Possess the promised rest.

Some of Watts' hymns, when sung in private, have produced great effect on individuals. The story is told of the effect of one of his hymns on Robert Hall, the profound and eloquent preacher.

A hymn was being sung in the room when he was present. It was one of Watts', and one, perhaps, of his most beautiful compositions—the sixty-sixth hymn in the second book—

There is a land of pure delight ;
Where saints immortal reign :
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

And then we have the verse which is supposed to come from his early recollection of the lovely island—the Isle of Wight, as he stood at Southampton, and gazed upon its living verdure, whilst the sea rolled between.

Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood,
Stand dressed in living green :
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan roll'd between.
But tim'rous mortals start and shrink,
To cross the narrow sea ;
And linger, shivering on the brink,
And fear to launch away.

Then came the lines—

O, could we make our doubts remove,
Those gloomy doubts that rise,

and Robert Hall was so greatly overcome that he fell on his knees with deep emotion, and said : “ Let someone pray.” And a friend prayed, lifting his thoughts, beyond all doubt, to the faithful and unchanging God.

If a dying statesman lies deploring his misdeeds, he appeals for pity in the words of Watts. When Daniel Webster, the author of the shameful “ Fugitive Slave Law,” was dying, he needed pity, and repeated again and again, in deep and solemn pathos, the Psalm—

Then pity, Lord, O Lord, forgive,
Let a repenting rebel live :
My crimes are great, but can't surpass
The Power and Glory of Thy grace.

The words of Watts have lighted up the condemned cell. How often has the chaplain said to the poor victim of sin—

Life is the time to serve the Lord,
The time t'insure the great reward :
And while the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return.

Children have been made happy in a recital of his verses. When about six years of age, the daughter of Mr. Ward, the missionary, whose name is always joined with those of Carey and Marshman,

recited to her father, just before her death, with most pathetic expression—

When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes.

On Sunday morning, October 6th, 1854, Mr. Stovel had announced that he would on that Sunday morning improve the deaths of two sweet youths, aged respectively fifteen and eight. The subject of the discourse was: "A Tender Heart, a Youth's Treasure." The two youths were carried off in a few days by a fever which no medical skill could check. Mr. Stovel said: "On the day that Thomas, the elder, died, James was getting worse and worse, and one day before he expired, seeing his parents anxious, he said, 'Father, I *can* read my title clear,' and then began to sing the hymn to the tune 'Arlington.' Let these examples lead each youth before me to begin an acquaintance with the Saviour *now*. Let each one of you go home, and then retire into your bedroom and pray that, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, God may manifest Himself to you while you are yet young. 'They that seek Him early shall find Him.'" Amidst the solemn feeling created by the discourse, Mr. Stovel said: "Let us sing the hymn quoted by James—

When I can read my title clear.

It was sung by a weeping congregation.

Dr. Watts appended a hymn to many of his sermons. These do not appear among his "Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs." I may be permitted to give you one; it was appended to a funeral sermon:—

Unveil thy bosom, faithful tomb;
Take this new treasure to thy trust,
And give these sacred relics room
To seek a slumber in the dust.
Nor pain, nor grief, nor anxious fear,
Invade thy bounds. No mortal woes
Can reach the lovely sleeper here;
And angels watch her soft repose.
So Jesus slept: God's dying Son
Passed through the grave and blessed the bed
Rest here, fair saint, till from His throne
The morning break and pierce the shade.
Break from His throne, illustrious morn!
Attend, O earth, His sovereign word;
Restore thy trust, O glorious form!
She must ascend to meet her Lord.

Another of his hymns I quote, and then my quotations must cease. At Dunstable, where my parents lived, I remember, on the occasion of one or two funerals, my mother taking me and calling my attention to the hymns which the young members of the Church were about to sing. Their charming voices blended well. God's gifts are freely bestowed, and they are to be found in nearly all His children. Never shall I forget the solemn and pathetic singing of the hymn—

Hear what the voice from heaven proclaims,
For all the pious dead ;
Sweet is the savour of their names,
And soft their sleeping bed.

Until recent times, when men began to lose the strength and energy of Christ's Gospel, Watts was the inspirer of the Church of Christ. I loved, and still love his hymns ; I love them for their direct reference to Christ—their reference to His constant love and care, and to the promises which He will fulfil, taking to heaven all who love and trust Him. I am glad to think that this great singer in Israel was, perhaps, one of the greatest ornaments of the Christian Church.

I now, in recollection of my mother's influence and teaching, thank her for the introduction to Watts and his glorious hymns, the knowledge of which constitutes, to-day, no mean heritage.

“ The wilderness is no necessary thing, nor part of God's purpose, nor mentioned when coming out of Egypt (Ex. iii., vi., xv.). The thief on the cross never went through any wilderness, nor any Canaan : redemption put him straight into Paradise. The if's of scripture are all connected with the journey and conflict, and met by the sure promise of God, because we and (so to speak) God, for faith, are both tested there.”


* * * *

“ The washing of regeneration (Titus iii. 5). The washing in connection with that new order of things (Matt. xix. 28) not yet outwardly established, but into which, as born again, we have entered in spirit ; for by the new birth we enter the kingdom. This washing is never repeated.”

CHRIST OUR LIFE:

OR, DOES JOHN VI. REFER TO THE LORD'S SUPPER?

By W. JEATER.

ON one occasion as the Lord Jesus was entering Capernaum, there came to Him certain Jewish Elders as messengers of the Roman centurion stationed in that town. They came to report that a servant of the centurion, who was "very dear" to his master, was at the point of death, and they besought Jesus earnestly that He would accede to the request of the centurion, and go and save his servant. They strengthened their petition by pointing out that the centurion was worthy, that he loved their nation, and "himself built for us the (not *a*) synagogue." 

The doom afterwards pronounced by the Lord upon that town of Capernaum for its unbelief long ago had its sure fulfilment. The place vanished out of sight and knowledge. The town that had the distinguishing honour of being described as "His own City" could not even be located, and it is only of late that the rival claims of different places have been sifted, so that the balance of evidence is in favour of Tell Hum, the second word of which is probably a survival from the original name Caphan Nahum, the village of Nahum. Within recent years, during exploration work on this site, the ruins of the synagogue were discovered, the remains of what must have been a costly and striking structure, with its work of limestone standing out bright and vivid in the midst of the general buildings of basaltic material. It was an affecting monument for the explorers when, turning over a block of stone that had formed part of the architectural adornment of the building, they discovered on one side of it a carving representing a pot of manna.

One may easily make too much of the external setting of the gospel incidents, and in speculating whether the words of Christ respecting Himself as the True Vine were suggested by the Golden Vine that adorned the Temple, whether He lifted up His eyes and actually saw the sower, the birds, the trodden footpath and the clump of thorns; whether the crown of thorns was of this or that plant; in speculating on these things we may easily miss the lessons, both solemn and gracious, that are intended for our instruction. Yet it is almost impossible, as we read of the unearthed synagogue

and the pot of manna, to withhold the question, Was it here that "He said these things to them in the synagogue, as He taught in Capernaum"? Did someone perchance point to this adornment of the building as he uttered the challenge "What sign showest Thou? What dost Thou work? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness." If this be so—and there is nothing improbable in the suggestion—we come to one of those incidents, not uncommon in the Gospels, wherein a seemingly trivial thing gave rise to the deepest teaching; the adornment of the synagogue by a pious alien furnished the text for words that will live for ever.

The Gospel of St. John is emphatically the revelation of the Divine Glory of the Son of God, manifested in both word and work. In the preceding chapter—the 5th—we have Christ revealing Himself as the source of life; in the present chapter, by sign and by word, He shows Himself as the Support of Life. "The Son quickeneth—maketh to live" is the keynote of the one chapter; "I am the living Bread . . . he that eateth Me shall live because of Me," is the keynote of the other.

It has been said, with sad truth, that the fairest spots of earth have been the scenes and subjects of strife, and in the same way, the most gracious portions of God's word have been the battle-fields of contending schools. "They strove among themselves" is the Evangelist's account of the hearers of this wonderful discourse; "they strove among themselves" is too true of those who have attempted to interpret it. Yet the words are such as should be read by us on "the knees of our souls," in the silence of the sanctuary, rather than as disputants in the Courts, concerned about the interpretation of some obscure document.

Wherein lies the difficulty? It is necessary to state, however briefly, the subject of the controversy.

There are three possible methods of interpretation: (1) The purely natural; (2) The sacramental; (3) The spiritual.

(1) As to the first, no one puts it forward. The Jews, indeed, who heard the words, asked with a touch of contempt that hardly comes out in our translation: "How can this man—this fellow—give us His flesh to eat?" but not even they, however much they were stumbled by the teaching, took it as being literally meant.

(2) As to the sacramental interpretation, it would be safe to say that it has been the prevailing interpretation wherever the ecclesiastical element has been strong. That is to say, the Lord is regarded as uttering teaching about the Sacrament of the Last Supper, and as unfolding the significance of Eucharistic participation. I open, for example, Isaac William's *Devotional Commentary on the Gospel Narrative*, a work that is avowedly based upon the teaching of the Fathers of the Church. There is much that is spiritual and helpful in it, and one criticises Isaac Williams and his authorities with great respect. The chapter that deals with this particular section is headed "The Holy Eucharist." He says "the whole of this discourse is connected with the doctrine of the Eucharist, as its centre." And this interpretation, he contends, "is confirmed by the authority of the ancient Church, as has been frequently shown by one unbroken chain of testimony, that embraces the name of almost every Father worthy of attention from the beginning." He has to admit that St. Augustine (who was surely not the least of the Fathers) does not give this interpretation, but he puts forward as an explanation of this, that "St. Augustine passes by the literal and obvious meaning, as being apparent to all, when he dwells on the more obscure, subtle, and sublime, speaking of that spiritual communion in Christ's passion, by which we are incorporated into One Body and become One Bread." "One does not need," says Isaac Williams, "to point out the sun in the heavens."

Is that interpretation so obvious and so plain? Can it be the fact that twelve months before the night of institution the Lord should discourse to a mixed multitude, a large element of which was contemptuous, contentious and unbelieving, upon the significance of that Feast which has value only to the loving and believing soul? What are the reasons that are alleged for this interpretation?

Briefly, these are some of them :—

(a) *The chain of testimony that includes so many of the Fathers.* This is, as I have said, the view taken up by those of strong ecclesiastical and sacramentarian leanings, by those who regard, in some sort of way, the Church as being the vehicle of instruction—I do not say to the denial of, but at least to the oversight of, the truth that the Spirit of God still teaches by the word of God. And these

same teachers, who—or some of whom—saw a reference to the Holy Eucharist in the petition “Give us this day our daily bread,” would almost certainly see another reference to it in the words of the Lord spoken in the synagogue at Capernaum. Truth to tell, the Fathers saw sacraments in everything. And it was not long before the emphasis was moved from the thing signified to the sign itself, even as in our own day, and in Churches unhampered by any sacerdotal notions, the question is oftentimes not so much “What meaneth this service?” as “How and by whom shall this be done?”

It is not enough to say that other men have held this interpretation, however honoured their names may be. The promise of the Spirit is ours, and we should do despite to the Spirit of Truth if from a mistaken deference to expositors of other days, we stifled careful and prayerful examination of our Lord’s teaching.

(b) Again, it is said that *if this chapter does not treat of the Eucharist, St. John nowhere mentions it.* Assume that is so, what happens? Absolutely nothing, either to St. John’s credit or to our good. If there is one fact pretty firmly established, it is that St. John never proposed to himself to go over ground that had been covered by the other Evangelists. Where it suits the purpose of his Gospel he does not hesitate to touch on facts common to the others, but it was certainly never his purpose to give a full, chronological, complete “Life” of the Lord, any more than it was his intention (as some have said) to supply what the others had omitted. He does not take into account what is called the Galilean Ministry of the Lord, though his “gaps” leave ample room for it. He does not detail the miraculous birth, after the manner of Matthew, or of Luke; he sums it all up in the marvellous phrase, “The Word became flesh.” He does not give any account of the Ascension, though it is everywhere *implied*. He does not even speak of the other Sacrament—Baptism—though there are still some who see Christian Baptism as the subject of the Lord’s words with the Jewish Ruler, Nicodemus. Unless, therefore, we can say that St. John ought to have embodied and *must* have embodied some reference to the Holy Supper in his Gospel, it is difficult to see the cogency of this reason.

(c) Again, it is said that *the similarity of language used in the discourse and in the Words of Institution is conclusive that the discourse refers to the Supper*, or as it is usually called, the Eucharist.

There is a certain similarity, but the conclusion does not follow. Apart from the fact that at the Supper the Lord said, "This is my *Body*," and that in His discourse He spoke of eating His *flesh*, is it not much rather likely to be the case that the similarity has its origin in this—not that one speaks of the other, but that both speak of some third thing, namely, a spiritual participation in and feeding upon Christ? The sacraments are roads, not termini; discourse and type do not lead up to *them*, they themselves lead up to what is spoken of by discourse and prophecy and type. Imagine a centre, and a circumference as far removed from it as you will, and from the circumference lines that converge upon the centre. This line that we will call A, is related to B, by the common centre, but A is not B. And so in regard to the faith of the Christian Church; Christ is the adorable centre towards which all the different lines converge—type and prophecy, symbol and sacrament. It would be strange if along these different lines we did not meet with similarities, if there were not at times certain overlappings of thought and language, but the lines run on and meet, not one in the other, but all in the centre, Christ, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.

As a fact, the differences are far greater than the similarities, as a comparison of the discourse and the Words of Institution would show. It is not enough to say that a reader limited to St. John's Gospel could not form any idea of the method and the manner of the Last Supper—that is perhaps only natural in the circumstances, even if the Supper were in view in John, seeing that the discourse was spoken so long before the event. What is more important is that the main thoughts are different. In the Supper, it is the question of the inauguration of a new covenant; the blood was shed for the remission of sins; the partaking was for a remembrance. Covenant, remission, remembrance—all are absent from the Capernaum discourse, while there are present such ideas as *cannot* be attached to any outward rite—living for ever, the possession of eternal life, the believer's abiding in Christ and Christ's abiding in the believer, the believer's living because of Christ even as Christ lives because of the Father.

It is not denied that the outward rite and the inward feeding may go together. If there is a time when we should in truth eat Christ's flesh and drink His blood, it is when we sit at His Table,

and from His Hands receive the memorial of His dying and the pledge of His coming again. But the two things may be divorced ; the rite may have its place of honour, while the Lord of the feast may be practically forgotten. We may eat—may “press with the truth” as the Article in the Prayer-Book phrases it, following an ancient Father—but the inward feeding may be absent. What is purely external may engage our thoughts, though our ritual may be of the simplest, while with every additional feature of elaboration the probability is that there will be additional distraction from the true spirit of remembrance, and from that reception of the elements which makes them “meat and drink indeed.” At the moment of writing, there chances to lie on my table a musical setting of the Communion Service sent me by the composer. It is well written—the work of an accomplished musician. As I turn to the *Agnus Dei*—“Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us ; Thou that takest away the sins of the world, grant us Thy peace”—with its plaintive solo for a tenor voice, its soft choral accompaniment, its organ-part alternating from manual to manual, I know that, however the æsthetic side of my nature might be delighted, the probability is exceedingly great that the spiritual purposes of the Feast would be lost.

On the other hand, the feeding upon Christ may be independent of any and every rite. John, himself, banished to Patmos, that lone island of vision, surely partook of the divine food he was afterwards to write about. Paul the aged, the Lord’s prisoner, forsaken by all but one or two, must often have had his table spread by Divine Hands in the presence of his enemies. John Bunyan, in Bedford Gaol, Samuel Rutherford in his Scottish prison, and many another, removed from all intercourse with fellow-believers, and from all the ordinary “means of grace,” have left immortal tokens of that abiding in Christ which the Lord mentions as one of the results of eating His flesh and drinking His blood. This, indeed, is to be noticed, that the individualising phrases used throughout this section, “he that believeth,” “a man may eat,” “whoso eateth and drinketh,” “he who eateth this bread,” &c., look in the direction of the solitary act rather than of social worship.

(*To be continued.*)

The question is not whether we are producing fruit, but whether that fruit is equal to the grace God has bestowed on us.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF BELIEVERS (*concluded*).

SACRIFICES OF PRAISE.

PSALM 1. 14 bids us "offer unto God the *sacrifice* of thanksgiving" (R.V.). Surely "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord." Not only is it right that we should be thankful for benefits received, but we shall be more likely to receive further benefits if we show ourselves to be grateful. If the reader will make a study of 2nd Chron. xx. he will be amply repaid: for there are many sweet lessons to be learned there; and while it would be quite out of place here to attempt an exposition of that chapter, yet, perhaps, a brief analysis may not be altogether unacceptable to the reader.

Verses 1, 2, Judah's trouble; 3, 4, their remedy; 5-13, Jehoshaphat's prayer; 14-17, God's instructions; 18, they submit and worship; 19, faith leads them to *praise* God in anticipation of victory; 20, their leader encourages them; 21, singers are appointed in fuller confidence of victory; 22-24, victory was given "*when they began to sing and to praise*"; 25, they have nothing to do but "gather the spoil"; 26, they *praise* again after victory; 27, 28, they go to God's house rejoicing; 29, "the fear of God was on all the kingdoms"; 30, "the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet," and at "rest." Thus shall it ever be with God's people in their deepest distresses if they exercise the same confidence in His power and His goodness, and *show* such confidence in *praising* Him.

• Acts xvi. 19-40 furnishes us with a similar case.

In Ps. 1. 23 God says, "Whoso offereth the *sacrifice* of thanksgiving glorifieth Me" (R.V.).

We may praise the best of men too much, but we cannot glorify God too much.

Seeing then that "Praise is comely for the upright" (Ps. xxxiii. 1), "Let us offer the sacrifice of *praise* to God continually" (Heb. xiii. 15).

THE PERSONAL SACRIFICE.

The first offering in Leviticus is the "Burnt Offering" (Ch. i.), the object of which was the acceptance of the imperfect *offerer* through the unblemished offering. "*It shall be accepted for him*" (verse 4). It was a sacrifice entirely given to God, for it was wholly

burnt upon His altar. So in Rom. xii. 1 we are entreated to "present" our "bodies, a living *sacrifice*, holy, acceptable to God." No offering we bring can be acceptable till *we* are first "accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. i. 6). But this being the case our first offering is to be one of personal surrender. In consequence of this we are to present ourselves as living sacrifices.

If we hold *ourselves* back, we may spare all other offerings, for they will avail nothing.

In Rev. viii. 3, 4, we see an angel with a "golden censer" and "much incense," which he is to "add" or "give unto the prayers of all the saints" (R.V.), "and the smoke of the incense *for* the prayers of the saints went up before God" (R.V.). This is surely the merit and intercession of Jesus, our "Great High Priest."

Ps. cxviii. 27 presents a scene of "Binding the sacrifice with cords, even to the horns of the altar." This may suggest that cords of devotion to *God* and love to *man* bound our blessed Lord as a "sacrifice to God" "for us" (Eph. v. 2), and we should be bound by the same cords to Him, offering ourselves and all we have, and never taking it back again. May our language ever be—

Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my love: my Lord, I pour,
At Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be
Ever only, ALL for Thee.

"If I turn to nature, I see signs of goodness, but widespread misery and wretchedness too, so that I know not how to say God is love; and these very signs of goodness shew me that I have lost it all, for this God I have offended. If I turn to providence, I find it all confusion—how often have the wicked the upper hand. If I look to the law, it condemns me, and leaves me without hope. In all these I see things about God; but nothing that reveals Him. In Christ I get what reveals God."

IS SOCIAL REFORM ENOUGH?—A PARABLE.

To the Editor of "The Faith and the Flock."

SIR,—Will you allow me to pass on to your readers a little parable which I heard a preacher of the Gospel put forth last week, and which seems to me too valuable to be confined to the small company to which it was then addressed.

In the desert, in poor parched soil, grew a bush, bearing nothing but thorns—just a thorn bush, in fact. Those who passed that way deplored its poverty and its barrenness, earnestly desiring that it might be productive of fruit. Said one of them: "It is merely the consequence of its surroundings. [Philosophers would speak of it as the 'creature of its environment.'] What can you expect from a tree in a desert, planted in poor parched soil? Place it in advantageous circumstances, in a more suitable 'environment,' and see what a change will take place."

The advice of the wise man was acted upon; the bush was transplanted to a more fertile spot, placed in rich and kindly soil. Its *environment* was changed; were its *products* changed also? Alas, after a fair test made, it became apparent that the thorn bush only produced thorns, longer, sharper than before, but thorns still.

I venture to think the above deserves the notice of the many sincere but mistaken enthusiasts of to-day who fondly hope to change the nature of men by improving their environment, by education, social reform and the like. It is not *without*, but *within*, that the change must first be effected, and, when this change takes place, it is not the environment that changes the man, but *the man that changes the environment*.

We need, in this 20th century, to heed the great lesson taught in the first by the Lord Jesus Christ to one brought up in the choicest environment, "Except a man be born from above [see margin] he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John iii. 3).

H.M.M.

"Be watchful." Watch your closet; all declension begins there. A man falls in secret long before he falls openly before the world.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS:—

A Simple Exposition.

CHAP. IX., 15-28.

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST SEEN IN CONNECTION WITH HIS WORK
IN THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

THE section we have now reached is one of the richest in the whole page of inspiration. It presents to us three things: Our Lord's work on the Cross; His work of intercession on high; and His return to bring in actually and manifestly the blessed fruits of accomplished redemption. This, it will be seen, covers the past, the present and the future. In the past, He appeared to put away sin; in the present, He appears in the presence of God for those who believe; in the future, He will come again to receive us to Himself; to change these bodies of humiliation; and to

“ Bid the whole creation smile
And hush its groan.”

With regard to the first aspect of our subject, read carefully vv. 15-23, 25-28; with regard to the second, verse 24; and as to the third, the last clause of verse 28.

1. CHRIST'S WORK IN THE PAST.

It will be seen at once that the outstanding reference in the passage before us is to our Saviour's atoning work. Indeed, it may be said that the ninth chapter of Hebrews is a divine commentary upon the day of Atonement, celebrated by God's ancient people once a year. The great point is contrast rather than comparison, yet there is comparison, because the great work our Lord and Saviour was to accomplish is foreshadowed in what occurred on the day of Atonement in Israel, as recorded in Leviticus xvi. This was the most solemn and sacred day in all the Jewish calendar. In it they were to do no work at all, but they were to afflict their souls. Yet it was to be to them a sabbath of rest. Only one man did any work on that day; and for him it was a busy one; teaching us that Christ's work alone can take away sin. But there was to be a sense of the awfulness of sin, and so they were to afflict themselves. At the same time the work done brought rest (though only partial in their case), and so it was to be to them a sabbath.

But we are distinctly told in the New Testament that all this could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience (Heb. ix. 9). And herein lies the contrast. Christ has "found an eternal redemption"; His blood purges the conscience (vv. 9 and 14). Moreover, we are distinctly told in the opening verse of our section that, "*For this cause 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.*" It is important to notice the use of the word "eternal." "Eternal redemption"; "eternal Spirit"; "eternal inheritance." Under the old covenant, with all its splendid ritual, and, withal, divinely instituted, there was nothing durable, nothing permanent. The day of Atonement had to be repeated year by year because the sacrifices offered were not of sufficient value to take away sins for ever. In what a much brighter and better dispensation do we live. Expressions such as "eternal," "perfected for ever," "once offered," are characteristic of Christianity. And why? Because Christ's offering was of such value to God that it never needed to be repeated. His Person and His spotless life of obedience to God's will imparted all their value to His blood. So completely have transgressions been removed that it can speak of eternal inheritance.

In order to understand the greatness of the work Christ has accomplished let us consider a little further the amazing statement we were dwelling upon last time: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." Think of One Who could offer Himself to God. Sufficiently glorious for that. Who among the sons of men, or who among the ranks of angels, bright and unfallen as they are, could have presumed to offer himself on behalf of sinners? Here is One who could, for He was without spot. Is not His blood enough? Moreover, if we need any further assurance of His ability, we are informed it was by the eternal Spirit He offered Himself. How great then and altogether sufficient was the offering of Christ on our behalf. At that moment an immeasurable fragrance filled heaven and the heart of God. And where did it come from? It came from the Cross of Calvary. It came from Christ as He presented Himself on behalf of guilty men, undertaking to atone for their guilt, and doing so in accordance with the Divine will. Is not His blood,

again we ask, enough? Could anything more be presented to God than was presented then? Perfect love, obedience, devotion, while bearing all that was due to us. And when faith apprehends this the conscience is purged from dead works—and all works are dead which are put in place of *this* work—for it sees that as regards the settlement of the sin question and a perfect ground of approach to God for the sinner, nothing more needs to be done.

Conscience bows to the fact that nothing more is necessary, for, instead of our sins, it is the eternal efficacy of the offering of Christ that is before God, and according to which He ever views us. Think only of that which has obliterated everything else. Think no longer of your sins, they are gone.

This is the meaning of verse 15, which has been quoted. Christ, by His death, has brought us out from underneath all our sins, and we are now on an entirely new footing. The blood of Christ secures your present pardon and your eternal portion. The death of the testator must take place or the blessings God had purposed could never have become ours (vv. 16, 17).

From verses 18-22 we see again the absolute necessity of the shedding of blood. If Christ's work is so great, how can men gain heaven apart from it? Human obedience has proved worthless as a means of securing blessing. In the twenty-fourth of Exodus we read of the solemn undertaking on the part of Israel to be obedient. "All the words which the Lord hath said will we do," they declared; and, again, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." God entered into covenant with them on this ground, and in a most solemn way bound them to it by blood. There was no escape; it meant entire obedience, or death. It also pointed to the blood of another as the only way of being relieved of their responsibilities. This ought to have taught them their weakness and sinfulness; but alas! they were too full of self-confidence. What emphasis all this gives to the declaration in our passage: "Without shedding of blood is no remission." Yet men are despising the blood to-day. They forget what they are. They forget the united testimony of Scripture. They forget the character of sin. They forget that they have sinned. And they seem in their blindness and perversity to forget these words: "Without shedding of **blood is no remission.**"

How all this brings out the greatness of the work we are considering; for, thank God, the blood has been shed which obtains remission.

There are two other statements to which we must refer. (1) "Now once in the end of the world (or age) hath He appeared to *put away sin* by the sacrifice of Himself." (2) "Christ was once offered to *bear the sins* of many" (vv. 26 & 28). Here we have two statements with regard to the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. One has reference to sin—the principle—the thing in its entirety; the other to sins. He came to put away sin—to rid the universe of it. Thus John the Baptist exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh (beareth) away the sin of the world." This did not in itself involve the salvation of anybody. Had it done so it must have involved the salvation of everybody, whether they believed or not. Thus something else became necessary; and so, we read, "He (Christ) was once offered to bear the **sins** of many.'

Thus we have a two-fold aspect of the great work of Atonement: one Godward, the other manward. Virtually, for God, sin has been already dealt with, and nothing but the savor of Christ's sacrifice remains: beautifully foreshadowed when Noah offered his burnt offering after the waters of the flood had abated, when God, it says, "smelled a savor of rest." Sin is self-will. In its place there is now the sweet odour of Christ's surrender of Himself to do the will of God: "the sacrifice of Himself" being the very antithesis of sin. But He was also the substitute for sinners: "Offered to bear the sins of many"; so that all who are brought to a sense of their guilt and believe on Him might be saved.

These two aspects find their counterpart in Leviticus xvi., where we have the record of the Day of Atonement. First of all we find that Aaron had to "wash his flesh in water," and put on "holy garments" to express in figure that only one perfectly holy could make atonement for sin; then he carried the blood of the sin offering both for himself and the people within the vail and sprinkled it once on the mercy seat and seven times before it, which typified that God extended to the one approaching all the value of that blood which He deemed so precious that it could be placed upon His throne. The very fact that it is placed there ought to be convincing witness that the blood is sufficient. Then the carcasses of those beasts whose blood was brought into the holiest for sin were totally consumed outside the camp. A witness likewise that sin had been completely put away. This in all its reality has been accomplished by Christ, Who appeared once in the end of the age to put away sin

by the sacrifice of Himself. What are all the achievements of man in comparison with this ?

But there was more. There was a second goat, called the live goat, upon the head of which Aaron had to confess all the iniquities and transgressions of the children of Israel. "And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited." This of course on the ground of the death of the other goat. Here we see what Christ did when He was "offered to bear the sins of many." So that we have **sin** put away from God's eye, and in addition, **sins** put away for those who accept Christ as their substitute.

What a place the Cross has ; and how destitute of hope man is apart from it. It is said to be "the end of the age" when Christ appeared. Man's probation was over ; the testing God had applied proved him disobedient and hopeless ; foundation to rest upon he has none unless he finds it in the death of Christ. The coming of the Son of God formed a new beginning. Thus John says, "That which was from the beginning" ; because all else—the trial of the first man and of the flesh—had come to an end. How little this is realised ; the world goes on as if no such climax in its history had been reached ; and mankind tries to forget that "*It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*" This solemn, irrevocable sentence is written with the finger of God upon the race ; and all its enterprises, inventions, and improvements can never erase it. Man's hope lies where God in infinite grace has placed it ; in "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." How blessed to think there has been a work done in this world in which God finds infinite delight, and through which pardon and peace and eternal blessing can be ours. All the questions involved in sin and sins divinely settled.

2. CHRIST'S PRESENT WORK.

We now pass on to consider briefly Christ's present work. "*For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true ; but into heaven itself ; now to appear in the presence of God for us*" (v. 24). So that we see the present is provided for as well as the past. We have seen how glorious has been the work already accomplished for us ; may we not expect Christ's work in the present and in the future to be equally so ? On the cross all our sins were remembered by God and borne by Jesus so

that they might be remembered no more. The One Who bore them then does not forget us now. He Who died for us, now lives for us. Is this not a proof that all our sins are gone? Is it not a proof that no accusing voice can be raised against us? For us He was once forsaken of God; for us He is now in the presence of God.

When the High Priest of old carried in the blood on the Day of Atonement, he appeared in the presence of God. But he could not remain, for the reason that the blood he carried was not of sufficient value. Christ has entered in in the power of His own blood; therefore that blood must be sufficient to take away sin. But, beside the blood, the High Priest's hands were full of sweet incense beaten small, and he had also a censer full of burning coals of fire. "And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not." So that there was the blood and the incense carried in to God's presence. The one speaks of the work done, the other of the moral and personal perfections of the one who did it. Both refer to Christ. His life and death revealed Who He was and what He was. The fire of testing only brought out fragrance. There was nothing in Him to yield anything else. That fragrance now fills heaven. He has carried all His fragrance in as well as all the worth of His work, and He appears in the presence of God *for us*. We are covered by all that He is as well as all that He has done.

The High Priest of old also bore the names of the twelve tribes on His shoulders and on his heart when He went in before God, "for a memorial before the Lord continually" (Ex. xxviii. 29). They were never forgotten. "Upon his heart"; "before the Lord." How much these words convey to us. We know the heart of the One now representing us in heaven. Its love has been tested to the uttermost in this very scene of sight and sense. It is unchanged, for nothing can change it; and we are borne upon His heart before God continually. In this scene of toil and strife, of sorrow and loss, of weakness and disappointment, it is our privilege to know that we are remembered by One Who has served us already on earth as He only could, and now serves us in the place of power; and to retire in spirit from things that distress us here to the presence of God where Christ has appeared for us. His love never allows Him to forget us. His strength never fails us.

3. CHRIST'S FUTURE WORK.

“*Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*” We look back and see Christ bearing our sins. We look up and see our names on His shoulders and on His breast—love and strength combined. We look forward, and His coming is our prospect. If in love He undertook to bear our sins, and has been able to remove them for ever from God’s sight ; and now is engaged on our behalf ; if He sacrificed Himself to remove sin so that God might be able to rest again in His creation ; what a blessing Christ’s return must be to the whole world. It is quite true there will be judgment ; His enemies will be made His footstool ; nevertheless, it is said here, “ He will appear the second time unto **salvation.**” This is, however, to those who look for Him. All that men, as men, have to look for out of Christ is judgment, as we are reminded in verse 27, but “ Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many,” and they who have found refuge there look for Him, and to them He will appear unto salvation. The glorious visions of prophets and seers of old will then be fulfilled ; the world will cease its travail ; the sons of God will enter upon their birthright ; Israel will become the head of the nations ; and blessing far and wide in redeemed creation and amongst all kindreds and people and tongues will tell the glad tale that “ The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.”

Those who know what Christ did in the past are privileged to know what He is doing for them in the present, and can look forward with joy to what He *will* do in the future.

“ There is a generation of saints now, who have been favoured with great light. Dispensational knowledge abounds, and the true peace of the sanctuary is known by simple faith in the word of God. But the moral power of truth is wanted ; the understanding of what our real life is, so that we should live that life, which is Christ ; and with this the condition of soul under which alone our God can communicate divine realities—the depth of God (1 Cor. ii., 9, 10). The power is always Christ by His Spirit, the condition under which alone He can impart it ; the preparedness of heart He alone must give.”

SEPARATION AND DIVISION.

W. H. DORMAN.

I ALLOW it to be difficult to conceive the difference between "separation" and "division."

"Separation" in its scriptural good sense is always from *evil*. In its bad sense (equivalent to "division") it separates from *saints*.

In its good sense it may involve separating from saints, but only from "bad" saints, and always individually.

In its bad sense it always involves separating from good saints as well as bad and always collectively.

In the good sense it is always from *actual evil*.

In the bad sense from *theoretical evil*.

I call "division" a sin because it is always a sin.

By "good" saints I mean those who are good according to the three scripture points. The scripture points I mean are—

Goodness in point of morals.

Soundness in point of doctrine.

Refusal to associate with such as sin in respect of either of these two particulars.

By "bad" those who are otherwise.

"Separation" needs spiritual judgment, there is no shibboleth.

"Division" always has a shibboleth and the flesh can work it to perfection.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

H.W.L. sends us a question relating to Eph. iv. 3—the unity of the Spirit—and asks whether whole meetings should not recognise such unity by breaking the bread and blessing the cup together; also, whether any scripture can be given for individual reception.

Ans. : Where there are Christians gathered to the Lord's Name, who seek to own His authority, and to regulate their meetings according to His Word, both as to ministry, &c., and the exclusion of evil, these would be recognised by all who are endeavouring to "keep the unity of the Spirit." For it must be obvious that we cannot keep the "unity" of the Spirit if we disown those who have the Spirit. The simple question is, Have they the Spirit, and are they seeking to walk according to what He has laid down in the

word? If more than this is demanded, we are seeking to enforce human tradition or authority, neither of which is binding. So that the simple principle on which "the unity of the Spirit" is kept is that each gathering recognises every other, by both receiving and commending. Where this is denied, those who refuse are guilty of independency, and are not endeavouring to keep "the unity of the Spirit." In these days, through separation, by arbitrary acts of discipline, and by forcing questions upon Christians which never ought to have been made a determining factor as far as Church fellowship is concerned, some have made a unity which is not really the unity of which Scripture speaks. It is a unity founded upon the acceptance of certain opinions or judgments. All who agreed with one view formed a unity; those who did not accept this view founded an independent unity, and neither received from the other. This was simply to make light and intelligence, or, it may be, the will of man, the bond, and superseded one Spirit, one body, one Lord, one faith, one baptism.

So much as regards those who are connected with the recovery of the truth in these last days. But what about those who have not had this light granted to them, and who still go on with a perfectly good conscience with much that has grown up in the Church apart from any divine authority? Here, again, we must not make knowledge the test. Knowledge puffeth up. Everywhere and always *love* is the supreme test. "If any man *love* not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be anathema maranatha." But are we virtually to pronounce these words upon those who do love Him, by refusing them the most common and ordinary Christian fellowship such as the Lord's Supper involves? Surely, there are very, very few who would ever approach the simple remembrance of the Lord outside the vast systems around but in love to Him and real desire to remember Him.

Then a further question arises: Is it to be an open table where any, holding whatsoever views he may, can approach, and find a place unchallenged? This would be going to the opposite extreme. It is the **Lord's** table, therefore we cannot refuse any who manifestly own Him; but, because it is the Lord's table, none must be received who refuse His authority by holding or propagating views not in harmony with revealed truth. The same applies, of course, to one whose ways deny the doctrine he professes. The Apostle Paul spoke, when writing to Timothy, of his doctrine and manner

of life ; and where anybody holds the one, and earnestly seeks to follow the other, he is entitled to be recognised as a Christian, and if so, admitted to every Christian privilege. The system that has grown up amongst some of recognising an individual as a Christian, and yet denying him every Christian privilege, is without any authority from Scripture, and productive of untold evil and sorrow.

From all this we may conclude that every individual Christian is entitled to all that belongs to the fellowship (and there is only one), unless debarred by moral or doctrinal evil ; and on the same ground all assemblies of Christians, where the commandments of the Lord are obeyed, are entitled to recognition.

E.P. Ques. : *Did Adam die the day he ate of the forbidden fruit ?*

Ans. : The sentence was : " In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Some suppose this was not carried into execution, because physical death did not occur. This may be, as far as the *letter* of the law went ; nevertheless, we could not say death did not come upon Adam. Could sin be there without death ? Romans v. seems to teach that death followed upon the heels of sin. " By one man sin entered into the world, *and death by sin.*" Sin brought death in its train. Was not expulsion from the garden death ? It is expressly stated this was done lest Adam should take of the tree of life and eat and live for ever. We need to see that death is a condition.

Some seem to think that death did not enter the world until Adam actually died, when he was more than nine hundred years old. So a correspondent writes. He seems to forget the death of Abel. Did Cain, then, bring death in ? Such is not the teaching of Romans v. The " one man " referred to there is Adam, the head of the race. Yes, undoubtedly, death came in the moment sin came in. Moreover, Romans vii. affords confirmation of this view of death. There Paul says, " Sin revived and *I died.*" Did he die physically at that moment ? We know he did not until years after he wrote these words. So people are said to be dead in trespasses and sins when all the time they are alive in the body. So it was with Adam. He died the moment he partook of the fruit ; his communion with God was broken ; his life was forfeited. At the same time it needs to be remembered that God's mercy found him immediately, and provision was made in the gracious promise concerning the woman's seed.

THE FAITH AND THE FLOCK

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PRICE—ONE PENNY.

EDITORIALS.

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” The Bible never calls in question God’s love; it affirms it. This is equally true of the love of Christ. It shines across the page of scripture with a radiance that is un mistakeable. If there was one thing more than another our Lord impressed upon His disciples just ere He left them, it was how much He loved them. “As I have loved you” was the keynote of much that He said. And the Holy Spirit has left on record that “Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end,” *i.e.*, He could not love them more.

Yet how many things seem to contradict this. Our circumstances often seem hard; our trials heavier than we can bear; and the causes of sorrow more numerous than we care to think about. Can love really be at the back of all? The very argument of the apostle, in the words which close the eighth chapter of Romans, is to prove that it is. He does not say, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? for we have every wish gratified; not a cloud in the sky nor a single care.” His language implies a very different state of things to this. He mentions tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword. These, or some of them, are what we are called to pass through. But, far from being a proof that Christ doesn’t love us, we are assured that they cannot separate us from His love.

The consolation, then, of our passage is found in this : we are not to regard these trials as reasons for questioning His love or doubting whether we have it ; but, rather, that these vicissitudes which may deprive us of everything else—friends, wealth, health, and comforts—cannot separate us from the love of Him Who is greater than all beside.

For wherein has that love been displayed ? In something greater than bestowing upon us easy circumstances, or any of the advantages of this life, however coveted. In verse 34 we have one remark—one fact—which reveals the love of Christ in its full extent. “ It is Christ that died.” Death ! that is the proof : that is the assurance. Death is love’s everlasting seal and testimony. It was there He did what we most of all needed : it was there He served us to the uttermost of His power : it was there He gave up all, and bore all : and the blessings flowing to us from this one act surpass everything else He could do for us ; for in that death He gave Himself.

But the love having been manifested, can anything separate us from it ? The same verse mentions three facts which persuade us to the contrary : (1) *Christ is risen.* (2) *He is at the right hand of God.* (3) *He maketh intercession for us.* In rising again, He overcame the strongest and worst of foes. What power ! Who, then, shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Will not the *power* that brought Him out of death prevent anything separating us from the *love* that took Him into it ? In the next place, He is at the right hand of God—a position of supreme exaltation and authority. Is there anything above that or beyond it ? Will He Who went down to the bottom for us, forsake us now He is at the top ? “ ’Tis thence He watches o’er His own, guarding us through the deadly fight.” Lastly, He makes intercession for us. This tells us that in the place of pre-eminence His interest is as great as ever. The High Priest of old bore the names of the children of Israel on his shoulders as well as on His heart ; and the breastplate and the shoulder pieces were connected by a wreathen chain of gold. The shoulder is the place of strength ; the breast of the affections. The two are connected. Nothing can separate us from the love—nothing deprive us of the strength. As Samson took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up

to the top of the hill ; so Christ has spoiled death, and gone up to the right hand of God, where He undertakes for His own. Who, then, shall separate us from His love ?

* * * *

The Consolation of Christ. " For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." In such language the great Apostle of the Gentiles describes his own experience, and incidentally accounts for some of the afflictions of God's people. We say some, for undoubtedly Paul is thinking of sufferings that arise out of the path into which we have been called according to the will of God ; and not of those which may come upon us through our own waywardness. Such could not be called the sufferings of Christ, for He suffered only in doing God's will. But some of the heaviest trials come to us in the path of faith, and because we seek to do God's will ; misunderstanding ; separation from friends ; conflict with the powers of darkness ; opposition, and perhaps persecution, from the world, and, it may be, from the Church. But here it is the consolations of Christ abound. Paul's sufferings came upon him because he preached Christ ; and because Christ was his only object ; but the consolation he received seemed an over-weight of joy. Instead of being cast down he was exultant ; and he knew that others would reap the benefit of this. The " consolations of God " were not small with him, he could say they abounded. May it be so with us.

* * * *

A correspondent and reader of this magazine, who seems to have enjoyed, during a long illness, some of the consolation Christ gives, writes as follows :—" I am as one risen from the dead, especially as I have been under an operation from which I have marvellously rallied so far One longs to be more and more occupied with **Christ**, to be drawn more and more to **His Blessed Person**. Nothing, *nothing* else will do for the soul which once tastes of His sweetness—the altogether lovely One, the chief among ten thousand."

* * * *

" One smile can glorify a day,
One word true hope impart ;
The least disciple need not say
There are no alms to give away,
If love be in the heart."

AN OUTLINE OF "THE REVELATION."

(See Chart issued with February number).

By WALTER SCOTT.

SECOND SECTION. CHAPTER I., 9—20.

WE trust every reader has secured a copy of the Chart* issued with the February number of *The Faith and the Flock*, in which the twelve sections of the Revelation are shewn. In turning then to the chart we find this section thus characterised: **Christ in the midst of the seven Golden Lamp-stands.** This, then, is the first of the visions beheld by the seer in the lonely isle of Patmos—a convict place of banishment for prisoners peculiarly obnoxious to the Emperor and Government. All passed before the rapt gaze of the prophet on the Lord's day—the first day of the week. "I was" or "became in Spirit"; that is, the Seer for the time being was taken possession of by the Spirit—heart, mind, and in fact the whole man controlled by the Holy Spirit; the absence of the article before "Spirit" marks the action as specially characteristic. Whatever Domitian—one of the cruellest of the emperors—laid to the charge of his distinguished prisoner, yet the real ground of his banishment is there stated to be his uncompromising testimony to "the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ." That no political offence was justly chargeable upon the aged apostle is shewn from the fact that on the accession of the just and humane Nerva, the apostle was released. This would not have been done had a political offence been proved, for *all* the Roman emperors were exceedingly jealous of their sovereign rights—such offences were not forgiven, nor readily forgotten.

In the closing words of the previous section (verse 8) the voice of God is heard. In the opening of this section we listen to the words of man (verse 9). There are awful scenes revealed in this book, enough and more to appal the stoutest heart, but He who stilled the angry and raging elements which sought to get out of control of their Creator (Matt. viii. 26), who trod on the billows of the Sea of Galilee (Matt. xiv. 24-27), speaks once again, before ever the storm of divine wrath bursts forth from the throne (Rev. iv. 5), and from the altar (Rev. xiv. 18). The voice of God is the terror of the

*The production of the Chart is a work of art, and if framed and hung up might be profitably utilised in home Bible Readings—a source of pleasure, of help and instruction to many.

wicked. To us His voice is the sheet anchor of our souls, and as we travel through the numerous and sublime scenes unfolded in this wonderful book, we carry with us the voice of verse 8, and our souls are calmed. It is grand in these days to be lost in the greatness of Another—and that other even *God Himself*.

John announces himself as the channel of these divine communications—not as an apostle but in words of severe simplicity—"I, John, who also am your brother and companion in *tribulation*, and in the *kingdom* and *patience* of Jesus" (omit "Christ"). Those three things embrace all the saints of this age and those of Apocalyptic times as well.

Let us now put together the various separate links in one chain which introduce John into the prophetic scene. There were many distinguished men bearing the honoured name of John, but to the heart of the church there is but one such. On moral and spiritual grounds the writer of the fourth Gospel, the three epistles ascribed to the same writer, and the reposer *in* the bosom of Jesus (John xiii. 25, R.V.), is the John *the* writer of The Revelation. Banished from the haunts of men, he is the more alone with God. His natural powers for the occasion were held in abeyance—he "became in Spirit." The visions were beheld in one day—the *first* day of the week in more senses than one. The emperor unwittingly accomplished the purpose of God in sending His servant to Patmos, the very centre of the prophetic situation. In front of him lay the Asiatic assemblies whose history and end he is about to relate. Jerusalem crowded with sacred memories lay south. Rome, whose prisoner he was, but whose doom the Seer is going to unfold, lay west. Babylon, the enslaver of God's people of old, lay to the east. Russia, the Magog of prophecy, lay north. Here in Patmos the visions contained in the book were beheld.

"I heard behind me a great voice" (verse 10). "And I turned to see the voice that spake with me" (verse 12). Evidently the seer had his mind and eyes directed onward to the kingdom, but ere the glories of Messiah's reign could be entered upon, the fortunes of the professing church—the most responsible witness for God of all others—must first be depicted. The ruin of the church necessarily precedes the full revelation, and establishment of the kingdom. The "great voice" was the voice of God. He is the Source of all

authority in this book—"All power is of God." He has already morally judged the professing Christian body on earth, but the sentence of utter rejection (Rev. iii. 16) is not yet executed. Till then that body is God's public witness to bear His name and exhibit His character on earth. Alas! it has miserably failed. The church as the body of Christ is intact, and is maintained in essential unity before God. *It* cannot come into judgment as in its inception, maintainance, and perfection in glory—all is secured by God Himself. And it is not in this aspect the church is presented in Revelation, but as the House of God.

The seven churches in Asia to whom John was to write are severally named (verse 11). These various churches had each their own special message sent them, but apart from the local and distinctive application, the seven churches separately and together formed the colouring and back-ground on which the history of the church as a whole could be depicted, from her moral fall (Rev. ii. 4) till her rejection (iii. 16). Note, that here the churches as such are addressed; whereas in the next section the representatives are written to.

"I saw seven golden candlesticks" or lamps. In the Spirit's interpretation of the symbol we read "*the seven candlesticks . . . are the seven churches*" (verse 20). Each lamp stands on its own base. Each church is within its own sphere, responsible *alone* to God. There is no Metropolitan church on earth. Each assembly in its own geographical locality is directly and solely responsible to Christ, and not to another or group of such, whether in London or Rome. The mystical body of Christ is composed of the aggregate of saints (1 Cor. xii. 13). A confederation of assemblies may display a certain external unity, but only for a brief season. The thing is bound to break up, and the truth of this has been amply verified in our own days. The Spirit's unity is that of *all saints*, not of many, or all assemblies.

"*The seven golden candlesticks.*" The numeral seven points to what is spiritually complete, while the gold refers to what is righteous before God. The meaning is, that the Church here viewed as the House of God (1 Tim. iii. 15) was constituted in Divine righteousness. In the symbol, therefore, of the Seven Golden Candlesticks, we have the Church shewn as God sees it, morally complete and divinely

righteous as His vessel of testimony on the earth—not what the Church *became*, but what it was in God's sight, and this it should have been practically—a reflex of God's character.

But the seven golden lamps do not form *the* subject of this introductory vision. What is the church apart from Christ? Its life, glory, and blessedness are derived from Him. Beloved reader, let us come out of our narrow and circumscribed surroundings and contemplate with profoundest reverence the One here characteristically described as in the midst of the Seven Candlesticks—" *One like unto [thè] Son of Man.*" The church has moved from her centre. She has got out of touch and contact with her Head in heaven. She has lost faith in the Living God. She has lost sight of the glorious One in her midst. Hence the drifting process, rapidly bearing her down till the climax of horrors is reached, and she fathoms the depths of Satanic wickedness (Rev. xviii. 2).

It is the characteristics of the Son of Man that here come before us. In the character of Son of Man He touches the human race. Under that same title He shall exercise universal sovereignty, and to Him as Son of Man all judgment is committed. The judicial glory and majesty of Christ overwhelmed the Seer (verse 17). What effect has it wrought upon the soul and conscience of the writer and reader?

" *Clothed with a garment down to the foot*" intimates calm, deliberate, dignified judgment. "*Girt about the paps (breasts) with a golden girdle.*" Divine Righteousness and Divine Faithfulness constitute the girdle, but these are never separated from the love of His blessed heart, though these have to be restrained. "*His head and hairs white like wool, as white as snow.*" This part of the description identifies Him with "**The Ancient of Days**" (Dan. vii. 9). The Son of Man and the Ancient of Days are distinct in Person, but certain characteristics and actions are similar to both (Dan. vii. 13, 22; Rev. i. 13, 14). Divine wisdom—essentially so—and absolute purity in the colour named—white—is what we gather from the head and hairs. Divine wisdom is ever exercised in essential purity. The uncovered head points to what He is personally, not what He is officially. "*His eyes as a flame of fire.*" Nothing escapes His keen, penetrating judgment. "*His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace.*" Firm, unyielding, judicial judgment upon all that which His eye searches out in the churches. "*His voice as*

the sound of many waters." The waves of human passion and rebellion will yet as before rise and hurl themselves against the throne of the Eternal, but the majesty and terror of His voice—more powerful than many cataracts—will break and utterly overwhelm every combination of evil (Ps. 93).

In verse 16 certain official glories are presented, and we may add, what is relative also. "*He had in His right hand seven stars.*" Stars are meant to shine in a dark night and reflect the light of heaven on earth. "*The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches*" (verse 20). Christ is the source of all gifts to His church, and they are upheld by His power; whether for administration or edification.

All here is viewed in Divine order. (Compare with iii. 1). As the night darkens, may every spiritual ruler and guide shine increasingly, and draw his resources more deeply from Christ. *He* will sustain every faithful servant in His "right hand." Further, "*Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword.*" The execution of Divine judgment by the irresistible force of His word (see 2 Thess. ii. 8). Christ never puts His hands on His foes. He speaks, and at once the judgment is executed. "*His countenance as the sun shineth in his strength.*" Supreme glory is indicated in His blessed face, and glory of such sort as no mortal can gaze upon.

The sight was all too much, even for the disciple peculiarly loved of the Lord. John himself narrates the effect of the vision. "*When I saw Him I fell at His feet as dead*" (verse 17). This was the overwhelming effect of the vision. "*And He laid His right hand upon me.*" O how the gentle pressure of that hand must have thrilled the heart of John as he lay at the feet of his adorable Lord. Then, once again, the familiar "Fear not" would calm and quiet the soul.

"*I am the First and the Last.*" Here is a title essentially Divine and a rock of strength for human weakness and sorrow. Build upon it, rest your soul's weakness upon it. Jehovah takes that same title in the book of Isaiah three times (Chaps. xli. 4; xlv. 6; xlviii. 12). Christ applies it also to Himself three times in our book (Chaps. i. 17; ii. 8; xxii. 13). As the "First" He is supreme and before all. As the "Last" He is the end, the Consummation. He is source and end. And this One is none other than Jesus of Nazareth, now glorified in the heavens.

Then He says—who says? not the Seer, but the Lord Himself, “**I am He that liveth.**” The Living One victorious over death and all the circumstances of life. “Was dead,” or “became dead.” Death had no claim upon Him. He voluntarily entered into the domain of death. He laid down His life. Death is the stronghold of Satan and the result of sin. Men enter it of necessity. He voluntarily passed through its portals. Now hear the shout of the victor, “**BEHOLD I AM ALIVE FOR EVERMORE.**” This, then, is our everlasting strength, our strong consolation. Our Lord calls attention to a mighty truth practically forgotten by the church. It was the battle cry of Luther. The Lord lives! The Lord lives! “*And have the keys of death and of hades*” (not the English word “hell”). He is Master of the whole situation. He is Lord of death and hades, of the bodies and souls of all—but especially does He preserve those of His own.

There are two commands to write (verses 11, 19), but between these we have the glorious visions of Christ and the consolatory truths contained in verses 17 and 18. What the Seer is to write is contained in three divisions into which the contents of the book are distributed, *not* including the Introduction (chap. i. 1-8), nor the closing section (chap. xxii. 6-21). “Write the things which thou hast seen (*past*) and the things which are (*present*) and the things which shall be hereafter” (*future*). Those three divisions are consecutive; they do not overlap. Each is complete in itself, and contains within itself its own group of events. The first division is found in chap. i. The second division occupies chaps. ii. and iii. The third division is the largest, commencing with chap. iv. and closing with chap. xxii. 5. [The mystery of the stars and candlesticks (verse 20) has been already referred to.]

“I am myself a professor of theology, and many have acknowledged that they have derived no inconsiderable assistance from me; yet I have often felt myself most sensibly raised and helped by a single word from a brother, who thought himself very much my inferior. The word of a brother, pronounced from Holy Scripture in a time of need, carries an inconceivable weight with it. . . . The greatest saints have their times of weakness, when others are stronger than they.”

THE BRIDEGROOM AND THE BRIDE.

“The Lily of the Valleys.”—S.S. ii. 1.

'Tis the “Lily of the Valleys,”
Not a growth midst dust and din,
Is the cherished “Bride of Jesus,”
Spotless, pure, without, within.

In the atmosphere of heaven,
From the tumult far away,
There it is in sweet communion,
She beholds the brightest day.

There, she sits beneath His shadow,
There, how sweet she only knows;
'Tis the rest of full communion,
'Tis the rapture of repose.

'Tis “His fruit,” her soul's provision,
Far beyond the angel's fare;
For the heavenly food provided,
Rich is found beyond compare.

There the Bride enjoys her portion,
Sitting closely to His side,
With His constant love unfolding,
She is wholly satisfied.

Oh, the world—how poor its pleasures!
In His love its wooing dies,
He alone her heart's own treasure,
And herself the Bridegroom's prize.—ALBERT MIDLAND.

THE LAST MOMENTS OF CHRIST.

By W. H. DORMAN.

NO subject, no event, recorded in the scripture approaches in profound importance to all created beings, and especially to us, the death of the Lord Jesus.

The whole narrative, from His entrance into the garden of Gethsemane is of entrancing interest. The time occupied is brief, not more than some eighteen or twenty hours, but how full of incident! We acknowledge thankfully the completeness of the account the Spirit of God has caused to be given us so that we may trace the circumstances of every hour.

The bearing of the Son of God in all that troublous time fills the soul with worship ; and we can for a moment forget even our own blessing, spell-bound in admiration at the sight of His supreme majesty, even in circumstances of the lowest misery and degradation.*

I make no doubt that the utterances of Christ on the cross, including the prayer for His enemies, the comforting of the believing robber, and the loving commendation of His mother to John, all took place before the coming on of the darkness ; and that from that time there was a solemn dreadful silence on His part until nearly the close of those dark hours of awful conflict when the multitudinous energies were all on one side, and only solitary endurance on the other. The great Deliverer went down into the fight to wrench from the strong one the armour wherein he trusted, and to deliver his captives (Col. ii. 14, 15 ; Luke xi. 21, 22). The Good Shepherd faced the destroying wolf for the sake of the sheep (John x. 12). The Lamb of God presented Himself the willing sacrifice to take away the sins of the world. In all this He was a passive sufferer and endured even the forsaking of God, and not all the powers of heaven and earth and hell combined could move or destroy Him. Having been made sin He became obnoxious to the wrathful judgment of the Divine Throne which was poured upon Him without measure and He weathered that fearful tempest. " All Thy waves and Thy billows passed over Me " (Jonah ii. 3).

I suppose about a quarter of an hour before three o'clock the silence was broken by that exceeding bitter cry. It met with instant response, " Thou hast heard me from the horns of the wild oxen " (Ps. xxii. 21). All the struggle was over. The victory was complete. Principalities and powers were worsted and put to ignominious defeat. The Throne itself could demand no more. There remained a scripture which lacked fulfilment, and He, careful about that even in the moment of unparalleled triumph, said " I thirst," and when the callous bystanders had responded by offering Him vinegar on a sponge, He gave forth the victorious shout, " It is finished." The verdict lay with Himself alone ; His enemies were vanquished and put to utter rout ; the Throne was satisfied and

* The Elders round the Throne sing to the Lamb—" Thou didst purchase unto God with Thy blood of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation." They lost sight of the very joy of their own salvation in admiration of what the Lamb had done for the blessed will of God. (Rev. v. 9).

could demand nothing more ; and He proclaimed in the face of all created existences that nothing remained to be won. His conquest was complete and absolute, none could move a tongue any more for ever. He then in sublime dignity gave up His Spirit to His Father. He laid down His life for the sheep. No one took it from Him. No created being could—such was the commandment of the Father. He laid it down of Himself, potent in His supreme conquest, able and ready to take it again. Great was the glory of the Father. He had glorified His name once in that matchless life, and now He had glorified it again in that unexampled death.

At that moment a shock of earthquake passed over the spot, and, greater portent still, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The amazement of the centurion and the spectators was great. Death by the cross was usually lingering, the victims dying of slow exhaustion. At times it took as long as three days before they finally breathed their last. Here was One in the fulness of His strength, who after a loud shout died without a struggle. It was no heart failure or any sudden exhaustion, or other natural cause of instant death. He proclaimed aloud His intention, and forthwith put it into execution. Well might the Roman officer say, "This was a man of Divine origin."

Meantime everything from that moment changed. God took in hand the obsequies of His Son. A mysterious influence prevented the body being mishandled, but in order that a certain scripture should not be unfulfilled, a soldier was moved to inflict an honourable wound. Men had designed that His corpse should be cast into some common barathrum where the bodies of executed criminals were thrown, and where, doubtless, were consigned the mangled corpses of the transgressors, His companions in crucifixion. But God had other thoughts, and two men of the wealthiest class in the city came forward and claimed the body of the King, and Pilate only too willingly gave it up ; the unlooked for portentous death adding to the load on his uneasy conscience.

With reverent care they took the body down, and rolled it in a mass of myrrh and aloes, and wrapped it round and round with long swathes of linen ; and then, because the time was short ere the Sabbath's enforced cessation of all labour, guided by God they laid Him in a tomb newly excavated in the living rock, in the seclusion

of a garden, and where no defiling corpse had ever been laid. It was a royal burial, brief because time pressed, but no circumstance of dignity was wanting. The solemn close had quelled the hostility of His enemies, and the mean fears of the priests and the Pharisees, who thought all men as deceitful as themselves, were utilised to compel them to provide a guard of honour around the resting place of the Son of God. "They appointed His grave with the wicked, but He was with the rich in His death, because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth" (Isa. liii. 9).

Jesus had said that, conformable to the scriptures, He was to be buried in the ground for three days and nights. He was left in the grave just barely long enough technically to fulfil the scriptural prediction, and then the Father with every circumstance of glory "brought again from the dead the Great Shepherd of the Sheep"—The Lord Jesus Christ—The King of Glory.

He Hell in Hell laid low,
 Made sin He sin o'erthrew,
 Bow'd to the grave destroyed it so,
 And Death by dying slew.

Bless, bless the Conqueror slain ;
 Slain in His victory.
 Who lived, Who died, Who lives again,
 For thee, His church, for thee.

"It is fresh truth which tests the soul and faith. Old truth, generally received, and by which a body of people are distinguished from those around them, may be a subject of pride to the flesh, even where it is the truth, as was the case with the Jews. But fresh truth is a question of faith in its source ; there is not the support of a body accredited by it, but the cross of hostility and isolation."

* * * *

"No difference in the Father's house, but great difference in the kingdom."

* * * *

"Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me." This is the Spirit's work—the work of the Comforter. And what is the source of comfort expressed in this song? It is that sin is put away, and that the heart is assured of it. Here are the twin graces implanted by the Holy Spirit, namely, comfort and praise, and both flowing from the assurance of sin forgiven and put away.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS:—

A Simple Exposition.

CHAP. X., 1-10.

“ LO, I COME TO DO THY WILL, O GOD.”

IN keeping with the whole tenor of the glorious epistle we are considering, we are again led to contemplate the greatness of the Person Who introduced and gives character to Christianity. But nowhere does His far surpassing majesty shine with more brilliant and dazzling lustre than here. When we hear One saying, as taking part in the counsels of eternity with God Himself, “ Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God,” worship alone becomes us ; for we feel that, however great may have been the servants and saints raised up by divine power who attempted to do a measure of God’s will in the past, here is One Who eclipses all.

Our Lord Jesus Christ stands apart from all others as the alone accomplisher of God’s will. That will had never been accomplished. Neither Adam in the garden ; nor Abraham, a stranger in Canaan ; nor Moses, leader of the Chosen People to their promised inheritance ; nor the Chosen People themselves, had ever given God perfect satisfaction as to their own path, much less rendered satisfaction on account of the sin of the world. They could not. Great as they were, they were only human ; and they constantly broke down. Here, on the other hand, we contemplate One Who undertakes to do all God’s will. We hear Him speaking in eternity, and He speaks with no uncertainty. And what a blessed thing for us it is so, for upon the accomplishment of all that God required—upon the supreme necessity of rendering full satisfaction—depended our salvation. There is no “ peradventure ” here, as when Moses went up the mount to plead for Israel. There is no alloy of human weakness, nor grain of human imperfection ; the One Who speaks knows full well all that is required, and He undertakes it in the full consciousness that He can meet all demands.

Can He take away my sins ? Yes. When He undertook to do the will of God, this was included. God’s will is that all men should be saved (1 Tim. ii. 4), and Christ did everything necessary for this, so that God could give effect to His will. In accepting by simple faith what Christ has done, the believer knows that his sins

and iniquities will be remembered no more. Thus Christ's perfect work rests upon His Person ; and our salvation rests upon both.

Having already seen, in our former meditations, the superiority of Christ with regard to prophets, priests, and leaders of old, let us now see, from the passage before us, the superiority of His sacrifice over all that had gone before.

" For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect (v. 1)." From this we learn that God must have *perfection*. Who can present it to Him ? The sinner himself is very, very far from perfect. We have done what we ought not to have done, and left undone what we ought to have done. " The law," we read, " made nothing perfect." The offering of sacrifices year by year continually proved their insufficiency.

The next verse shows that could a perfect offering have been presented there would have been no need for repetition. *" For then would they not have ceased to be offered ? because that the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins "* (v. 2). In all this we see the identification of the person with his offering. These sacrifices under law not being perfect, could not make the comers thereunto perfect. This is of supreme importance, and lies at the very basis of everything. That the sinner cannot appear before God in any goodness of his own is evident, for he must bring an offering. And, further, if he cannot bring a perfect offering he himself is not perfect. Therefore it goes on : *" But in these sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins "* (vv. 3, 4). Such sacrifices could not remove sins in perpetuity. Even their temporary value derived all its force from the fact that they foreshadowed something better.

Where then shall this perfect offering be found ? Now the great point to be borne in mind is this : that, though these sacrifices were insufficient of themselves, they yet did point on to a sacrifice that would eventually be offered which would make the comers thereunto perfect, and which would only need to be offered once because of such value that the worshipper who approached God would do so without any conscience of sins. It is to this we are now introduced.

“ *Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and Offering Thou wouldst not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me : In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God* ” (vv. 5, 7). Here, then, is One Who undertakes to give to God all He wanted. He comes to do God’s will. When a person’s will is done, that person gets all he requires. This is the simple meaning of our text. The offerings and sacrifices of old never gave God pleasure, for how could bullocks or rams give God what He wanted. How could they take any account of sin, or enter into the judgment it deserved, on the one hand ; or what moral or personal worth could they present to God on the other. In Christ all these are found, and found in perfection. The cross was the acknowledgment of what sin deserved ; of where it had placed man ; and that God was righteous in judging it. At the same time it was the display of absolute obedience and devotedness on the part of Him Who was thus made sin. The character of sin, the character of God, and the full value of Christ’s offering, all came out there. Christ offered Himself to God in all the value of what He was, at the same time that He bore the judgment of sin. In this double aspect of the cross we see that God found all He wanted. His will was done. On the one hand judgment awoke against Christ, on the other there arose to God the sweet savor of the One Who bore it. It is this which has perfected us for ever, for God has been satisfied.

Is it any wonder that all this abides before God forever. The judgment is passed ; what ascended to God from the very place of death remains. And so we read : “ *Above when He said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin Thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein ; which are offered by the law ; then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second* ” (vv. 8, 9). At last God has got what He wanted, for Christ has borne what sin deserves, and rendered to God perfect obedience in doing it—sinless perfection from the sin-bearer—and thus a ground is laid whereby the worshipper can approach, and God can receive him into His presence.

It is in thinking of what God has got that the soul finds its joy in worship. One has come Who could give God all He required, by His ability to *render* perfect obedience, and to *endure* even the

hiding of God's face on account of sin. How eloquently the words, "a body hast Thou prepared Me," speak of the place He took—He Who had part, as God, in the eternal counsels—in order to give effect to both. Especially when we remember that the words—"a body hast Thou prepared Me"—are the Septuagint rendering of "Thou hast digged ears for Me" of Psalm xl. It shows that the great thought of His becoming man was to obey. As one has said: "The ear is always employed as a sign of the reception of commandments In taking a body, the Lord took the form of a servant. Ears were digged for Him. That is to say, He placed Himself in a position in which He had to obey all His Master's will, what ever it might be."

We come in the next place to the application of all this to us. "*By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*" (v. 10). It was part of God's will that that body should be offered on our behalf, and that we should be separated to Him according to all the value of such an offering.

Here we rest, in wonder viewing
All our sins on Jesus laid,
And a full redemption flowing
From the sacrifice He made!

This one sacrifice, if we have come to it, has made us perfect. Not perfect in ourselves, we never shall be that until we arrive at the other side clothed in glorified bodies, but perfect because the sacrifice we have come to is perfect. And if perfect, we have no more conscience of sins. I cannot look at the Cross of Calvary where God's will was done, and my sins at the same time. The one obliterates the other. God's will has been done by another—One Who undertook it in the eternity that is past—and He asks no more from me as a ground of His reception of me. Having received all from Christ, He will not wait at my door for anything. And, yet, it is thus He gets everything. With glad free hearts we worship and serve Him, because we know that in respect of our sins **Another** has rendered all He requires.

What peace and contentment reign within our hearts as we thus meditate upon One Who has done God's will. It leaves us nothing to do as regards our position before God. But as we look upon Him Who was great enough to give God all He required, we worship. Those words, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God," fill a gap which had remained open all down the ages, and which they

only could close. Of old God had to say it repented Him that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. Again, after further centuries we read: "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." And even of Israel—the chosen nation—it had to be said: "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?"

But One there was different from all this; and in the volume of the book it was written of Him, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." At last, what God looked for all along from man has been given Him. How blessed to know God sees us in connection with One, in Whom He is well pleased, and not in connection with ourselves as children of Adam or our sins.

I AM.

My soul, hear the voice of Jehovah, He saith
I am whatsoever thou wilt,
 Wilt thou be released from thy burden of sin?
 Then *I am* the *Bearer of Guilt*.

If helpless, thy *Helper*, if hopeless, thy *Hope*,
 If fearful, thy *Confidence*, I,
 If friendless, thy *Friend*, if homeless, thy *Home*,
 If an orphan, thy Father on high.

If a widow, behold me a Husband most kind,
 If careworn and anxious, thy *Ease*,
 If weary, thy *Rest*, if feeble, thy *Power*,
 If troubled, thy *Solace and Peace*.

If faint, thy *Support*, if erring, thy *Guide*,
 If simple, thy *Wisdom* is here.

If lonely, thy *Brother*, if hungry, thy *Bread*,
 If thirsty, thy *Water* clear.

If a mourner, behold Me a *Comforter* sweet,
 If a failure, the *Remedy* sure.

If sick, I am *Health*, if poor, I am *Wealth*,
 Which will to all ages endure.

If unlearned, then I am thy *Teacher* from Heaven,
 If perplexed, a *Counsellor* wise,
 If lost, I'm the *Way*, the *Gate* and the *Door*,
 If sightless, then I am thine eyes.

If strengthless, thy *Strength* every moment am I
 Ah, soon shall the joyful hour come,
 When I, as thy glorious *Life* shall appear,
 Triumphant o'er death and the tomb.

M.E.R.

SANCTIFICATION.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

SANCTIFICATION is as truly characteristic of the epistle to the Hebrews as justification is of the epistle to the Romans. There is moral suitability in this. In Hebrews the sanctuary is in view, and our fitness for such a place ; in Romans it is the throne that is in question, and the ground upon which we can stand before it without alarm. Sanctification may be said to connect itself with the holiness of God ; justification rather with the righteousness of God.

“ The sanctified ” is, in the epistle to the Hebrews, a kind of technical term descriptive of the whole Christian company. In chap. ii. 11 we read : “ Both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.” Christ is the Sanctifier ; Christians are the sanctified. Christ has thus a circle in this world that He can call “ His own ” (John xiii. 1). They are no longer “ of the world,” having been separated from it by sovereign grace ; they are constituted a heavenly band, taking their whole character from Christ, the heavenly One. This is the force of the words “ all of one.” We are of Christ’s order, we are partakers of the divine nature, and we stand in Christ’s own position and relationship with His Father—God. If I would know the divine thought as to Christians, I must look, not at Christians themselves (where imperfection is ever seen), but at Christ in His present position of acceptance and blessing on high. “ As He is, so are we in this world ” (1 John iv. 17). So wonderful is the place into which He has brought us as the fruit of His redemption, that “ He is not ashamed to call us brethren.” If we were to-day in the condition in which His love found us at the first, He might well be ashamed to acknowledge us ; *now*, He is able to survey all the objects of His favour with supreme delight. We are His own workmanship ; and, as such, the reflection of His glory. “ Holy brethren ” is the Spirit’s account of us in Heb. iii. 1.

Into the midst of His sanctified company the risen Lord delights to come. There alone can His heart find joy amid the wreck of the present world. There His voice is heard, speaking to us of the Father’s name, unfolding its deep blessedness to our hearts ; and

there also He gives forth His song of praise to God, as the Chief Musician of His people. (Compare Heb. ii. 11, 12). *We* only sing aright in measure as we are near enough to Him to catch the strains of His heavenly voice.

In Heb. x. we have formally stated the ground of our sanctification. Christ's perfect sacrifice is there on view, in contrast with all the inefficacious sacrifices of the Levitical dispensation. By Him all the will of God has been accomplished. Then we read: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." And a little later: "By one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified (or the sanctified)." We are thus set apart by the will of God in virtue of Christ's one precious sacrifice. This is absolute. It is not that progressive work in the soul which is called sanctification elsewhere; *that* is the operation of the Holy Spirit; but in Hebrews it is not the work of the Spirit that is under discussion, but the work of Christ. This is why, in the allusion to Lev. viii. in Heb. x. 22, we find reference made to the water and the blood, but not the oil.

Every believer in Jesus is thus God's sanctified man. He has been set apart by God for Himself for ever. In all the value of Christ's efficacious sacrifice he stands before God eternally. In this there is no difference between one Christian and another, the youngest being as truly sanctified (in the sense of Heb. x.) as the oldest and ripest saint on earth. In realisation of the power and blessedness of the position there is ample room for progress, but the position itself remains unchangeably the same. It can neither be improved nor marred by the hand of man. "Sanctified" and "perfected" are God's grand terms descriptive of the present standing of every believer in virtue of the accomplished work of the Lord Jesus. Yet how feebly is it apprehended! Sacerdotalism, with all its God-dishonouring inventions, thrives upon the prevailing ignorance of this wonderful grace of God.

Turn now to the first epistle to the Corinthians. Here the apostle describes his readers as "the sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling," and in chap. vi. 11 he states most positively: "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." As addressed to such people as the Corinthians, this is manifestly standing, not state;

position, not condition. The holy name of the Lord was being painfully dishonoured amongst these believers. In any practical sense, sanctification was a nullity with them ; but this condition of things (sorrowful as it was) could in no wise affect their place and portion as "in Christ." The apostle emphasises this in order to reach their hearts and consciences, that so they might become thoroughly ashamed of their ways. God's sanctified ones should at least walk in separation from the world which lieth in the wicked one, utterly abhorring all its words and ways.

The same absolute aspect of sanctification is found in 2 Thess. ii. 13 and 1 Pet. i. 2. In both of these passages it is called "sanctification of the Spirit." In the Peter passage the position of the Christian is contrasted with that of the Jew of old. The latter was marked off for God in an external way merely, his separation being characterised by the possession of ordinances such as no other nation possessed ; the Christian has been marked off for God by an inward work of the Holy Spirit, whereby a new life and nature have been imparted.

There are various senses in which the word "sanctified" is used in the New Testament scriptures (*e.g.*, Heb. x. 29 ; 2 Tim. ii. 21 ; 1 Cor. vii., 14) which we cannot attempt to deal with in the present article ; we pass therefore to the progressive aspect of this great truth. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." So the apostle tells us in 1 Thess. iv. 3. There is no mistaking the meaning of this. The apostle is not stating something that is absolutely and for ever true of the believer (as in the passages already considered) ; but rather what our Saviour-God desires should be true in all His own from day to day. It is complete separation from everything pertaining to the present evil world, under the mighty influence of divine grace. Self-occupation cannot produce this. The effort of many, in their quest for practical holiness, to slay the flesh within themselves, only leads to sorrow and despair. But when once the believer realises that he has been eternally set apart for God in virtue of the one offering of the Lord Jesus, it becomes the simplest matter possible to hold himself aloof from everything that is inconsistent with that wonderful position. Being in heart and mind outside the world of the first man, he expresses in his life those ways that savour of that other world of which the glorious Second Man is both the centre and the Sun.

There are two great means whereby we become sanctified in the practical sense. They are indicated in our Lord's prayer in John xvii. (1) The truth. "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth" (v. 17). This is not an abrupt entrance into an ecstatic experience, but the heart and life growingly formed by revealed truth, *i.e.*, by Holy Scripture. (2) The risen Lord Himself. "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (v. 19). An object outside of ourselves is absolutely necessary if the walk is to be steady and firm. Christ Himself is this to us in His present position on high in separation from this scene. Thus we have not only the book of God, but also the Son of God Himself as the joyful occupation of our hearts during the days of our pilgrimage.

In Heb. xii. 14 we are exhorted to "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." This means that the Lord will never acknowledge as His any man, whatever his profession, who has no regard for holiness in his life and walk. God's saints are likened to sheep. These abhor filth, while the washed sow wallows in it to its heart's delight (2 Pet. ii. 22). In the light of Heb. iii. 1, where the whole Christian company are addressed as "holy brethren," the exhortation in chap. xii. 14 is to the effect that we should be in *condition* what we are in *position*.

Oh, the wonders of divine grace! By the will of God we have been once and for ever sanctified, on the basis of the blood of Christ, and through an inward work of the Holy Spirit. Our simple business now is to live in the reality of this in the energy of the Spirit. A day is coming when the results of our present aims and pursuits will be publicly manifested. With this in view the apostle prayed for his beloved Thessalonian converts that the Lord would establish their hearts unblameable in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints (1 Thess. iii. 13).

Increased holiness of life brings increased knowledge of God. The holy walk of a believer is that which *deepens* the vessel so as to receive more of Christ Jesus the Lord. The believer's capacity for receiving increases with his walking up to the light of what he has already got.

CHRIST OUR LIFE :

OR, DOES JOHN VI. REFER TO THE LORD'S SUPPER?

(Concluded).

By W. JEATER.

II.

(3) I have anticipated to some extent what might be said upon the spiritual interpretation of the chapter—an interpretation that has the sanction of such names as Westcott and Edersheim, Plummer and Dods, among recent expositors, though the list might be swollen indefinitely if there were any purpose in doing so. Indeed, it must be said in justice to sacramentarian interpreters, that few, if any of them, would *limit* the meaning of the passage to Eucharistic participation. They would admit that spiritual realities are implied. The defect of their interpretation is that they so link the reality to the symbol, as to deny the presence of the reality in the absence of the sign, which is as though one should deny the sovereignty of our king unless he always carried crown and sceptre with him. As a fact, he was king for months before he was crowned.

But the chief witness for the spiritual interpretation of St. John's record is—St. John himself. Many good men have held and still hold to the view that the central teaching of the chapter turns upon the Eucharist. I can only confess that, as I recall the intensely vital and spiritual character of St. John's teaching—his presentation of Christ as the source of life, the Support of life, as Truth, as Light, as Love—I do not understand the weakening of his thought by substituting the Sacrament for the Saviour of Whom the sacrament speaks.

To the careless reader of the section before us, particularly if he follows the text broken up into verses, as is unfortunately the case in our Authorised Version, it may seem as though there is little order, and that there are frequent and puzzling repetitions. The truth is, the lines of thought are well marked, while there are no mere repetitions. Where a statement is repeated, it is, as Dr. Plummer points out, like a diamond that is re-cut or re-set. We must go back to the 32nd verse for the beginning of the Lord's statement about Himself as "The Bread of Life." In this statement,

broken up once and again by the comments of the Jews, the Lord makes a fourfold reference to Himself as the Bread: (1) He is the true or real Bread, as contrasted with the manna which was the mere type of Himself. (2) He is the Bread of God. (3) He is the Bread of Life. (4) He is the Living Bread—an expression that is more than a verbal variation of the last mentioned; that “referred to its *effects*, like the Tree of Life, which was a mere instrument; the Living [Bread] refers to its nature.” The characteristic of this bread is that it is from heaven, and is viewed as “coming down”—(a timeless phrase that must not be understood as indicating a constant coming)—and as having come down, that is, there is a definite reference to the Incarnation. The effects of eating are, negatively stated, that a man would not die; affirmatively, that he would live for ever.

We leave for the moment the question of what is meant by “eating,” as the expression comes up again. At the end of the statement we are considering (v. 51), the Lord says, “The bread which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.”

This strikes a fresh note, and the attention of the Jews is arrested to the point of controversy among themselves. “How can this man give us His flesh to eat?”

What meaning underlies the expression? There can be little doubt, on a comparison with other passages in the writings of St. John, that the word indicates the Son of God as Incarnate—as True Man. “The Word became flesh” is the statement already quoted from the Prologue of the Gospel, while in his Epistle, St. John writes that the test of a spirit’s being from God or from Antichrist is whether or not it confesses Jesus Christ as having come in the flesh. And the phrase doubtless means that the Bread of the world is not some glorious, mysterious Being, utterly beyond the reach of our senses (though on the Divine side He ever is that), but True Man, knowing the human lot with its temptations and its sorrows, knowing them, too, as we cannot know them, because He has never known the moral bluntings and spiritual callousness that come from sin.

The exclamation of the Jews leads the Lord on to an extension of His thought. Not His flesh only, but His Blood must be received in order to the possession of eternal life. That is, He must be

received not only as Incarnate, but as the Sacrifice. He is not merely a gracious example ; He is the Redeemer : the thought is one of sacrificial participation, though the teaching is veiled, as He Himself said at a later day, in parables or similitudes. It is an expansion of His opening statement about the Bread of Life, the more simple figure to which He reverts as He closes.

What, then, is the eating and drinking ? It has been asked, if the Lord meant simply to speak of faith in Himself, why did He choose expressions that were strange and mysterious ? We may not always see the " Why ? " but if He saw fit to speak to the woman of Samaria of Himself as the water of life to be received for blessing, why should He not here adopt a related figure and speak of bread for hunger as well as water for thirst ? This much is certain—when He first speaks of Himself as the Bread of Life, He does not continue the figure and speak of " eating," as we should expect, but of " coming " and of " believing." " I am the Bread of Life : he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." Throughout these sections, " believing," " coming," and " eating and drinking " are used almost interchangeably, and the *effects* of eating are those effects that are elsewhere connected with believing—such as living for ever, the possession of eternal life, the being raised at the last day, abiding in Christ, and living because of Christ. Every one of these blessings is elsewhere associated with belief in the Lord, and these additional phrases throw a vivid light upon Christ's conception of faith. It is vastly different from the easy-going faith we meet with—and find in ourselves—to-day, a faith that is content with historical reconstruction, or with the efforts of what is called " a historical imagination,"—a faith that stands apart and detached, and can appraise, and, perchance approve, the " originality " of our Lord's " plan," can measure His limitations, or point out (as does a writer in the recently-published *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*), where here and there He makes " a mistake." In the Lord's view it was a question of life and death, of a hunger of soul that can be satisfied only by Him, of a thirst He only could quench, and that not merely by the sense of His presence, by the beauty of His life and the power of His example, but by what is figured in the separation of the flesh from the blood—by His death. We " come " to Him, as to the haven and the rest of our hearts ; we " believe "—not merely His words, not merely *on*

Him, but as St. John in a vivid phrase often puts it, we believe *into* Him, as though we thereby lose ourselves in Him; we "eat and drink" of Him, so that, as Heavenly Food, He becomes the stay and strength of our life; we "abide" in Him, as in the security of a strong fortress, or as a fruit-bearing vine-branch in the parent stem.

Perhaps the tersest comment on the synagogogue discourse is that of St. Augustine: "Believe, and thou hast eaten."

Strange it is, that such words should excite contention among the Jews, and murmuring among His own disciples. It was part of the shadow that ever fell upon the Lord, a foretaste at least of the cross on the human side. He knew that among His followers there was unbelief and betrayal. And it leads Him to a reiteration of what by an anachronism we may call the Calvinism of this Gospel: "Therefore said I unto you, that no one can come unto Me, unless it hath been given him by the Father."

"Thereupon many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him." He turns to the Twelve: "Will ye also go away?" It is a challenge that has come to many of us at divers times in the course of our Christian experience; it is one of those testing questions that divide asunder soul and spirit, and joints and marrow, and discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. Peter, ever ready to answer at such times of crisis, replies in words that form the second of his great confessions: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure—we *know*—that Thou art the Holy One of God" (R.V.).

"Having one's own will is sin, *i.e.*, determining without reference to God, instead of obeying—the claim of independency to have a right to act supremely, without reference to another having authority over us."

* * * *

Christian reader, ever remember this, that while your *salvation* depends on Jesus and His finished work, and on that alone, your enjoyment of that salvation depends very much on yourself—on your holy walk with God, on your living a life within the vail—living daily by faith on Him who loved you and gave Himself for you. Without this you may be a Christian, but you will never be a peaceful, praiseful, happy Christian.

LETTERS TO YOUNG PEOPLE.

A VOICE FROM A FIRE GRATE.

DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

I am not about to attempt to teach you how to light a fire, though there is an art in that, like there is in most things; and because there is an art in it, some lessons of practical importance for our lives may be drawn from it. To emphasise some of these is the only purpose I have in referring to the matter. I would like to help you to keep your own grate ablaze.

1. However well laid the grate may be, all is dead and dark until the match is applied. In the same way a young person may possess a mind well stored with texts, and have a mental acquaintance with the truth, and yet have no life, the divine spark is wanting which alone is effectual.

2. When the fire begins to burn there often comes a moment when, if not watched, it will go out. Now I do not mean to infer from this that divine life can be ever really quenched in the soul, but there does often come a critical period in our spiritual history when instead of progress comes stagnation, and spiritual life seems a blank. There is very little evidence to anyone of our Christianity. A fire when first lighted may flare up for a few minutes, and then die down again until you can hardly tell whether it is alight at all. The wood burns, but the flame does not get hold of the coal. So it is in the history of conversions, sometimes. There is much excitement and display of zeal at the beginning; all seems to promise well; by and by a change comes. The reason is, the truth has not taken a sufficiently firm hold. In the case of a fire, the condition I have described is a critical one; if neglected, it may go out altogether. It is equally critical in the case of a human soul; for although, as I have intimated, the parallel would be pressed too far were it implied that divine life may be extinguished, yet years may be wasted if we allow ourselves to sink into the state I have indicated.

What is to be done in the case of the fire? (a) *Some burning coals from off another fire may save it.* In the same way if you feel that you have sunk into a state of spiritual torpor and indifference get amongst some warm hearted believers ; attend some evangelistic meetings ; go and tell your troubles to some trusted friend ; or you may get an immense amount of good and rekindle your own fervour by trying to help somebody else. (b) *Sometimes with a fire a judicious poke may be the means employed.* In like manner, what will stir you like calling to mind the events which first led to your blessing ? Go over the special text ; repeat the hymn ; do not be afraid of the company of those who will speak to you pointedly and plainly about the evils of backsliding ; go where you know you will hear the gospel told out with power ; read accounts of revivals. All or any of these may prove the "poker" in your case. The other day I had the privilege of listening to an account of the revival of 1859 in Ireland from the lips of a servant of the Lord, and I am sure it did me good. Someone once said to a man, Are you in the revival ? "No," he said, "the revival is in me." See that this is always true of you. (c) *A draught may at times have the desired effect.* Our souls may be dull and dead because the breath of God has not been upon them. We have spent little time in His presence, or we have not read the Bible as we ought, and we have neglected prayer. We have not visited the mountain top, and consequently have had no vision of the glories that are ours ; we are strangers to the heights of communion above the din and degrading influences of earth, and it is no wonder, having ceased to breathe that atmosphere, our souls are sickly. You do not need to be told that the atmosphere has as much as anything to do with the lighting of a fire. If you took all the matches that Bryant and May ever made to the moon, and could have all the coal ever dug out of English coal pits transported thither, you would never be able to light a fire, even if you had ten million firelighters to help you, because in the moon there is no atmosphere. And neither can your soul ever thrive, however much truth you know in your head unless you keep yourself in the atmosphere of God's love. Open all the windows of your soul and let the refreshing breezes of free and sovereign grace enter and drive away the damps and mists of earth, and revive the flame of answering devotion.

3. *In lighting a fire, you are well aware, it is unwise to put too much on at once.* The amount of coal you use has to be in

proportion to the wood. Better that a little should be thoroughly ignited than a great mass only just warmed. The little successfully lighted will give you something to build upon. It is the same in our apprehension of truth. Better to be thoroughly grounded in one or two truths than possess only a meagre acquaintance with many. Try and get a firm grip of each truth as you come to it. This may seem a slow progress ; but it is the surest in the end, and leads to the best results. I should be very glad to hear of any young man or woman spending eighteen months over the epistle to the Romans, and scarcely travelling beyond it.

4. *Do not be afraid to let your fire burn when it is lighted.* By this I mean that the more you give out the more will come to you. Use what you know whenever you have the opportunity ; if you keep it in reserve it will become useless. I will illustrate this point in the following manner. The other day in a certain house a log of wood was placed on the fire, and by the time the household retired had only partly burned through. The head of the house took it off thinking there would be something left for the next day. Alas ! for his expectations. When he came down, there *appeared* to be the log, though smaller than when he left it, but one touch, and it was reduced to ashes. It had gradually smouldered away through the night without warming anybody. Better to wear out, than to rust out. Better burn on the altar of sacrifice than become a heap of ashes at the foot. Better use what has become yours while it is fresh, than keep it till it becomes stale, because afraid of being impoverished. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth ; there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty."

5. To young speakers and preachers I would say, *be more anxious about having your grate full of material than how and when you are going to use it.* What I mean by this is, the Holy Spirit cannot use what you haven't got, but, what is equally true, He alone can rightly and profitably use what you have. Prepare your material, but do not necessarily give it out because you have prepared it. You might just as reasonably expect the coal and wood to ignite of their own accord because they are in the grate, as for you to be able to give out in your own power what you have taken in. Nothing would come of it in the one case ; and nothing comes of our preaching oftentimes for the same reason. Read and, above all,

meditate, and, if you have time and opportunity, write ; but when all has been done, leave yourselves trustingly to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and hold yourself simply for His use. The greatest preacher that ever lived prayed that *utterance* might be given him. No one understood better than he his message ; but he desired to deliver it in “ demonstration of the Spirit and of power.” It is important also to know when to stop. It is no use adding to a fire when everybody wants to be leaving. An old servant of the Lord said once to a brother as he came away from the preaching, “ How did I get on to night ? ” “ Very well,” said the other. “ Ah ! ” said the old man, “ I went on very happily with the Lord until the last ten minutes, and then I went on by myself.” Who does not know the difference between going through a preaching with the Lord, and going through it without Him, even though there was no lack of material ? The divine spark that makes all the difference, who shall describe ? When Christ had given His disciples their message, He added, “ Tarry ye . . . until ye be endued with power **from on high.**”

6. My last point is, *Do not stir the fire too often.* This may be a fault in two ways ; either at the beginning, when it scarcely seems to have made a start ; or later on, when it is going well. And here, perhaps, is a lesson for some of us older ones. Young people need at times to be left alone. Or rather, left to God and the influences around them. For other people to be always raising the question of their spiritual condition—or, to adopt our metaphor, be always poking the fire to see if it is alight—is more calculated to prove a hindrance than a help. Many have either been disgusted or disheartened by this proceeding. On the other hand, if the fire is burning well, do not encourage a young person to blaze away and burn himself out by unnecessarily wasting his energies. The most useful fire is that which burns steadily and continuously, not one that flares up and very soon dies down again.

May I say in closing to all my young readers, your spiritual life needs constant watching, attention, and renewing, just as does the fire in the grate. And may the love of God be so shed abroad in your heart that it may glow with a divine warmth that shall cheer and comfort all around you.

Your friend,

THE EDITOR.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

J.F. (S. Petherton) Ques. : Matt. xxv. 5 reads, "They all slumbered and *slept*." Eph. v. 14, "Thou that *sleepest*." 1 Cor. xi. 30, "And some *sleep*." *Does the last mean the same as the two first, or refers to natural death?*

Ans. : As far as the parable is concerned, the first refers to natural sleep, though as a figure of a moral condition. The second to spiritual sleep. The third to death in the ordinary sense.

T.M. Ques. : *How can the following be made good in the individual experience of the believer?* "Our old man crucified"; "The body of sin destroyed"; "Dead and freed from sin" (Rom. vi. 6-7).

Ans. : The foundation of all is Christ's death; and what that death involved; and it is important to see that we are committed to that in baptism. In v. 10 of the above chapter we are told that "In that Christ died, He died unto sin once." If I have been baptized I have identified myself with that death, and therefore, Christ having died to sin, I am to reckon myself dead unto sin. This is the argument of the first eleven verses of Romans vi. The apostle begins the chapter by asking "Shall we continue in sin?" This is more than if he had said, "Shall we continue sinning?" It involves the whole state. And he goes on to show we have been taken out of that state, positionally, through the death and resurrection of Christ, and our identification with Him through baptism. We have died to sin. How? By being baptized unto Jesus Christ, and unto His death. Christ's death has closed the old condition; for He died to it; and we are on new ground with Him; connected with Him, and no longer with sin. We are in an entirely new life. In that life I am delivered from the old. The great point to grasp is thorough identification; so that we can say Christ's death is our death, and His life our life. I am to look at Christ, and not at myself any longer. Thus we can say, Our old man has been crucified with Him. Sin in its *totality* has thus been annulled; for to *faith* I no longer live in the condition to which sin attached. Thus sin has no longer any claim over me. "For he that has *died* is *justified* (it should be) from sin." He is discharged from it. It no longer has any claim to rule him. But all this is to faith, and not actual, so we have to *reckon* (v. 11).

CORRESPONDENCE.

The current February issue of *The Faith and the Flock*, p. 64, contains a reference to Zech. xiii. 6, which, I suggest, ought to be reconsidered. To begin with there is the undoubtedly correct rendering of R.V., with *margin*, and this in turn may be explained by 2 Kings ix. 24.

Israel was suffering from a plague of false and idolatrous prophets (v. 2), but these would pass so completely that were one to dare again the old and evil tricks, even his parents would be actively hostile, so much so that they would strike him with a weapon intending to wound, if not to kill (v. 3). And if such an one, discarding his hairy mantle, assumed to deceive, is suspected and questioned, he will deny his character and claim to be a peasant slave (v. 5). But he shall be cross-examined as to the marks "between his hands," *i.e.*, on his breast, he shall explain them as in the text. The question may arise: are these the wounds of v. 3, or are they marks of mutilation such as idolatrous priests practised? (1 Kings xviii. 28, and cf., perhaps, Lev. xix. 28, Deut. xiv. 1, Jer. xlvi. 37).

The next verse begins a new section, and a new subject. Its meaning is fixed by Matt. xxvi. 31, where, it is worthy of note, the Lord changes the "smite" of the Heb. and lxx. into "I will smite," Jehovah, of course, being the speaker. But how xiii. 6 can be read to refer to the Lord Jesus and His death I do not understand.

You may deem it worth while to seek further light upon the subject from your readers.

C. F. HOGG.

"Faith is not a mere acknowledgment even of *all* the doctrines of scripture, but such an affianced dependence on God, and on Jesus Christ whom He hath sent, as disposes us to listen (with an obedient ear) to the word of God, and makes us willing to renounce all the world rather than part with this our confidence in God."

* * * *

"An inn is the place where a man is measured; it touches the pride of man. The first floor for the rich, the garret for the poor: there was no room for Him. No room in the great inn of this world."

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EDITORIALS.

THE sayings of Christ. Chapter vii. of the gospel by St. Luke opens with the words: "*Now when He had ended all His sayings.*" We naturally turn back to the previous chapter to find out what these sayings were. The reference to them, just quoted, prepares us for something special. "*When He had ended all His sayings.*" The enquiry is raised, What will those sayings reveal? What special doctrine will they unfold? What will be the supreme burden of their message? And when He has **ended** all His sayings, What is the impression He desires to leave?

As we go over these sayings, recorded in vv. 20-49 of Chapter vi., are we surprised to find they contain no scheme of doctrine, or plan of salvation; no explanation of mysteries, or information upon recondite subjects? *They deal with what Christ wishes His followers to be.* The most ordinary details of daily life are taken into account; and our behaviour in them is the great subject of consideration. Indeed there is more said about dealings with our fellow men than of our attitude towards God. We need hardly say that all this is in remarkable contrast not only to the age in which Christ lived, but to every age since.

If we inferred from the fact that little is said as to doctrine (in the ordinary sense of that word), and scarcely anything about belief, and nothing about atonement, that these things are only of

secondary importance, or do not matter, we should indeed greatly err. And this is where some have erred ; for these things in their place are of utmost importance, and cannot be dispensed with. They lie at the back of all these sayings of Christ. Nevertheless, the fact remains that no reference is made to them, and even when forgiveness is touched upon, it becomes ours only on the ground that we forgive. The reason for all this is, Christ was addressing His *disciples*. He had just chosen the twelve apostles, and we read thereafter, “ *He came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of His disciples. . . . And He lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor : for yours is the kingdom of God.*”

* * * *

We, then, who profess to be the disciples of Christ, what is His supreme message to us? Have we not been too prone to think that the entire message consisted in certain doctrines presented for our acceptance : the doctrine of the Trinity, of the Deity of Christ, of the Atonement, and various others? And have we not thought sometimes that having given an intellectual assent to these mysteries—having embodied them, so to speak, in our faith as part and parcel of it—we have done pretty nearly all that could be expected of us?

Now let us say, once and for all, in order that there may be no misunderstanding, that no person can be a Christian who denies any of these foundation truths of the faith. (I do not mean man’s explanation of them, but the facts themselves.) And for this simple reason, that, to deny them is to be untrue to Christ. Everything depends upon our acknowledgment of Him, and our allegiance to Him. Apart from a proper attitude towards Him (and therefore towards all these doctrines), it would be utterly useless to try and give effect to these sayings, which we are going briefly to consider. All power for so doing comes from acknowledgment of His claims and attachment to His Person.

* * * *

What, then, is the special message our Lord has to give us in these sayings of His? It may be divided into four parts : I. Our condition—our circumstances need not be the best from a worldly point of view (vv. 20-26). II. Our bearing under evil treatment from others (vv. 27-36). III. Our behaviour and conduct towards others (vv. 37-42). IV. Everything proceeds from what we are.

I. The condition, described by our Lord, to which blessing attaches, is the very opposite to that desired by the world. *The very first thing, therefore, we have to do is to be willing to accept the conditions our Lord prescribes—poor, hungry, hated.* *Poor*, because such alone feel their need, and are willing to become recipients of God's bounty. He fills the hungry with good things, but the *rich* are sent empty away. *Hungry*, for thus alone shall we continually seek the blessings of the kingdom. Hunger is a thing that is always returning, however often satisfied. God give us a continual craving after that which He alone can bestow. *Hated*, because we belong to a kingdom not of this world, and the world loves its own. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." In these three things we have the *condition* necessary for blessing.

II. *Our bearing under evil treatment.* We are to love those who ill-use us. Verses 27-36 are all about what love will suffer and do; and may be read in conjunction with 1 Cor. xiii. "Love suffereth long and is kind." This love is quite compatible with grave rebuke of an offender (specially where one called a brother is the wrong-doer), and even stern denunciation, where evil is done to others. (See Luke xvii. 3; and Matt. xxiii. 13-36).

III. *Our behaviour and conduct towards others.* This is to be characterised by the absence of harshness, and the cultivation of a forgiving spirit; in allowing generosity to have full play. Whatever we possess is to be at the service of others—a kindly word, a lowly act of service, as well as our worldly goods—in fact it comprises all the manifold outgoings of a loving heart. And we are to be less ready to see our brothers' faults than to see our own. All this does not come to us spontaneously (at least, not to some of us), it has to be cultivated. And where cultivated it reacts upon ourselves, so that—

IV. **A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good.**

* * * *

Now where is the power found for all this? It comes from Christ Himself. There must be two things: (a) Attachment to His Person; (b) Acknowledgment of His authority. Before this discourse begins, as recorded in Luke, we notice, as already pointed out, Christ standing "in the plain, and the company of His disciples, and a great multitude of people . . . which came to hear Him, and

to be healed of their diseases. . . . And the whole multitude sought to touch Him : for there went virtue out of Him, and healed them all." Here was the power that attracted. Christ's attraction lies, first of all, in the fact that He can meet our every need. These various physical infirmities are but types of a deeper kind. But none are beyond His power to meet. "*There went virtue out of Him, and healed them all.*" This is the grand initial step. And when we know Him as the Healer, we are prepared to know Him as the Teacher. He not only removes the evil, He can reveal to us the good. Unless we have in this way been drawn to the Person of Christ we have not advanced very far. But, if drawn to him, I must want to obey Him. And here comes in the question of His authority. "*Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say*" (v. 46). No mere lip acknowledgment is enough. We have come to One Who has spoken to our very souls, Who has revealed Himself as greater than all our diseases, and to Him we must bow. His claims must be owned. "*Whosoever cometh to Me, and heareth My sayings, and doeth them.*" Nothing short of this will suffice. Hearing is not enough. There must be the doing the will of the One we own as Lord.

Here it is we most of us fail. Our Christianity is such a superficial thing. We say Lord, Lord, and there it ends. We do not dig deep and lay the foundation on a rock. Yet our true happiness is found in obeying Him. He requires us to be like Himself. He takes away our sins that He may turn us away from ungodliness (Rom. xi. 26, 27). This is why He insists upon love as the essential law of life. God is supremely happy because He loves. Heaven will mean happiness because love reigns. We can only find fulness of joy here on the same principle. And all this is the outcome of personal contact with Christ, and entire submission to His authority. We come to Him and we realise Who He is. We hear His sayings ; and, in the realisation of Who He is, we do them. We can be *poor, hungry, and hated* because we know that is the condition that most of all guarantees His help and presence ; we can bear ill-treatment, and still love and do good, because we have learned the secret of His love, and we know it is just the way He behaved towards us ; we can even become lavish givers because **HE** suffices. And, finally, we can bring out of the treasure of our hearts because acquainted with the infinite treasure of **His**.

Meetings for Prayer and Ministry at Devonshire House.—On Tuesday, 15th March, a number of brethren met for prayer and consultation with reference to the lack of power amongst the Lord's people, and in the preaching of the gospel. The morning was spent in prayer and confession to God; the afternoon in confession rather to one another (which is also good), and in dealing with the causes which have led to lack of power and interest; the evening was chiefly occupied with accounts of Christian work. On the whole the meetings were helpful, though it was felt by some that the evening was out of harmony, to some extent, with the rest of the day. This partly arose from the attempt to crowd too much into one day, owing, we understand, to the fact that the hall could not be obtained for longer. Three sessions of prayer, taking up one entire day, would certainly not have been too much, with an additional day for dealing with the causes and the remedy.

* * * *

We may, perhaps, be allowed to express the hope that the above may be carried into effect at some future date, not very far distant. If it is, we trust the programme will be more strictly adhered to. In the circular of invitation it was stated that both afternoon and evening would be devoted to prayer and ministry. As a matter of fact there was very little prayer, and, when the opening speaker had finished, nothing of what could properly be termed ministry. This was the more disappointing (especially in the evening) because both the opening addresses were particularly good.

* * * *

The body of the circular referred to "the low spiritual condition of many of the Assemblies," but we notice this did not form part of the subjects for consideration as given at the foot. These were confined to the gospel. Yet surely the testimony of the gospel has a very close relation to the spiritual condition of God's children. We read even of our Lord, "He could there do no mighty work"; and a little further on it reveals the secret; it is traced directly to unbelief (Mark vi. 5, 6). So with the salvation of souls to-day. No doubt God has bestowed special gifts to this end, but all does not depend upon the evangelist; a great deal depends upon the prayers of the Lord's people, and the atmosphere created by their own walk and communion with God. It is, therefore, as necessary to feed the flock, and establish Christians in the faith, as it is to proclaim

the gospel to the sinner. We fear in some directions this is a little overlooked, and the services of the teacher are not so eagerly sought as those of the evangelist. This accounts in some measure for the condition of the Lord's people. A verse was read and commented on at the above meetings upon which a great deal more might have been profitably said. We refer to Acts xvi. 5: "And so were the churches **established in the faith**, and increased in number daily." Here we see at once the importance of the ministry of the word. Saints need teaching, as much as the world needs evangelising. And the difference as well as the need of each is constantly exemplified in the life and labours of the Apostle Paul. In Acts xiv. 21 we read: "And when they had preached the gospel to that city, *and had taught many*, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, *confirming the souls of the disciples.*" Again, in Chapter xviii. we read: "And he continued there a year and six months, *teaching* the word of God among them" (v. 11). And he was the one, though the greatest of all evangelists, who said, "Let us go again and visit our brethren." If the churches are not established in the faith there is certainly very little to bring new converts to, and they are not likely to make much progress.

* * * *

We would like to know how much it is the custom to follow up the labours of an evangelist by inviting a pastor or teacher to come along and instruct the converts. Are we not often satisfied with getting such baptized and into the meetings? Much that we have to deplore is due, in part at all events, to the following defects: 1. Many believers instead of realising that they belong to the Church of God, only realise that they belong to a meeting, or an association of meetings. 2. The goal has been reached in the thoughts of many when they have been baptized and admitted to the Lord's Supper. This is only the beginning and not the end. Yet not a few are too lazy or careless to think of more. The Apostle's words need constantly pressing on the attention of all of us: "*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him; **rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving***" (Col. ii. 6, 7). 3. Resting too much in the fact of being baptized instead of being anxious to be true to it. If all who have been baptized were only walking "in newness of life" what a change would be witnessed.

If God gets anything at all to-day it is from His people. If their spiritual condition is low, He is the loser. Shall we think only of what the world gets, and not of what God misses? "*I am the door,*" said our Lord, "*by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in, and shall go out, and find pasture*" (John x. 9). Here we have a double characteristic of Christianity—*going in and going out*. This means a great deal, and we by no means pretend to exhaust its meaning when we say that it represents what is God-ward and what is man-ward—the service inside the sanctuary, and the service abroad in the world. It may mean, too, the entering into the spirit of Christianity, and the going outside all that system of things which man ever invents and which sooner or later robs truth of its power and meaning until only the shell is left. In any case if we know what going in and going out mean, neither God's part nor man's part will be lacking from us.

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Those who are interested in preaching, and concerned as to the small measure of results, may like to read the papers on preaching which will be found further on.

* * * *

The exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews will (D.V.) be continued in our next.

"The saints, in the love of the family, address God as their Father. In the government of the church it is the Lord Jesus we address. This distinction will be always marked when praying in the Spirit, not by an effort of attention; but by being in the spirit of the relationship."

"It is one of the deepest and deadliest marks of the fall that man strives to shut out God from his heart and thoughts altogether. I ask the reader of these pages whether this is not his prevailing tendency and his constant sin; that he acts and thinks and speaks without a thought that there is One at his side taking a record of everything? Go through last week, go through one day of it—nay, go through only one hour of that day—can you say that your thoughts, and words, and deeds have been influenced by this truth?"

AN OUTLINE OF "THE REVELATION."

THIRD SECTION. CHAPTERS II. AND III.

By WALTER SCOTT.

A REFERENCE to the Chart in the February issue shews that this section of our book is titled **The Things which are**. Had those two chapters been omitted from *The Revelation*, we would have suffered an irreparable loss. In them we have the Spirit's history of the Christian profession from the close of the Apostolic period, right down through the ages, till its rejection. It is, therefore, an exceedingly important section, and one fruitful in lessons both to the Church and individual. The history is necessarily brief—not many particulars are given, but rather the statement of general principles. The down-grade course of the Church from its *first* point of departure (ii. 4) till its absolutely Christless condition (iii. 17, 20) is here sketched by a Divine pen. The history is open to all who have ears to hear.

Will the reader carefully note that we have—

Church History in Rev. ii. and iii.

Kingdom History in Matt. xiii.

Gentile Political History in Dan. vii.

Jewish National History in Gen. xlix.

Governmental History of Israel in Deut. xxxiii.

Ecclesiastical History of Israel in Lev. xxiii.

In the Chart, the Churches here addressed are separately named, and a brief word or sentence added so as to point out the main characteristics of each. Attention to this will materially assist the reader in the understanding of these Apocalyptic Epistles.

In all there are seven Churches, which presents the Church as a whole in its totality, its completeness. But the seven are divided into two groups—three and four. In the first three, namely, Ephesus, Smyrna and Pergamos, the call, "He that hath an ear, let him hear" precedes the address to the overcomer; whereas, in the second groups, namely, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, the overcomer is first addressed followed by the call to hear.

Again, the first group presents consecutive periods of history. In the second group the beginnings of history are as distinctly marked as in the first, but their close brings us down in a general

way to the coming of the Lord ; they overlap each other. In the first group the main point is a call to repent and return to the pristine condition of the Church as in Pentecostal youth and beauty. In the second group, the hopeless condition of the Church is shewn, recovery is impossible, hence in each the goal of hope is the Kingdom and the Coming of the Lord.

In all the Churches, mingled praise and blame are meted out in exact proportions to their actual state, save in two—Smyrna and Philadelphia. The former was characterised by *suffering*, the latter marked by *weakness*, hence neither is blamed. Their condition rather called for sympathy and support.

1. **Ephesus** (ii. 1—7). Paul 30 years previously addressed a letter to the *Saints* in Ephesus. John sends his communications to the *angel* of the Church in Ephesus. In the former there is intimacy ; in the latter there is reserve. We believe the difference can be accounted for. In Paul's time *love* was the predominant feature of the Church life of Ephesus. Love is variously mentioned in the Pauline Epistle nearly 20 times. In John's day *love* was characteristically absent in the Ephesian assembly, hence he cannot write to the saints direct but to their "star" or representative, *i.e.*, the angel. "Nevertheless I have against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." The word "somewhat," wrongly inserted in our English Bibles, weakens the sense. The absence of first love is a positive and grave cause of complaint, and must on no account be palliated.

Love is the life-breath of the Church and of the Christian. It is the hidden spring of all Christian activity, of all true devotedness, of all service and worship acceptable to God. We cannot do better than beg careful perusal of the Holy Spirit's commentary on love—the first and most enduring of all Christian graces—in 1 Cor. xiii. The *first* step in the Church's downward career is here noted, "Thou hast left thy first love." Where love to Christ is lacking, or but feebly alive in the soul, that Church or Christian that can be justly so charged is in grave danger of making moral shipwreck of faith, of conscience, and even of common morality. God alone can read the heart. If Christ is absent *there* (Eph. iii. 17), you are in gravest peril. The root of all that is wrong in church-life and personal life is the absence of first love to Christ. Divine love is the kernel of Christianity and the firm maintenance of it in the soul the power of a subjective and practical Christianity.

Praise always precedes blame. Such is the order in the addresses to these Churches; see also 1 Cor. i. 4-7. Our God delights to own every good in His people, hence the serious indictment against the Ephesian Church (Rev. ii. 4.) comes after the hearty and unqualified commendation of their practical life as detailed in verses 2 and 3. How ready we are to find fault, how slow to appreciate in others what God by His Spirit has produced and what, perhaps, may be lacking in ourselves.

The removal of the Ephesian candlestick (v. 5) has had its solemn counterpart to-day and through the ages. Many an assembly originally distinguished for zeal, devotedness, service, suffering and firm opposition to all ecclesiastical pretension has fallen under the judgment which befel the Church in Ephesus. Let us never forget that Christ *yet* walks in the midst of the Churches as the ecclesiastical Judge thereof (v. 1).

There was much to commend in the Church in the close of the first century, but its characteristic defect was a waning love for the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. **Smyrna** (ii. 8-11). In order to recover the Church, fast drifting away from devotedness and love to Christ, God threw His people into the fires of persecution. The pagan imperial powers of Rome were His instruments. For about 250 years successive periods of suffering culminating in the Diocletian persecution of ten years—the worst of all—overtook the Church (v. 10). Satan got the dross. God had the gold. Faith shone brilliantly. Love triumphed, and the eighth of Romans (35-39) was verified to the very letter.

“The Synagogue of *Satan*” (v. 9) points—not to individual effort as before to ruin the Church by the introduction of Judaism in principle and practice (Phil. iii. 2)—but to a collective and established system within the Church itself determined to wreck and ruin the Church as the vessel of God’s grace in the world.

To the suffering Church Christ presents Himself in the grand and consolatory titles taken from chap. i. 17, 18. How fitting the titles to the conditions of His people exposed to suffering, and death in its cruelest forms. The “Crown of Life” (v. 10) and immunity from Divine judgment (v. 11) are the promised rewards of the Smyrnean overcomer.

The witnessing company of Heb. xi. is complete. The overcoming company of Rev. ii. and iii. is in process of formation. May reader and writer be found amongst the completed number of overcomers to receive each for himself the Lord's own personal approval in the day of His and our glory.

3. Pergamos (ii. 12-17). Diocletian, the last of the Pagan Emperors, and Constantine, the first of the Christian Emperors, are set in sharp contrast in the writings of the historians. The former is sternly denounced; the latter is warmly praised. Yet, strange to say, the Church flourished under Diocletian and sank under Constantine. The judgment of the world as to these things is very different from that of the enlightened Christian. The world regards the era of Constantine as the triumph of Christianity, whereas its public downfall as to strangership with Christ, and of separation from the world, dates from that period. Constantine patronised Christianity, forced its adoption upon his heathen subjects at the point of the sword in various instances, raised prominent Christians to positions in the State, used the gorgeous temples of Paganism for the celebration of Christian worship, and effected the union of Church and State, the results of which continue to this day. The unholy alliance of the Church and world had a dazzling effect upon mankind. It was Satan's masterpiece. The Church sat down in the presence of Satan's throne (v. 13). Yet amidst it all a few maintained intact the faith of God's elect and resisted even unto death the ungodly alliance (v. 13). The Church lived in gorgeous splendour, walked in golden slippers, *that* was her ruin. In scripture the world and the Church are in principle and practice diametrically opposed. Paul the Apostle of faith (2 Cor. vi. 14-18), Peter, the apostle of hope (1 Pet. iv.), James, the apostle of works (James iv. 4), and John, the apostle of love (1 John ii. 15-17) all declare the impossibility of walking with God whilst cultivating the friendship of the world. May we lay the lesson to heart. Add to this the Lord's emphatic declaration, "*They* are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John xv. 14, 16).

4. Thyatira (ii. 18-29). In the circumstances connected with this Church, we are transported into the dark or middle ages when the Papacy reigned supreme. The hopeless condition of the Church is here shown inasmuch as its one and only hope is the Personal Coming of the Lord and the establishment of the Kingdom here

presented for the first time in these addresses. Thyatira is the first of the second group of these Churches, and in its character and what is related of it, runs down to the end. It is the longest address of any of the seven, that to Smyrna being the briefest. The blending of what is personal (v. 28) with public glory (vv. 26, 27) is exceedingly fine. The first part of the descriptive glory of Jesus, "the Son of God" (v. 18) is not found in the Revelation of Him as in chap. i., *there* it is in the characteristic glory of Son of Man. *Here* He takes that very character on which the Church is built (Matt. xvi. 16-18)—the confession of Himself as Son of the living God.

There are four women referred to in The Revelation, but these do not represent persons but *systems*. Thus Jezebel (v. 20), stands for the Papacy; a woman invested with the fulness of governmental authority (xii. 1) represents Israel; the woman and whore sets forth the Apostate Church (xvii.); while the bride and wife signify the Church in eternal association with Christ (xix.).

The Papacy has been the curse of Christendom. It withers and blights everything it touches. The rule of the priest is inimical to material progress, to national prosperity. It is an absolute impossibility for any nation or people to progress under Papacy. Take Spain and the South of Ireland as examples.*

A remnant—separated from the mass—is now formally recognised (v. 24), and yet one other interesting feature, there was and is in the midst of that system—the most wicked and anti-christian—that which the Lord heartily commends (v. 19). May we have grace to do so likewise.

5. **Sardis** (iii. 1-6). In the previous church we have in word and symbol the Papacy pictured. Here we have the Reformation and Protestantism brought before us. Jezebel—the Papacy—exercised sway over Europe for a thousand years, but God in mercy interposed, and the voice and pen of Luther and the printed Bible broke in upon the scene of death, superstition, and gross corruption characteristic of mediæval times. Europe awoke as from a nightmare, and to a large extent threw off the Papal yoke. The Reformation of the sixteenth century was a Divine movement so far as it

* See *Priests and People in Ireland*, by Michael J. F. McCarthy—himself a Roman Catholic, but an honest one, and whose outspoken utterances have greatly disturbed the Roman hierarchy.

went. The grandest work of that period was an open Bible—not as before confined to Bishop and Priest, many of whom were so ignorant that they could not read, but the Bible was publicly read in Church, Chapel and Assembly, and the doctrines of grace expounded openly and in the hearing of all. But the Reformers came short, “I have not found thy works perfect (or complete) before God” (v. 2). The distinguishing truth of Justification by Faith in opposition to works as developed in Paul’s epistles to the Romans and Galatians, was substantially the limit of biblical attainment by the Reformers. Their struggles with the Papal authorities left them but little time for enlarged study of the Word.

What succeeded the Reformation was Protestantism as a system. The Church as developed in 1 Cor., Eph. and Col. was almost utterly unknown. Hence, the leaders in Protestantism began to *make* Churches instead of recognizing that *God’s* Church consisting of all the saved is on the earth. God’s assembly is a divine thing on the earth. It was established at Pentecost, and has existed ever since in divine unity. But Protestantism with its numerous sects smothers the scriptural idea of the Church, and has sunk down into a state of deadness and powerlessness, hence the frequent use of the word “name” and “names” (vv. 1, 4, 5). Protestantism simply lives on tradition—on what it was and did. It is lifeless, and utterly powerless to stem the advancing inroads of its old and bitter enemy the Papacy. It awaits the judgment of God (v. 3.)

6. **Philadelphia** (iii. 7-13). We have had the Papacy in Thyatira with, however, a remnant recognised, such as the Albigenses and Waldenses of the thirteenth century. Thus in Sardis we have what might have proved a magnificent work for God and man. The Reformation did much, but it did not go far enough. It stopped short, and instead of a complete recovery of long neglected and unknown truth, buried from soon after the close of the first century, a system was established in opposition to the Papacy. The life, the vitality of Christianity is absent in Protestantism, hence *another* Reformation was needed.

Philadelphia contemplates a state of things which had their origin in the early part of last century. Three things characterised the movement: the revival of genuine Godliness, the true nature of the Church as the body of Christ, and consequently our vital

associations with Christ in heaven ; and the Personal Return of the Lord from heaven as the true Christian Hope ; and the study of the prophetic word. All this forms the true complement to the work of the Reformation. The Reformation of the 19th century is just as important as the Reformation of the 16th century.

There is no word of blame addressed to the Angel of the Church in Philadelphia, but there is unstinted praise and promise to the overcomer (v. 8-12). The rewards and promises here are peculiarly rich and full. The revived testimony of the Lord had been maintained in much weakness in Philadelphia—Christ's word, name, patience and coming. Here too the Philadelphian saints are cheered by another blessed announcement, "Behold, I come quickly" (v. 11). Philadelphian state and conditions spring from personal associations with Christ. In this address, *He is everything*. In Laodicea He is outside, and the Church boasts in unbounded self-satisfaction. Here Christ is clung to, and His word prized beyond all else.

7. **Laodicea** (iii. 14-22). We have here a clearly defined picture of Christless profession. Christ is rejected by the mass and so He is here seen outside, and entreating for individual fellowship (v. 20). We do not hesitate to assert that the Laodicean state characteristic of to-day is the most appalling of any Church condition. The greater number of so-called Christian people are unsaved—destitute of Divine righteousness for God—"gold tried in the fire." The practical righteousness of saints before the world, "white raiment" is also wanting. Neither is there perception of need—no spiritual discernment—no "eye-salve" (v. 18). Laodicea is self-satisfied and boasts largely and loudly of her wealth, but Christ is outside. What does the Lord think of all this? How does He regard this Church and her boasting and material wealth? Let verse seventeen answer. Fellowship with the Lord is becoming intensely individual. The corporate conditions await judgment—there is no remedy, no hope (v. 16). Thus "the things which are"—the second great division of our book—closes up in judgment, our hope is to be caught up (1 Thess. iv. 15-17).

"The more pains God has taken to set men right, the more only was it proved that the more you dig and dung a bad tree, the more bad fruit it will produce."

 PAPERS AND A POEM ON PREACHING.

SUGGESTIONS

TO

 Open-air Preachers and Workers.

To Preachers.

1. Pray as much before an Outdoor Meeting as you would before an Indoor one.
2. Beware of thinking that anything will do for an Open-air company : this is a fatal and foolish error, much to be deplored.
3. Preach **THE WORD**, which God will surely own and bless. There is far too little Gospel in most open-air addresses. People will listen to an earnest man who has something to say, and knows how to say it.
4. Do not use anecdotes and illustrations *too freely* ; a cake must not be all currants. Remember that the hearers have souls, and that merely to interest is not enough.
5. Amongst your audience will probably be found the careless, the sceptical, the prodigal, the weary, the broken-hearted, the anxious. Be compassionate and tender, but fearless and faithful ; speak tremblingly of Hell and Judgment (never shout and declaim about such terrible realities). Appeal to sinners as a man who yearns for their blessing.
6. Be short and simple, unless some special circumstances induce you to prolong your address, but always stop before your audience and helpers grow weary.
7. Don't attempt to say everything you know ; it might take more than half-an-hour. Some worthy men take Adam and Eve as a foundation for an Address that embraces Noah (and the Ark), Abraham, Joseph, David, etc., finishing up (invariably) with the Prodigal. Enough is as good as a feast—sometimes better.
8. Finally : Get the message into your heart, and then put your heart into the message.

To Workers.

1. Do not come to an Open-air Meeting listless and prayerless. Come to work, to sing, to pray, to watch for souls.
2. Gather close round, especially in front of the preacher, so that the crowd may come up behind you.
3. Be—or at least, appear to be—more interested in what the speaker is saying than any of the crowd.
4. If you can preach, and are not asked to preach, do not be annoyed or injured. A wise and dependent leader may be trusted to invite the speakers whom he thinks most suitable for the particular time, place and audience.
5. Do not move about amongst the crowd during the preaching; this is very distracting. Wait until the end of the meeting before giving out tracts, etc.; or let one or two stand some little distance away from the crowd to catch any who may leave.
6. At the close of the meeting try to get into conversation with some of the hearers, using tact, and being ever in dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

Many Open-air Meetings are utterly spoilt by long pauses and fruitless appeals to individuals to fill up the gap. Such a deplorable state of things ought never to occur. Another serious offence is committed when a brother steps into the ring unasked. No Open-air meeting should be held unless someone is responsible for the conduct of it. This responsibility he should feel, and others should recognise.

“Let all things be done decently, and in order.”

W. B. WESTCOTT.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SPEAKERS.*

By W. T. R.

I'd give you "good counsel," ye open-air preachers,
Likewise ye "evangelists, pastors, and teachers":
When speaking of Jesus to sinner or saint,
I pray you, give heed to the words of my plaint.
Have something to say, and *stop when you've said it!*
Be pointed and brief, 'twill be to your credit;
Speak audibly, so that all listeners may hear;
Pronounce ev'ry spoken word perfectly clear;
Be natural, and avoid affectation;
Speak never too fast, but court moderation;
Be full of your Subject, forget "No. 1";
And, let me repeat it, *do stop when you've done!*

* Suggested on hearing the remark concerning a speaker: "He was all right up to a certain point; but though *he spoke for ten minutes longer, he said nothing!*" "Therefore, let thy words be few."

EQUIPMENT FOR SERVICE.

MARK iii. 13-15.

13. And He goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto Him whom He would: and they came unto Him.

14. And He ordained twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach.

15. And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.

The Gospel of Mark has been called the "Servant Gospel." It is so called because it describes the perfect service of the perfect Servant—the One who delighted to do the will of Him who sent Him.

This peculiar feature of the gospel invests these three verses with a special charm. They shew not only the *character* of the service on which He would send His chosen disciples, but also the necessary *equipment* for that service if it was to be effectually discharged.

Note first the moral greatness of this wondrous Person, this perfect Servant—man, yet truly God. See how, going up to a mountain, He calls "unto Him whom He would" and "they came unto Him," the same One who commands the winds and the sea and they obey Him, and who "will draw all men unto Himself."

Notice first of all "*That they should be with Him.*" Precious words! He would have them as His companions, to be with Him in His chequered pathway, to learn of Him who was "meek and lowly in heart," and thus find rest to their souls. This is true training for service.

(1) "That He might send them forth to preach."

The present is a day of great religious activity, never more so, but Christians everywhere deplore the little result from so much preaching, surely there is a reason. The gospel is still "the power of God unto Salvation," and I am persuaded that the secret of successful service in the gospel is the result of communion and companionship with the Blessed Master, to drink in of His spirit, and to have the same tender love and compassion as He Who came to seek and to save that which was lost. He can only "*send forth*" those who have been His companions and near enough to Him to hear His voice.

(2) "To have power to heal sicknesses."

There is much sickness to-day amongst the Lord's dear people, I do not refer to bodily sickness alone, but soul sickness, loss of spiritual appetite, loss of Christian love and energy, and oh, the need

is great that such should be healed, that the lame should not be turned out of the way, but rather "let it be healed," and that such an one should be restored "in the spirit of meekness" (Gal. vi. 1). We only get that spirit of meekness from companionship with the One who is "meek and lowly in heart." It is so easy to us to cut off, so hard to restore. Let us covet to be as described in Isaiah lviii., verse 12. "The repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in," for this we require power—spiritual power—and the source is Himself. "To have power," as this verse says, is His desire for us.

(3) "And to cast out devils" (demons).

When the blessed Lord was here, the whole concentrated power of Satan was brought to bear against Him, and because His coming again is so near, there never was in the history of the Church, so much activity of Satan and display of demoniacal power as in the present day. The direct power of Satan has to be met, for never were there such direct and terrible attacks against the person of the Christ, and that by men who profess to be Christian. The vital truths of Christianity are stormed, and shaken to the very foundation, but praise God, the "gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." The Christian Church must not only be defensive but aggressive. How truly we need "to have power."

"God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly" (Romans xvi. 20) is a word for to-day, for we were never so near to His coming again. Yea, we are on the very eve of His return, and if we are to stand in an evil day and meet successfully the direct power of the enemy against our blessed Lord, against His word, against His Church, it is only as we enjoy nearness and companionship with Himself. Then, the Spirit, greater in us "than he that is in the world," can lead us on in the path of victory and to be what the Lord so earnestly desires for each one of us, an "overcomer."

WM. BOUSFIELD.

THE PREACHER'S OWN PREPARATION.

In the quarter of the world in which we live, there is at the present time a marked dearth of conversions, and many are enquiring anxiously the cause. In spite of much and continued prayer (for petitions for a great revival have been going up for months and years past), there seems to be a disregard of the gospel and a drifting

away from Christianity, rather than the spectacle of eager crowds waiting upon the ministry of the word and enquiring "What must we do to be saved?"

Many things may account for the present indifference. It may be that apostate Christendom has received almost its last chance, and strong delusion is setting in, rather than a turning once more to the light of truth. It may be due to wrong methods—the reliance upon other means than those which have been so effectual in the past. It is, no doubt, due in a large measure to the worldliness and corruption of the Church. All these causes have a share in producing the general result so many of us deplore, but at the present moment we wish to focus attention upon one other cause which must be a prime factor in it all—we refer to the preacher himself, and the kind of message he proclaims.

We cannot do better, in considering this subject, than refer to the great model for all preachers—our Lord Himself. Before He commenced preaching we have four things stated of Him, all having reference to the Holy Spirit. *This shews to begin with the immense importance of the Holy Spirit in relation to our work.* The four statements are: Our Lord was **full** of the Holy Ghost; He was **led** by the Spirit; He was in the **power** of the Spirit; and when He stood up to preach He could say "The Spirit of the Lord is **upon** Me" (See Luke iv. 1, 14, 18).

Let us then make up our minds, and be thoroughly impressed with the fact, that nothing can be accomplished apart from the Holy Spirit's agency. Let our preparation, above everything else, be to be filled, led by, and in the power of God, the Holy Ghost. If God has not anointed us to preach, and His Holy Spirit is not upon us, the work is sure to be in vain. The work is His from beginning to end. In preparing the workman, in giving him his message, in enabling him to deliver it, and in making it effectual in the conversion of the hearers. No doubt God bestows certain gifts to certain men, and He suits the gift to the vessel; all that is true, and must not be lost sight of, nevertheless, these are the very men who need to remember what is here being pressed.

Then the preacher needs to be prepared in another way. The common thought to-day is that a man is prepared for preaching at a college, amongst books, and listening to professors, who sometimes teach him anything but what he ought to know. *Our Lord found*

His preparation amidst the ordinary routine of life, and away from the haunts of men in personal conflict with the great Adversary. Here is the needed preparation for every preacher. He must be familiar with men's lives on every side. He must know the tactics of the enemy and have overcome them for himself. As one has said, "Prayer and temptation, the Bible and meditation, make a good minister of Jesus Christ." We must know the home; we must know the wilderness; we must know what conflict with evil means, or we shall never preach to the deepest needs of mankind.

Next, we must be familiar with the Bible. We read that, when our Lord came to Nazareth "*there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place.*" We must know how to open the book and find the place. Some preachers seem to have an acquaintance with every book except *the* one they ought to know. If a ministry is to be powerful, and productive of lasting good, it must be biblical and exegetical. The preacher himself must be filled with his message, from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet, and to his finger tips.

He must also be an embodiment of his message. Our Lord could say, when He had finished reading that wonderful passage from Isaiah, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." It was true of Him. Are the things we preach about true of ourselves? If people see a man before them who appears to be delivering a sort of essay; or merely declaiming about something very remote; or discussing questions from an academic standpoint, they may be interested, but they will neither be moved nor transformed. Not so if they behold a living embodiment of the truths presented. If the speaker can convince them that he speaks because he believes; that the message he brings to them has first warmed his own heart; that he has tasted, handled, and looked upon the things of which he treats, and they have become part of his own life; in one word, if it is the *man* who preaches—such preaching cannot be in vain very long.

He must be so acquainted with the word of God as to be able rightly to divide it. Our Lord knew *when* to close the book as well as *where* to open it. He stopped in the middle of a verse, and He knew the remainder of the verse did not apply to that present moment. The Bible is an uninteresting and unintelligible book to many because they do not know to what time and what circumstances different parts apply. When there is some clearness of apprehension as to

which portion relates to the past, which to the present, and which, again, to the future, the Bible becomes a different book. Here is one great secret of a preacher's power, and ability to bless, can he make the Bible a book which the plain man can understand, and in this way lead him to study it for himself?

He must understand the character of his audience. His message is to the *poor*, the *broken-hearted*, the *captive*, the *blind*, the *bruised*; and it is a general proclamation to all of the acceptable year of the Lord. He is a herald of the **King**; and with healing for all human woes. Truly he must have the Spirit of the Lord upon him to be equal to all this. Well might one exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things?" The very vastness and comprehensiveness of our message ought to humble us in the dust and make us cry out for help, until we realise that "our sufficiency is of God." He alone can make us "*able* ministers of the new covenant." Clothed with such power as the Spirit alone can give, and carrying such a message, the effect will be in measure what it was at Nazareth, and with our Lord, "The eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him."

Lastly, our speech must be with grace, and, yet, we must not hide the truth, however unpalatable. "*And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth.*" Can this be said of every preacher of the gospel? Alas! is it not sometimes preached in a kind of take it or leave it style? There is little heart-breaking utterance, and no yearning over the lost. It would be impossible, perhaps, for any to go into a prison and speak to the inmates—found guilty of actual crimes and suffering accordingly; many of them with blighted and hopeless lives—without being visibly moved. Ought it not to be the same when we stand up before any audience containing unconverted people? They are poor indeed. Behind all their furs and feathers, and silks and satins, their poverty ought to be the only thing we see. If they are not broken-hearted, we ought to be that they are not. They are captives, too, to a hidden, but remorseless enemy; and if they remain as they are will one day find themselves in a prison house "where hope never comes that comes to all." Let them, then, hear gracious words from our lips.

But grace will sometimes awaken, when proclaimed, the bitterest opposition from our hearers. On their side they do not like to think they are in need. They flatter themselves they are different

to the wretched and the outcast. Such was the case in Nazareth on the day of which we are thinking. The Lord had to tell them of the outcast getting blessing, while the privileged were passed over, and of another incident where the solitary case of healing was that of an alien, who alone availed himself of the opportunity the grace of God had given. All this was resented then as it would be to-day, under certain conditions, and Christ's audience "rose up, and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong."

Now, are we prepared for such a reception of our message? And more, does our message ever awaken such a reception? One thing that largely accounts for the prevailing indifference is this: our message is often lacking in faithfulness, through the fear of man. "Be not afraid of their faces," is an injunction we need to heed at the present moment. But one thing needs also to be borne in mind—let not those who hear us be "filled with wrath" on any other account than our faithful proclamation of the grace of God? If our hardness, or harshness fill them with wrath, woe be to us! Let the Spirit of God have full possession of us and we are bound to speak with tenderness, and compassion for the needs of men. But there will also be faithfulness. There will be the warning as well as the wooing. There will be, by the very fact of grace being proclaimed, a full exposure of the human heart; and this is just what the human heart hates; especially the human heart that has a cloak of religiousness. And just here lies the principal weakness of present-day preaching. Audiences are not made to see the awfulness of sin, or made to feel the terrors of judgment, nor is self-righteousness exposed; and the God that is presented is not in the language of holy writ, a "great and dreadful God," but one Who hardly means what He says, or says what He means. It was not this kind of preaching that swayed the crowds that came to hear John the Baptist, or Paul, or Whitefield and Wesley; they heard no soft-tongued orators, but they heard the truth told with a love which would not and could not hide it, and which broke them down under conviction of sin, so that neither could they hide their need.

May every preacher realise to-day his entire dependence upon the Holy Ghost; the character of his message; and the manner of its delivery, so that by the blessing of God men's attention may be arrested in such a way that they shall either proclaim themselves open enemies of the truth, or, on the other hand, repent and believe the gospel. R.E.

BIBLE BRIEFS.

GOD'S PROMISES ARE :

P erformed in due season	Gal. iv. 4.
R emembered by Him	Ps. cv. 42.
O btained through faith	Heb. xi. 33.
M ade to His children	Jas. i. 12.
I nherited through patience	Heb. vi. 12.
S corned by the ungodly	2 Pet. iii. 3.
E xceeding great and precious	2 Pet. i. 4.
S ure of fulfilment	Josh. xxiii. 14.

W.T.R.

"COME" IN THREE ASPECTS.

1. The Sinner *must* Come "Down" .. Luke xix. 5.
2. The Saint *should* Come "Out" .. 2 Cor. vi. 17.
3. The Saviour *will* Come "Back" .. John xiv. 3.

W.T.R.

LABURNUM TREE.

BY WILLIAM LUFF.

Thou hast a weight of yellow gold,
The burden of a wealth untold,
Bright, pendant, lovely to behold :
And yet, though thou dost brightly shine,
A bending, modest head is thine,
Laburnum tree.

As if thy gold dipp'd finger fain
Would point to nature's birth again,
And prove wealth had not made thee vain.
Thou dost not lift thy gold-crowned brow,
But humble, gracefully, dost bow,
Laburnum tree.

Oh wealthy one, whose finger tips
Are yellow with the gold that slips
So readily from mortal grips,
If God has blest thee, bow to Him :
Remember, time thy gold will dim,
Laburnum tree.

And should the God of bounty place
Upon thy boughs the wealth of grace,
Lift not to heaven a haughty face ;
But bending, gracefully and low,
Look down to where thy rootlets grow,
Laburnum tree.

Can anything more lovely be
Than a bright gemm'd laburnum tree ?
Yes, one more lovely sight I see,
The bending head of Him, whose grace
Hangs low towards our weak embrace,
God's golden tree.

LETTERS TO YOUNG PEOPLE.

FROM ONE WHO BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH.

Extracts from letters of—— who was converted to God when about 10 or 11 years of age, and lived till the age of 21, testifying in her life the great reality of the power of “the truth.” For the last three years of her life she was an invalid, and unable for active work in the service of her God (visiting the sick and poor, teaching in Sunday School, etc.), in which she had much delighted, but her letters, and her intercourse with those around showed the power of the Grace of God to mould and fashion His child, and to fill her heart with “joy and peace in believing.”

ON READING AND PRAYER.

I. “You express a wish to know my general habit of reading and prayer? I scarcely know how to answer this question, not being aware that I have any *particular* plan, but perhaps if I give you some of my sentiments it may help to give an insight into what you desire to know. The Word of God, then, is my chief delight. I cannot bear that any book, *however good*, should take its place in my heart. I value and prize other works, *so far as they are in accord with it*, but the Bible is uppermost. It is not, however, a mere formal reading of the Word that satisfies me. I love to read, but while I read I desire to *feed*. I desire with David to look for the teaching of God’s Spirit, looking to Him to ‘open mine eyes to behold wondrous things out of His law.’ I like to meditate on, and pray over what I read; I desire that the Spirit may impress the Word upon my heart. Oh, what need we have of *His* teaching! He only can take of the things of Christ, and shew them unto us. He only can shew us what sin is, and what Christ is. What a lesson the miners set us! They are not content with the mere outside, they dive to the bottom of the mine in search of the precious ore. The Bible is a mine, it contains great treasure, it testifies of great riches, of nothing short of ‘the unsearchable riches of Christ.’”

II. In writing to her brother she says:—

“How rejoiced should I be did you know the blessedness of Prayer! Of communion with God! One moment’s enjoyment of this happiness is far more to be desired than the possession of all this world can afford. But, my brother, before you can have *communion* with God you must be *reconciled* to Him, for ‘how can

two walk together except they be agreed ?' Man and his fellow-man cannot enjoy intercourse together if they be at enmity, if their pursuits, their desires, their aims, are contrary the one to the other. So God and man cannot walk together *except they be agreed*. By nature we are 'at enmity with God.' We are led captive by Satan at his pleasure,' and there is but *one* way by which we can be reconciled to God, and that is by the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only "Mediator between God and man." We can only be brought nigh to God through His Blood. Those who have Him as their Saviour, have God as *their* God and Father *in Him*. They have free 'access by one Spirit unto the Father'; they have 'boldness to enter the holiest by the Blood of Jesus'; they have the wondrous privilege of 'fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.' Prayer is not merely the repeating of words to an unknown God, but it is communion with the living and true God—it is a reality—O, my brother, to know *God in Christ* is a *real* thing, and happy, thrice happy are they who can testify from their own experience that it is so."

III. "I had this day a visit from one of the Lord's faithful ministers; he prayed with me; how sweet is intercourse with those who love the Lord, who are leaning on the same Almighty Arm, who are members of the same family, and journeying together unto the same happy home. How sweet the Saviour's promise that 'where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.'

"I had a very pleasant visit from a minister of Christ (Mr. B—). We had much interesting conversation. When I alluded to the Lord's Coming as a 'blessed hope,' he added it was a *purifying* hope. Oh yes, dear friend, it is so. Let objectors say what they will; look to Luke xii. 37; 1 John iii. 3."

"I expect to see Mr. B— to-morrow, and hope we may have a little meeting of Christian friends in our house for prayer and reading, and communing together on the Word of God. Mr. B— is such a dear child of God. How sweet the union which subsists between all those who love the Lord Jesus. They are members of the same family. They are 'all one in Christ Jesus,' and one with each other *in Him*. He is their glorious Head and Saviour; from Him they receive life (not merely natural life), but life in their souls—eternal life, pardon, peace, strength, grace, fruitfulness, yea, every blessing, for apart from Him they can do nothing' (John xv. 5)."

ON TRIALS.

IV. "I shall be glad to hear how matters get on with you. How sweet to know that all our 'times are in His hand.'

'Tis He appoints our daily lot,
And He does *all* things well.'

"The trials He sends are most needful for us; they are all appointed by His infinite and unerring wisdom, and covenant love and faithfulness. The time of the duration of any trial will not be one moment longer than He sees *needful*, neither will its duration be shorter than is necessary. Oh no, He makes no mistakes in the government of His family, and He is 'faithful who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will, with the temptation, make a way to escape that we may be able to bear it.'"

'When various thoughts perplex my soul
This calms and quiets me—
Father, 'my times are in Thy hand,'
They all shall ever ordered be
By Thine unerring wisdom and Thy love,
Thy truth, and faithfulness.'"

(*To be continued.*)

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

THE law of Moses is not the revelation of God; Christ alone is that. But there is nevertheless a hidden suggestion in the law that is very beautiful. The law is all summarised in one word—love, the Saviour Himself being witness (Mark xii. 29-31; *cf.* Rom. xiii. 8-10). The law says, "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Thus the law insists that man should be all love. In the presence of such a demand, what can the poor self-centred heart of man do but quail in terror? But the gospel comes to fallen humanity with its blessed message, "What you are *not*, God *is*. You ought indeed to love God, but in any case God loves *you*." Here indeed the heart may find eternal repose.

W. W. FEREDAY.

"Christ is the object of a Christian's life. . . . It is not that there is not failure. A man who is seeking to make money does not always succeed; but everybody knows what his object is. Just so, Christ is the object of a believer's life."

THE THREEFOLD GLORY OF CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

IF the wise men from the east saw the glory of God in the Blessed Babe of Bethlehem, the Greeks from the West came in time to see the Son of Man glorified in His sacrificial death (John xii. 20-24). As one of our own poets has put it:—

“ Thy death of shame and sorrow
Was like unto Thy birth,
That would no glory borrow
Nor majesty from earth.”

He came into the world to make men acquainted with a new kind of glory, the very opposite to what they had looked upon as glory. Everything in our Lord from the manger to the altar was glorious. But not glories from the world's point of view. Anointed eyes can alone apprehend it, and quickened souls alone appreciate it. The glory of *the Babe*, the glory of *the Lamb* is “*hid*” from the wise and prudent, and “*revealed*” only to those who are prepared to become “*babes*” themselves, and to *follow* the Lamb in the way of the cross.

To Mary of Bethany a glimpse of this unearthly glory had been granted, and it made her a worshipper. She put oil and frankincense upon the Lord as upon the Meat-Offering (Lev. ii. 15 ; John xii. 3), and thus He was anointed for *sacrifice*, as He had before been anointed for *service*. And her action furnished the Lord with a text for His last message to Israel : the glory of His Cross.

(1) That Cross looked like the greatest disaster that could come upon the Son of Man, but it was the hour in which He was glorified (John xii. 23 ; xiii. 31). Without it the hunger of the world could never be stilled. Without it the unconscious longing of the world after bread other than material, as expressed by the request of the Greeks : “ We would see Jesus,” could never be satisfied (John xii. 24). The buried seed dissolves in death in its dark and damp grave. All things conspire to make the buried seed die. Frost, winds, rain, the juices of the earth, the heat of the sun. This is the parable. Everything was against the Son of Man ; men and devils, the visible and the invisible world. But through burial unto death the seed puts on its more glorious apparel. Just as out of the dark root

grows the beautiful flower, and out of the fading flower the ripe fruit, thus glory and loveliness and beauty come out of the cold and dark grave of our buried earthly hopes.

What if the death of Christ was the grave of the fondest hopes of the godly in Israel (Luke xxiv., 20, 21), the day will yet come, even for Israel, when it will be realised that but for that death not a single hope encouraged by the divine promises could have been realised. *The stumbling stone* of a *crucified* Messiah (1 Cor. i. 23) will have become *the foundation stone* of every Jewish aspiration and desire (Isaiah xxviii. 16).

(2) But God also was glorified in that sacrifice (John xii. 28 ; xiii. 31). Does it not glorify Him to be trusted to the uttermost by One forsaken to the uttermost point of abandonment in a world where the lies of the serpent had been believed universally ? Thus only could the catastrophe and treason of the fall be undone. "The greatest of those born of women," the man "filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb" broke down in this great matter of trust and confidence when everything was dark and perplexing. He was offended when he heard in his prison of the wonderful works of Christ, and felt himself neglected and forgotten because the Lord's power was not put in operation on his behalf. One only has perfected the life of faith. His trust was a testimony to the perfect goodness and wisdom of God spite of all to the contrary. Those who "watched Him there" had to confess: "*He trusteth on God*" (Matt. xxvii. 43, R.V.), even when not only men and devils were against Him, but when God seemed indifferent to His cry (Ps. xxii. 2-5), a new experience for a righteous man in Israel to cry and not be heard. Therein lay the secret of the victory of the Cross. It was a demonstration once for all that God is trustworthy, and how awful for man to have renounced allegiance to Him. For the Cross was not God's last word. Resurrection was the divine continuation of the controversy. But that which made resurrection morally possible was the unshaken trust of the forsaken One, which completely checkmated all the moves of Satan and "outgeneralled" his plan of campaign. And thus the third glory of the Cross came out as the Lord declared.

(3) "Now is the judgment of this world. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth,

will draw all men unto Me. This He said, signifying by what death He should die" (John xii. 13, 32). Man then is delivered by that sacrifice from the world and from the prince thereof. Delivered by judgment, as Israel was when the judgments of Jehovah fell upon Egypt as they sheltered behind the sprinkled blood and fed on the roast lamb. And if the prince of this world has been cast out I need not submit to his threats, nor be afraid of his attacks. He has been shewn up and stripped of his power for those who recognise the victory of the Lamb. The slain Lamb takes his place and draws the former captives of the prince of darkness out of his jurisdiction unto Himself. The evil spell is broken by the fascination of Christ crucified. As we submit to the judgment of the cross upon the world, upon its glitter and glory, upon its pride and power, upon its politics, pleasures, pursuits and course, it ceases to cast its glamour upon the imagination. And this judgment of the cross must be upon *the world within* as well as upon the world without. For all that is in this inward world of lust and vainglory is not of the Father, and to love these things is to be devoid of the love of God. The cross must judge this world within, and as I accept this judgment I shall feel myself drawn by the power that judges the evil within to Him by whose cross that judgment has been executed. And in the measure in which the judgment of the world becomes my deliverance from the world, I am also delivered from the prince of this world; for the kingdom of Satan extends just as far as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life are tolerated.

Every time we submit to have our wills crossed, our pleasures thwarted, our fond plans altered, our pride wounded, our self-will contradicted, we experience *the drawing power of a crucified Christ*, and we become prisms through which His glory can be made manifest to other eyes.

M.J.R.

"If a man is in the ocean, there may be a great deal he has to discover of it, but he has not to *get* there; he says, 'I *am* there. So I *am* in the truth. I have a great deal to learn; but I am in the Father and the Son, and I am in the truth. I have the very eternal God in whom I dwell—I have come to the Father.'"

* * * *

"Service, if real, must flow from direct communion with God."

THE DEITY OF CHRIST AND HIS MIRACULOUS CONCEPTION.

(Substance of an Address).

By E. E. WHITFIELD.

IN the eighteenth verse of the first chapter of John's gospel textual criticism has brought to light a notable reading which may be found recorded in the margin of the Revised Version: "God only begotten." It would seem that from apprehension of bias in favour of orthodox doctrine the revisers could not see their way to adopt the variation in their text. Westcott and Hort have had the courage of their own conviction and treated "God" as the true reading in this verse. The Bible Society's Greek text follows theirs, with the result that henceforth that Society's versions in various languages will give currency to this description of our incarnate Lord.

What was "the good confession" witnessed by Christ Jesus before Pontius Pilate (1 Tim. vi. 13)? We are told in Matthew xxvi. 63 *f.*, Mark xiv. 61 *f.*, Luke xxii. 69 *f.* He who is at the same time *the* Son of God (*cf.* 2 John 3), and *the* Son of Man, *i.e.*, is, as Origen of old so well expressed it, "God-Man," was put to death for claiming to be more than human. He is the only one in human history who has been put to death for such a claim.

The Evangelist John describes Him to us as Pre-existent; Luke tells us the manner of His coming into the world through the womb of "*the* Virgin" spoken of by Isaiah; Matthew, that He, Heavenly King (*cf.* John xviii. 37), King of the Jews by birth; and Mark sets before us His service in adult manhood. The reverse order in which the evangelists have been named is that in which their records are believed to have been published.

The idea of a virgin-birth of Christ could not have originated on Gentile soil, as alleged by some critics; for in that case the Jews would universally have refused it. Nevertheless, it was in itself naturally repugnant to every Jew, whose training tended to produce unbelief in such a thing being of God. There is no evidence that the passage in Isaiah vii. (v. 14) had been even so understood; the fact, therefore, of our Lord's having no natural human father came

as a revelation to the disciples after His resurrection from among the dead, and ascension, which was followed by the coming of the Holy Ghost, who brought out this profound secret, the truth of which must have been attested by the virgin mother ere she passed away.

In Luke ii. 11 the marginal reading "Anointed LORD" (without "the") is preferable to the present text. It is Luke's way of stating that which Matthew has expressed by "it is HE that shall save HIS people from their sins," being the Spirit's explanation of the name JESUS as borne by our Lord.

In Ps. cii. 27, "Thou art the SAME" is a Divine name. (*cf.* Heb. xiii. 8).

The "New Theology," so called, is mere paganism worked into Christian teaching, a revival of Gnosticism against which the writings of the Apostle John were directed. Believers may ever welcome what is new in the sense of Matt. xiii. 52, really vouched for by Holy Scripture itself. Let us not be carried away by "another Jesus," "a different spirit," "a different gospel" (2 Cor. xi. 4); in other words, "in the error of the wicked" (2 Pet. iii. 17).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

T.M. (Manchester). *Ques. : What is the meaning of "free from the law of sin and death?"*

Ans. : "Law," here, is not the ten commandments, but law in the sense of principle, such as the law of gravitation, for instance. The principle working in my old Adam life was that of sin and death. I get free from this in the life of another. One in Whom sin did not dwell, and Who, in Himself, was free from both sin and death, came in the likeness of flesh of sin, and God by making Him a sacrifice for sin condemned sin in the flesh. The believer's connection with Adam, therefore, and with the old life has been terminated in the Cross of Christ, and in God's account he has been transferred from Adam to Christ. This is the teaching of Rom. v. 12 to vi. 11. The way this is practically made good in us is that we reckon ourselves "to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus." Before God, I am in Christ the moment I believe, but I have to come to the apprehension of it myself. It is accepted, first

of all, in faith, and as we accept it in faith the Holy Spirit makes it experimentally true in us, and this enables the individual himself to say, as Paul says (for it must be noticed he speaks in the singular), "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made *me* free from the law of sin and death."

To use a simple illustration. In the town where the writer lives, the trams have been worked, at separate times, on three different principles. First drawn by horses, then propelled by steam, and now by electricity. But all these forces could not be working together. The steam displaced the horse, and electricity the steam. So with the believer. If he realises by faith the deliverance there is for him in the death and resurrection of Christ and walks in the Spirit, then a new power and control have come into his life, and he is set free from the principle of sin and death, for he cannot be governed by the Spirit and the flesh at the same moment, any more than steam and electricity are in use at the same time in the case of the tram.

In Romans viii. 1-4 we have three steps. (1) the knowledge of being "in Christ," and therefore no condemnation for us; (2) the principle of life which is in Christ becomes operative in us (just as the electric current passes from the place where it is stored and ultimately reaches the tram car); (3) we accept the fact that sin in the flesh has been condemned in Christ's sacrifice, and we pass the same condemnation upon it in ourselves by walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

H.F.H. Ques. : *In view of Gal. iii. v. 27, can one be said to have "Put on Christ," who has not been baptized?*

Ans. : In scripture, certain things are predicted of those who have been *baptized*, and this is one of them. It is important to remember this because many are disposed to think that everything is bound up with believing. The difference between the two is carefully preserved in Scripture; and for this reason: believing has to do with our position before God, and is invisible to everyone else, being a matter of the heart. Baptism has to do with what is external and visible, and with our public position before men. Now unless this external ceremony has been performed, who can say that the person has "put on Christ"? Baptism is a public declaration of having put on Christ, and not merely an affair of the heart.

*Other answers to questions are unavoidably held over for want of space.

THE FAITH AND THE FLOCK

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EDITORIALS.

THE DEATH OF KING EDWARD.

THE mournful intelligence of the sudden demise of the King has stirred to their very depths the hearts of all his subjects. It was so unexpected. Indeed it might be said to be almost the last thing that was expected. We only echo the universal feeling when we express profound sorrow at the loss the nation has sustained, and our deepest sympathy with every member of the Royal Family. Our prayer is that wisdom, strength, and courage may be vouchsafed to our new Sovereign, and divine support given to all.

Death speaks in tones to make itself heard where no other voice is regarded, and it makes its appeal to-day with an articulation so clear that it cannot be misunderstood. It speaks to the whole nation, to every political party, and to each individual. All heads are bowed and all hearts touched. We trust that under the influence of this the asperities of party conflicts may be softened, and that a better feeling may prevail throughout all classes. But, above all, may God use it as a means of revival, and in preparing many hearts to receive the truth. He would have all men to be saved, and He can use an event that appeals irresistibly to all sections of the community, and awakens sympathies long dormant, to prepare the way for the reception of the gospel. May the Lord's people pray for this and expect it, while at the same time looking for *the King* to appear, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, one mark of whose kingdom is—"the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

“IN THE YEAR THAT KING UZZIAH DIED.”

ISAIAH vi.

IT was in the year that King Uzziah died that Isaiah beheld the wonderful vision of which he gives an account in the sixth chapter of his prophecy. It is when man fails we need to see God. In the year of perplexing trouble we need the vision. When darkness wraps the earth we need to look again upon the glory of the Lord.

It is a striking picture the prophet presents in this chapter. It may be regarded from four different points of view. First, with reference to Israel's loss ; second, with regard to the Lord ; third, the effect of the vision upon the prophet himself ; and lastly, the solemn message he has to declare to the nation.

1. It is a master stroke, the reference to the death of the King. This dark background of the picture heightens the effect of all the rest. Uzziah had on the whole been a good and great king ; and Isaiah became the chronicler of his acts (2 Chron. xxvi. 22). The prophet must have been comparatively a young man when the king died, for he lived on to the reign of Hezekiah, and evidently the decease of one who had reigned for fifty-two years and been so celebrated, made a deep impression upon him. The failure of the King, at the close, after so prosperous a career, was also calculated to produce a similar effect. Again and again with reference to Uzziah we come across such expressions as these : “ God made him to prosper ” ; “ God helped him ” ; “ His name spread abroad ” ; “ He was marvellously helped, till he was strong.” Then he failed. And now he had passed off the scene altogether.

Cannot we imagine Isaiah's feelings ? Do not our own circumstances help us in a marked way to do this ? We feel staggered, humanly speaking, by the suddenness of the blow that has fallen upon this country. The loss cannot be estimated. We cannot tell ourselves, much less others, what it all means. It is here that the vision of Isaiah helps us : “ *In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord.*”

2. It was a vision of surpassing majesty and glory. When St. John the evangelist is recording, centuries afterwards, what was spoken by the Lord on this occasion, he adds : “ These things said Esaias, when he saw *His glory*, and spake of Him.” The vision is

within, in the Temple. Outside all was dark enough. Uzziah was dead, and soon the prosperity of the nation, and almost its very existence, was to become a thing of the past, for the communication to Isaiah contained these portentous words: "Then said I, Lord, how long? And He answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate." But this vision of a glory that does not diminish, or decay, or pass with time sustained the prophet's heart amidst every adversity.

Is there not this vision for us to-day, and do we not need it? The throne of Israel had been vacated by one of its most illustrious occupants; here is one "sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." Does it not remind us of another scene depicted by another seer? It carries our minds on to Revelation iv., where after reviewing the state of the churches—a state which culminates in utter rejection—the seer of Patmos is translated from earth's shadows to heaven's glory—from the shifting scenes of one to be occupied with the stability of the other—and what does he behold? A throne! "Behold," he says, "a throne, and *one sat on the throne.*" Yes, the throne is not a vacant one as some would have us suppose. After all there is really only one throne and one occupant, and He never moves from off it. When earthly thrones are vacated we need to think of that.

"He everywhere hath sway,
And all things serve His might."

He is "high and lifted up." *He* never stoops to death. "And His train filled the temple." There is no room for anyone else. None can share His glory with Him.

It is the fact of the throne, and that the throne is occupied, that arrests attention. And surely no throne ever had such attendants: "Above it stood the seraphims." Only in this place are they mentioned. While their ascription of praise is as unique as their own personalities—"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts." How different is all this to our conceptions of an earthly throne and an earthly monarch. Outward grandeur there may be, and every semblance of power, but what earthly monarch, if a genuine man, would claim to be holy, or even care to have the word continually sounded in his ears? No wonder that at such words "the posts of the door moved."

Could anything be more striking than this vision of the Lord—the throne and He Who sat there—all the accompaniments of supreme majesty, power, and glory—appropriating that which belongs to no one else—“holy, holy, holy”—and laying claim to “the fulness of the whole earth?” For such is said to be the glory of this One. What a vision! And at a moment when death had claimed as its victim the highest in the land.

3. Its effect upon Isaiah is not less striking than the vision itself. “*Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.*” What courtier has ever had such an experience in the presence of any earthly monarch? Those who throng the courts of kings are not in the habit of making such confessions. They go in their best attire, appear at their best in every way, and receive congratulations and compliments. But Isaiah found himself in an altogether different atmosphere here, and absolute purity detected his own unfitness for such a Presence. Nothing stamps the Bible as the Book of God more certainly than its treatment of sin. It tears away with a remorseless hand every refuge of lies and every vestige of concealment, and lays everything bare.

Thank God, there is the remedy as well as the exposure. And relief comes at the very moment our need is confessed—“*Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.*” For he was to become the messenger of the Lord of hosts, and God’s messengers must not only bear His message but His character as well. We are not all alike, and we have not all been guilty of the *same* sins, but notice the altar can meet our need just as and where we feel it most. Isaiah speaks of his unclean lips. It is the lips of the prophet that are touched. And, moreover, the very lips that had formerly been polluted are to become God’s channels of communication to His people. The burning coal conveyed by the seraph (which means “burning”) was but the symbol of those burning words that would henceforth issue from lips that had once been unclean. It is only as we have the vision of holiness that we can speak for God. For not otherwise can we know the true state of men.

4. And now let us consider for a moment the state of the people—the outside world. All this had been passing within—What was the condition without? So bad that it could hardly be worse. We learn this from the opening chapters of this same prophecy. And now judicial blindness and hardness are to follow. When God gives men over to this there is no hope for them. In this case it ended in Israel being scattered, and Judah being carried away captive to Babylon. After the lapse of centuries we find these same words referred to (John xii.), when their descendents, because of the rejection of Christ, are again to be dispersed amongst all the nations of the earth.

Surely all this speaks loudly to us. God has, with a suddenness almost appalling, removed the one at the head of the nation—a nation that has received for generations unspeakable favours, privileges, and mercies at His hands. What requital have we made? Have we not cause to ask the reason of this stroke? We sometimes sing, “Come not in terrors as the King of Kings,” but there are times when He chooses to come in this way, that our eyes may see once more “*the King*, the Lord of Hosts,” and that we may be reminded of our sinfulness and our need.

R.E.

AN OUTLINE OF “THE REVELATION.”

(See Chart issued with February Number).

FOURTH SECTION. CHAPTERS IV. AND V.

By WALTER SCOTT.

THE prophetic programme as unfolded in the third division of the Apocalypse (“the things which shall be hereafter,” i. 19), which we have now reached, is the product of the Divine mind. The whole extends over eighteen chapters and five verses (iv.-xxii. 5), covering a thousand years and more of the world’s future history; it is one gigantic struggle between good and evil, between light and darkness; the streets of the earthly Jerusalem are seen running in blood, and outside the holy city torrents of blood proclaim the vengeance of God; the scenes shift and change, but no haste; the orderly arrangement of the events, surprising to an onlooker, yet more startling to those whose part is apportioned therein. All this and more witness to a master mind. The conception of this orderly

and complete prophecy leaves the human mind staggered at its greatness and completeness. The *end* of it all is the triumph of God and the eternal shining forth of His glory.

While the prophetic division of the book commences with chap. iv., prophetic action does not begin till chap. vi.

This fourth section of the chart of the Revelation which we are now about to consider contains certain heavenly scenes which are described in two deeply interesting chapters (iv. and v.). They show the saints of Old and New Testament times in heaven, but not *how* they got there. The predicted translation—the whole company of those “caught up” (1 Thess. iv. 17)—*must* have its magnificent answer between the close of chapter iii. and the opening of chapter iv. We again assert that it *must* be so, for while the translation is solely a Pauline revelation (1 Thess. iv. 15), yet, the writer of the Apocalypse rightly assumes it. Two things are certain: first, that the church period terminates at the close of chapter iii.; second, a body of redeemed risen and glorified saints are recognised in heaven in chapter iv. *How* they got there Paul informs us. John simply announces the fact of their presence in heaven. *Spirits* on thrones, crowned and clothed (iv. 4), is a thought foreign to scripture. “Elders” speak of *men*, not of souls or spirits.

These two chapters form a heavenly vision of what will be after the present church period is over, and *before* the first series of prophetic judgments (vi.) are inflicted. We love these two chapters. We have often anticipated the holy and majestic calmness of chapter iv., and the magnificent anthem of chapter v. The mysterious grandeur of the one and the everlasting songs of the other have thrilled our souls and bowed us before the Lamb in worship.

The elders—the heads of the heavenly and redeemed priesthood—are found in action in both chapters. In chapter iv. the Creation glory of God is grandly celebrated. The beasts—or living ones—the ministers of the throne of the Eternal, and the elders proclaim in testimony, but not in song, the creatorial glories and rights of the Lord God Almighty and Jehovah (verses 8, 11). “A door opened in heaven” (verse 1) is for *one* to pass in. “And I saw heaven opened” (xix. 11) is to allow *many* to come out. The Seer passed in and saw such glories and heard in song and testimony such things which can only be known when realised.

The first object beheld in this heavenly vision is a *throne*; the first object witnessed by the translated saints is a *Person*. We pass with our Lord into heaven and the first sight which greets our gaze is a throne—vast and great. It is the sign of stability, of order, of government. It is “set” or established in heaven in contrast to the tottering thrones of earth. The “rainbow round about the throne” (verse 3) is God’s witness to the race that in coming days of judgment He will remember mercy. Round the throne of the Eternal are grouped the thrones (not seats) of the redeemed.

The elders, *i.e.*, the redeemed of past and present ages “cast their crowns before the throne” in the profound acknowledgment that their royal dignity is absolutely dependent upon and sustained by the throne of the Almighty and Living God. This magnificent chapter closes with the worship of the living ones, and with that of the elders. The former worship God in His various relations of old (verse 8), as also in the greatness, sovereignty, and eternal existence of His Being (verse 9); while the elders, prostrate, and their crowns cast down before the throne, directly worship the Creator. The worship of the latter is more profound and more direct than that of the living ones. *They* speak of God; the elders speak *to* God. “Glory and honour and *thanks*” are ascribed by the living ones (verse 8). “Glory and honour and *power*” form the doxology of the redeemed.

The central subject of chapter iv. is **The Throne** and its various glories and accessories and consequent worship. In chapter v. the central object is **The Slain Lamb** and His redemption glories and rights. The contents of chapter v. do not form an independent vision, but rather a continuation of events beheld in the previous chapter. The two chapters constitute one vision.

Chapter v. opens with Jehovah on the throne and holding in His right hand a book written within and without—such the fulness of the revelation, and of its contents. The book is sealed with seven seals. Next, a strong angel challenges creation or the intelligent universe to produce One morally competent to approach God’s right hand, take the book, break the seals in succession, and accomplish the purposes of God respecting the earth. The contents of the book cover the period from chapter vii. till xxii. 5. The book is **The Revelation of the Divine purposes respecting the world, and how they are to be carried out.** No created being can answer the

challenge. The Lamb slain enters upon the scene, and to Him every eye turns. There is combined in Him the majesty of the lion with the meekness of the lamb (verses 5, 6). He has right in Himself as also acquired glories. He approached the throne of Jehovah in all right and title and amidst the songs of the redeemed and the acclaim of angels. The worship of the Lamb widens and deepens till all intelligent creatures in the universe proclaim His worthiness. The chapter with its wondrous story of the Lamb slain, of redemption, of song, of universal worship, is, perhaps, the grandest in these respects in the sacred volume. There is no song, no redemption, no blood, no Lamb, no memorials of Calvary in the previous chapter, which is one of unusual grandeur. *This* one absorbs our affections, captivates our hearts, and leaves us entranced.

Worthy, O Lamb of God, art Thou,
That every knee to Thee should bow.

VITALITY AND STABILITY.

THE NEED OF THE DAY.

PSALM CIV. 15-16.

By WM. BOUSFIELD.

VERSE 15 of this Psalm gives us a striking instance of the remarkable way in which in Scripture particular blessings are put before us in a threefold way. The preacher says: "A threefold cord is not quickly broken" (Eccl. iv.-12), and what a wondrous threefold cord this is, *Wine, oil, and bread*.

Thrice happy is the man who enters into and enjoys the spiritual meaning of these precious types, who eats of that *bread* which came down from heaven, and never hungers, whose face is illuminated with the "holy anointing" *oil*, type of the Holy Spirit in its living reality in the soul, the fulness of which made the face of the first *Christian* martyr shine as "the face of an angel"—and who has drunk of that new *wine* which fills the heart with a heavenly gladness, the world can neither give nor take away.

In ver. 16 the figure changes, and the Psalmist speaks of the characteristics of the "trees of the Lord," fulness of sap (vitality) and the cedars of Lebanon (stability).

Now, I believe this 16th verse is a very needed word for us to-day, there is a need of a fuller expression of the Christian life in every one of us; that, as the sap, that marvellous vitalizing fluid, which at this season of the year is rising to the topmost twig of the topmost

branch of a *living* tree, produces such beautiful results in the vegetable world, so the power of the new life of the believer should permeate his entire being.

A well-known servant of Christ, now gone home, used to say that it was the last bit of truth we had from God that was the first to be given up, and when the sap is not rising to the topmost branch, the tree begins to die *downward*. I was passing through Sutton Park recently and saw many fine trees, bearing evidence of life in the lower branches, but the topmost branches were stark and bare, dying downwards; like many Christians with whom decline has set in, "first love" has been lost, the vitalizing power that should be seen in the minutest detail of the Christian life has declined. No longer like the Fruitful Trees of Psalm 145, praising the Lord, but as Jude says, "Trees whose fruit withereth." These are real things, we see it in ourselves, we see it in others, but, I believe, if we knew more of the good of verse 15, the *bread*, the *oil* and the *wine*, there would be more living power in our lives, and more fruit bearing for God. Joshua had to say to the people (chap. xviii. 3): "How long are ye *slack* to possess the land," alas! that *slackness* should mark so many of the people of God to-day. We need more *vitality*, to awake out of sleep, and we also need that which is expressed by the "cedars of Lebanon, which he has planted," *stability*, those mighty trees gracing the mountain heights, withstanding the fiercest storms, unmoved and unshaken. So the same power that enabled the apostle Paul to say "But none of these things move me" can work in us, and instead of being as the double minded man, *unstable* in all our doings, we take heed to his word of exhortation. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable (the cedars of Lebanon) always abounding in the work of the Lord" (fulness of sap) 1 Cor. xv. 58.

There is an awful danger of dropping to the level of that which will eventually end in the final rejection of professing Christianity, "neither cold nor hot."

But as the tree strikes its roots downwards, drawing its sustenance from the soil in which it is planted, elaborating the sap, and bearing its leaf and fruit in season, so we, as we are rooted and grounded in love, and in the quiet secret of His presence, and feed upon and draw our sustenance and life from Him, shall be like trees planted by the waters "full of sap" and as the "cedars of Lebanon" which He hath planted.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE.

THE foresight and care of God over all His creatures is a truth which circumstances seem, at times, to dispute. So impenetrable are the dark clouds that sometimes surround us ; so heavy and crushing the blows that fall upon us ; so swift and unexpected the lightning flash that blasts and withers our hopes ; and, what is more mysterious than all and often more staggering, so unnecessary and undeserved the waste of joy and life, and the promise of all that seemed good—that we are at times sorely tempted to doubt whether God is mindful of His creatures or has any real interest in them ; or if He has, does He possess any power to mitigate what seems only an unrelieved calamity ? We are tempted, sometimes, to argue that we should be only too willing to shield *our* children from suffering which God allows to come upon *His*.

Is there any explanation of this mystery ? When we see hundreds and thousands of lives sacrificed by what appears to be a mere freak of nature ; or when we see a young man of great ability, whose life seems indispensable, cut down in early life ; when we contemplate cruelty, that is often allied to power, allowed to work havoc in peaceful homes, and when we behold the innocent suffering for the guilty, how can we reconcile all this with the belief in a God Who is infinitely holy, just and merciful ?

In the first place, in endeavouring to answer these difficulties, it is no use pretending that they do not exist, or that there is no mystery after all. The mystery is there, and always will be there, in one sense, but one thing can be said, it need not be a mystery that blinds us, or stupefies, but only a mystery that leads to a deeper faith in God.

1. It must be remembered, in seeking any explanation of God's government of the universe, that things are out of joint, and that we are not living under a perfect system. Sin has to be taken into account. Under its influence man attempts to shut God out of His own world. And nothing is more clearly revealed in the Bible than that *we* only see one act of the great drama of human existence, and until the whole thing is played out we are not in a position to judge at all. If the innocent suffer for the guilty it is because of the abnormal state of things. It is so in human affairs. In time of war, people who had no hand in promoting the quarrel, and take no part

in it, may be called upon to suffer quite as much, if not more, than those who were directly responsible. But then everybody recognises that war is abnormal. So is the present state of things. But it is not to continue for ever. God, in His Word, gives us a bright outlook—"And in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees, well refined. And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory ; and the Lord 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 the Lord hath spoken it.*" (Isa. xxv. 6-8) It is only because we are ignorant of, or lose sight of, the fact that the present condition is not a perfect one, and of God's future intentions that we distrust Him, and call in question His ways. As the passage we have just quoted so beautifully intimates, the covering that is cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations will one day be destroyed, and then God's way will be known upon earth, His saving health among all nations. This means that God will one day directly and manifestly order the affairs of this world, and He will no longer be hidden. Every mystery will be solved.

2. It may be said, What are we to do in the meantime ? It is an occasion for childlike trust, and for faith and patience. "*They that know Thy Name will put their trust in Thee.*" It is remarkable that those whose lives have been most bitter in this world, and most hard, are the people who continue to trust God most. "Behind a frowning Providence, He hides a smiling face," was written by one who passed through deep waters. He himself could not always see the smiling face, but, nevertheless, it was and is always there. And how many thousands of God's people have been comforted by this true, and beautiful, and uplifting thought so aptly expressed. Yes,

"Apt words have power to suage the tumors of a troubled mind,
and are as balm to festered wounds."

Allow us to quote some words written by a man of great gifts—a student of Edinburgh University—who soon after leaving was struck with fever, which left him prostrate for six months, and with an incurable defect of speech, and in constant pain. "The God of love has taught me to see the meaning of my own dispensation in the clearest light, and I now perfectly approve of it with all my

heart. I am the most withered and insignificant thing in this part of the universe ; but weak, poor and afflicted as I am, I can truly say that my lot has become to me one of almost unmingled felicity. The sublime paradox, ' Having nothing, and yet possessing all things ' is a mystery to me no longer. It is just what I feel. I have met with no person so happy as myself, and it is to be ascribed chiefly to my sufferings, or rather to the grace of our Redeemer, Who has made them His instruments to refine and free my spirit and bring it into more full communion with Himself." So wrote one who, as far as nature went, had reason to doubt the wisdom of God's strange dealings, but he proved like many another the wisdom of the words—

" Ye fearful saints fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

What lessons we may learn from Job in this connection. Bereft of his possessions and his children, and withal a righteous man, he, yet, did not repine, but—" Fell down upon the ground, and worshipped and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither ; the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, *nor charged God foolishly.*" And when sore personal affliction came upon him he still retained his integrity, and instead of cursing God he exclaimed, " What ? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil ? In all this did not Job sin with his lips."

3. The Bible has much to teach us upon the subject of God's providence. It is to be noted that though in the writings composing this book there may be the record of want of faith on the part of individuals, yet the book itself never questions God's goodness, or the ultimate triumph of His plans. A fine illustration of the way things are working in the universe is afforded by the Book of Esther. There we find the wicked Haman plotting the destruction of the Jews ; and, as a result, " Letters were sent by posts into all the King's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day." Yet God was working behind the scenes, and, while the Jews were mourning and fasting because of the decree, He was depriving King Ahasuerus of sleep, so that he commanded to bring forth the book of records of the Chronicles ; and they were read before him.

Therein he found something to the credit of Mordecai, the Jew, and this apparently simple circumstance led to the overthrow of his Prime Minister's diabolical plans, and the complete emancipation of the Jews from their terrible situation. In this case the catastrophe was averted, but even where it is not averted, the same Providence is at work for final good, and not for evil. If, for instance, to take the case of China, a number of devoted missionaries are called to lay down their lives, it leads eventually to greater security, and to doors being thrown open for the gospel far more widely than before.

The Epistle of James will instruct us on the same subject, "Blessed is the man that endureth trial," it says, "for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." Here is a reward for all our trial. And the last clause reveals a very remarkable thing, namely, that God expects us to love Him, and not dread Him and doubt Him, even though His dealings may be painful instead of pleasant. Loving God does not give us immunity from trial, nor is trial a proof of any want of love on God's part, for it is often in the furnace that His children prove His love most. And further, we are assured that "Every *good* gift and every *perfect* gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." If we look only at providences there may seem darkness over God's face, but, as His children, we are privileged to know Him as the Father of Lights, and to expect only good, and that from this He will never turn.

Romans viii. reveals to us God's beneficent purpose behind all the seeming contradiction of a groaning creation. "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared," Paul says, "with the glory that shall be revealed in us" (or "to us"). So that we are bound to regard the sufferings as leading to some good result. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." Yet "the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." A groaning creation, and a suffering humanity may seem the sport of fate, and to present a problem that is insoluble, but, with the Word of God in our hands, we hold the key to the puzzle. Of course, to the one who persists in remaining at enmity with the Ruler of the universe, there can be

no explanation. If he refuses to recognise God he will certainly refuse to accept His plans and ways, but "to them that love God" we are assured "all things work together for good." Reconciled to God and loving Him we shall soon be at peace about the world.

It is sometimes a trouble to certain people that the wicked seem to prosper, and the good suffer. Such should read and ponder Psalm lxxiii. It deals with this very point. Inside the sanctuary, it was, the Psalmist learned his lesson. We cannot go over the ground here, but just notice the beginning and close of the Psalm. "Truly God is *good*"; and "It is *good* for me to draw near to God."

We must not forget that God disciplines His children, and that calamities and sorrows are meant for their profit. This Heb. xii. teaches us. "Whom the Lord *loveth* He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Our place is to be "in subjection," for we are reminded it is for "our profit."

In judging, therefore, of all that happens around us, to ourselves as well as to those we love, we must learn to regard it from the standpoint of the future, and the end God has in view.

Let us remember that He is above and at the back of everything. In the pocket of one sorely afflicted, upon whom a terrible blow had fallen, were found these words written on a slip of paper—

"The mist lies dim on the coming year,
I know not the way I go;
But my Captain standeth above the clouds
'Tis *enough* for Him to know."

We know not; but He knows. This is sufficient. Let us rest there—"Tis enough for Him to know." Let us not try to know what is not given us to know now.

It is the time for trusting Him; and the supreme reason for trusting Him is **Christ**. Had Christ never come—had God never sent His Son—then the riddle of the universe would have been a riddle indeed. But through the coming, the death, the resurrection, and the glory of Christ we already see that riddle in solution, while His coming again will solve it completely.

God has loved, and He will never take that love back again until every pang and pain has found its answer, and the whole universe is a witness that God is love.

Calvary, O Calvary,
Mercy's vast unfathomed sea,
Love, eternal love to me.
Jesus, we adore Thee.

R.E.

“NO CROSS, NO CROWN.”

No Cross, no Crown, could we but understand
That through the Cross the Crown will come,
That all our trials are sent by God's own hand
To lead us Home.

How often when our hearts are filled with sorrow
The loving face of Jesus shines more clear ;
Why should we fear to trust Him for to-morrow
He will be near.

On earth He suffered trials and temptation,
His heart was often sad and weary too ;
By earthly friends He was denied, forsaken,
All His life through.

He might have reigned as King with Heaven's glory,
That men might know His power far and wide ;
But no, He came to us, as poor and lowly,
And for our sakes He died.

And He invites us all His Cross to take,
And humbly in His steps to follow on ;
Content to suffer all things for His sake
Until He come.

K.D.

“STILLNESS.”

“ Be still and let Him mould thee.”

Thy lesson art thou learning ? O tried and weary soul,
His ways art thou discerning Who works to make thee whole ;
In the haven of submission art thou satisfied and still,
Art thou clinging to the Father 'neath the shadow of His will ?
Now, while His arms enfold thee, think well He loveth best,
Be still, and He shall mould thee for His heritage of rest.

The vessel must be shapen for the joys of Paradise,
The soul must have her training for the service of the skies.
And if the great Refiner in furnaces of pain,
Would do His work more truly, count all His dealings gain.
For He Himself hath told thee of tribulations here,
Be still, and let Him mould thee for the changeless glory there.

From vintages of sorrow are deepest joys distilled,
And the cup outstretched for healing is oft at Marah filled.
God leads to joys thro' weeping, to quietness thro' strife,
Thro' yielding into conquest, thro' death to endless life.
Be still, He hath enrolled thee for the kingdom and the crown,
Be silent, let Him mould thee Who calleth thee “ His own.”

“ The ten commandments do not create duty, the existence of which is founded on the relationships in which God has set man. . . . It is important to notice that the last of these commandments forbids the first motion of the heart towards the sins previously condemned, ‘ the sting is in the tail.’ ”

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS:—

A Simple Exposition.

CHAP. X., 11-18.

SINS TAKEN AWAY.

(11) " And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins ; (12) but this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God ; (13) from henceforth expecting until His enemies be made His footstool. (14) For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. (15) Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us ; for after that He had said before, (16) ' This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them ; (17) and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.' (18) Now where remission of these is there is no more offering for sin."

PERHAPS few of us apprehend the complete change that has been wrought by the death of Christ. It is not simply that when the judgment day comes we who believe shall find that our sins have been taken away, but, here and now, we have been cleared from all charge of sin. We are, here and now, regarded as sanctified, that is, separated from our sins altogether and set apart for God. The word " sanctified " in vv. 10 and 14 is the Greek perfect, and " marks a *permanent* condition resulting from a past action." It is this *permanent condition* which we are so slow to apprehend. Yet it is true that Christ's one offering has perfected us for ever.

" How can this be ? " says one. " Am I not a failing and sinning creature still ? I do not even satisfy myself, how then can God be satisfied with me ? " Herein lies the mistake which so many make. They are looking at themselves. But God does not say " Look at yourselves and see how perfect you are." But, " Look at the work of My Son and see how perfect that is." Notice the exact words. " By the which will we are sanctified, *though the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all* " (v. 10). And again, " For by *one offering* He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified " (v. 14). It is what Christ has done by His work, and not what we have done. The believer and the sacrifice of Christ are seen in connection. If the one is perfect then the other is perfect. This is how God sees it ; and He tells us so ; and expects us to believe it. This has been God's principle from the beginning. Take the case of Abel. " By faith Abel offered unto God a *more excellent sacrifice* than Cain "—it does not say he was a more excellent *man* than Cain ;

if we had looked at the two men we might have preferred the latter, but God was looking at the sacrifice each brought, and the one spoke of Christ and the other did not; therefore it adds: "by which (*i.e.*, the sacrifice) he obtained witness that he was righteous, *God testifying of his gifts*; and by it he being dead yet speaketh." God now testifies to us of what Christ has given to Him on our behalf, and He wants us to see that that offering being perfect, we are perfected, for we are seen henceforth in connection with the *One Who bore our sins* and put them away for ever. It is in this way that "*a permanent condition has resulted from a past action.*" That past action is our Saviour's death, and that permanent condition is that our sins are gone for ever, **never to be remembered any more.**

Let us now see how the verses which head this article supply us with at least six proofs that the sins of the believer are for ever taken away.

1. The first proof is that, in contrast with the sacrifices of old which were repeated, Christ offered only one sacrifice for sins. The repetition in the one case proved they were unavailing. But in the other there is no repetition; what then? It has completely answered its purpose. From the very words used this is the only possible conclusion. "Ministering and offering *oftentimes* the *same* sacrifices, which can never take away sins"—this describes the one. "But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God"—this describes the other. The divine workman said of His own work, "It is finished." Then He sat down. This leads us to the second proof, for

2. "Every priest *standeth*," "But this man . . . for ever *sat down*." What a lovely contrast. The toiling, standing priest of old, his work never finished, for he had no sacrifice of sufficient value to bring; and the seated, glory-crowned Saviour whose work on account of sin is for ever done. In the tabernacle of old there was one piece of furniture conspicuous by its absence—a chair. There was a table, and a candlestick and a chest, but no chair; for the priest could never sit down. Our Priest has for ever sat down. Believer, dost thou want to know if thy sins are already put away? look up there and see the One Who undertook to do it **seated**, and know that that is the proof that they are all forgiven and forgotten.

3. But where is He seated? Does not this furnish our third proof? He is seated "on the right hand of God." Your Saviour and mine has been put in the place of honour; does not this tell us,

in language too plain to be mistaken, what God thinks of His work, and that our sins are gone? Would such honour have been heaped upon Him if He had done His work imperfectly? When a general goes out to fight his country's battles and gets disgracefully defeated, does he come home to be honoured? Look up then again, dear fellow believer, and not only see your Substitute seated, but seated in the highest place, and know of a surety that every honour He wears is only an additional proof that He has vanquished your foes and taken away your sins.

4. He is "expecting till His enemies be made His footstool." You see, from these words, He is not expecting to die any more. If it said He was expecting to die again, this might throw some doubt upon your forgiveness. No, He does not die over again for each fresh believer, or each new generation. He will never die again, so that if His blood is the ground of our forgiveness, our sins must be just as much forgiven now as when we get to heaven. For the work that put them away is a finished work, and will not be more finished when we enter there than it is at the present moment. When any one gets to heaven he will say he is there because Christ died, but that work is just as much a past work now as it will be then, nor will it be of more value then than it is now, therefore we are, as to forgiveness, just as much saved now as we shall be then. No, He will never have to rise up to be a sacrifice for sins again, and this is the proof that our sins are gone. It distinctly says that when He rises up again it will be for "His enemies to be made His footstool." He has already had His triumph in heaven, He will then have His triumph on earth.

5. Verse 14 affords a still further reason for saying that the sins of a believer are taken away. "*For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*" "Perfected for ever"—perfected in perpetuity. Again let us repeat—"a permanent condition resulting from a past action." But does not this mean some perfection in ourselves? No. It says "By one offering." It is something Christ has done which makes us perfect, and not something we have done. But does it not say "the sanctified"? Does not this refer to those only who have lived specially saintly lives? The answer is that, although it is incumbent on all to seek to live saintly lives, yet, this is not the ground of our sanctification here. How then do we become sanctified according to this passage?

Verse 10 will explain. "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." This does not refer to *our* doing the will of God—that is another aspect of sanctification—but to Christ having done it. In offering Himself to God on our behalf He was doing His will; and part of that will is that we should be set apart to God according to God's own estimate of that work. So that as believers we are now viewed as "sanctified." and "perfected." If this is our position then indeed our sins are gone.

6. That the foregoing is the true interpretation the next verses plainly declare (vv. 15-18). They give us the sixth reason, which confirms all the rest. The Holy Spirit is a witness. How can we say our sins are not taken away when He says they are? Could language be stronger? Not only remitted but not remembered. **"Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."**

These are the six proofs that the sins of the believer are taken away; and we might add a seventh, for we are told next that we have "liberty to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." How could we enter the *holiest* if sins were not taken away? We could not carry them in there. But the **blood of Jesus** has so cleansed us that even the holiest spot in the universe is not debarred us.

This subject, however, we must leave for another occasion. The proofs we have given that a believer's sins are forgiven and forgotten are surely sufficient. (1) Christ's sacrifice never needs to be repeated; (2) He has sat down, in contrast with the priests of old who always stood; (3) He is in the highest place of honour; (4) He is expecting, not to do His work again, but, "till His enemies be made His footstool"; (5) His one offering has perfected us for ever; and (6) we have the witness of the Holy Ghost.

"To see ourselves perfectly cleansed makes us hate sin. A man who is thoroughly clean will not like to get a spot on his garments; while he who is already somewhat dirty will not care about getting a little more dirty."

* * * *

"God crowns not our merits, but His own gifts. Because He makes them ours, He rewards them, just as if they were our own virtues."

LETTERS TO YOUNG PEOPLE.



EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS (*continued*).

TRUST IN GOD.

V. "From your letter I think you seem to fear that you will not be able from want of funds to continue your work much longer ; but, dear friend, trust *in the Lord*. He can open doors for you when you least expect it ; and be assured if He sees that it will be for His glory and the good of His people, *He will do so*. Well, then, 'be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.' Consider it a great privilege to be permitted to engage in such a work. It is an honour of which we are not worthy to be allowed to do anything which may contribute to God's glory and the spread of His truth.

"Opportunities of usefulness are in His hand, yea, all 'our times are in His hand.' What a blessed thought is this ! and in this assurance surely an humble, teachable, *waiting* spirit becomes us—a spirit willing to go wherever He leads, to be what He pleases, in short, to have no will but His. But, dear friend, I fear lest constant employment should prove a temptation to neglect communion with your God and Saviour. Oh, be not satisfied with anything short of a close walk with God, a living intercourse with Him, a realising of the blessedness of having "fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ," thus you will go on your way rejoicing. Love to Christ will make everything pleasant, and you will be willing to spend, and be spent for His Name's sake."

COMMUNION WITH GOD.

VI. "When the room is quiet at night I have a delightful season, such a precious opportunity for communion with the Saviour of my soul. Oh, how empty and unsatisfying the best earthly friendships are in comparison with intercourse with Him. Dear friend, may the blessed Spirit reveal more and more of the preciousness of Jesus to our souls, enabling us to live more *simply, solely,* and *entirely* by faith on Him, *leaning* only on Him, not on ministers, not on ordinances, not on any creature, but on Him, and on Him

alone. But do not misunderstand me, I do not mean we are not to use, and to use with thankfulness, the means of grace God has given us, and to value the teaching He gives through His servants, but let us not lean on them, but on the arm of 'the Beloved.' We know Him by leaning *alone* on Him, and doing so we may expect a far greater enjoyment of the society of His people and other precious privileges. Oh, let us remember every creature is in His hand, and it is only as He gives the blessing they can really be of use or comfort to us. Some time ago I read a striking remark which contains much—'Our friends are to us all that, and only that, which God makes them to be.'"

SICKNESS.

VII. "I hope He who was present with His servants of old in the midst of the burning fiery furnace is very present with you in your sick room. *He* can make the bed of languishing a pleasant abode. His Presence makes the darkest night of suffering bright, but *without* that Presence the brightest day in the eye of the world is *in reality* full of gloom and sadness. Oh, dear friend, 'happy' indeed and 'blessed' are those who 'have the Lord for their God.'

"I have been very poorly, and am laid very low; cough very bad and throat a good deal affected. The doctor has ordered me to be kept very quiet. If you were here you would be able to talk to me, but I should say but little, I fear, to you. 'My times are in my Father's hand,' there I leave all. Farewell, dear friend, a little while we shall meet where we 'shall go no more out,' and 'shall serve Him day and night in His temple,' and 'His Name shall be on our foreheads.'

"By means of an amanuensis I write to wish you farewell. I seem to be getting near my home. God only knows. 'My times are in His hand.' Here I lie, a poor vile sinner, resting wholly on my Saviour's finished work. I, a vile worm, He, 'the Lord my righteousness.' He gives me sweet peace—peace which the world knows not of, and I am very happy in looking to Jesus. We part but for a 'little while.' Jesus will soon appear, and then 'shall we also appear with Him in glory.'"

"Worship is the being lost in wonder at what we find in God and in Christ."

A GLORIOUS FUTURE ; or, THE SAINTS IN GLORY.

G. HUCKLESBY.

I WISH to direct your attention to that most important subject, “**The Second Coming of the Lord,**” and to try and gather from the Holy Scriptures what will take place in connection with the *saints* from their being “caught up to meet the Lord in the air,” to that time when they will “appear with Him in glory.” The coming of the Lord *for* His saints will put us in possession of the glory, and the coming of the Lord *with* His saints will make it manifest to all created intelligences that we are the happy possessors of that glory. Compare John xvii. 22, 24 ; Col. iii. 4 ; John xvii. 23 ; 2 Thess. i. 10.

Thus the coming of the Lord is in **two stages**. First, He is coming into the air to gather all His own around Himself, and then He will introduce the whole family to the Father in the Father’s house, and then He will bring them with Himself, when He shall be made manifest to the world in brightest glory. The “Sure Word of Prophecy foretells many things which must of necessity take place before the latter event can come to pass, but our Lord puts nothing between our souls and His coming to receive us unto Himself. It was the fulfilment of our Blessed Lord’s farewell promise, “I will come again,” &c., which was the constant expectation of the Church in apostolic days. When I speak of “*the Church*” I mean that wondrous thing which God is now forming upon earth, and which is composed of all true believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. By the Gospel they are called out from the world, and by the Holy Spirit they are baptized into one body, the mystical Body of Christ. As “members of His *Body*” they are seen to occupy the nearest place to Him possible for Divine Grace to give them, then as the “*Bride of the Lamb,*” the church is viewed in the highest place of honour and affection, to which it is possible for divine grace and almighty power to raise her.

The hope of those who were thus gathered out from the world to Christ was His personal return from heaven, as we read in Titus ii. 13 ; 1 Thess. i. 9, 10 ; Rev. xxii. 7, 12, 20. But alas ! they soon lost sight of this hope, the heart grew cold through carnality, and the

spiritual vision became dim through worldliness, and the hope of our Lord's immediate return was let go. This had been foretold by Christ in the Parable of the Ten Virgins, where both wise and foolish virgins slumbered and slept during the absence of the bridegroom. But, thank God, **the midnight cry** is being heard, and many are being taught to see that the believer's proper attitude of soul is to be "waiting for God's Son from heaven." We are not called to look for death, but for the return of Him who has robbed death of its sting, and the grave of its victory. Of course, if our Lord tarries a few years, we shall, like those who have gone before, "fall asleep," but that is not our proper hope. "The sky, not the grave, is our goal." Ours is **a living hope in a dying scene**, to be translated to glory without ever passing through death, even as it was with Enoch.

This is what the Lord would ever have before the minds and the hearts of His people. Hence the frequent references to His coming in the scriptures of the New Testament, where we find it mentioned more times than there are chapters. One verse in every thirty is occupied with this subject, and we are exhorted to be "waiting, watching, looking for, and hastening unto His coming."

If we read 1 Thess. iv. 13-18, we shall see *how* and *when* the saints will be "**Caught up into glory.**" The Apostle had a twofold purpose in penning this scripture, viz., to comfort and to correct. He desired to comfort their sorrowing hearts in the hour of bereavement, also to correct a mistake in their minds about their loved ones that had fallen asleep. They were sorrowing over the removal of some of their loved ones, by death, and they were also fearful lest the departed ones should miss the joy and privilege of greeting the Lord when He returned. They were waiting for that event as seen in 1 Thess. i. 9, 10, but during this waiting time these loved ones had died. Thus the Apostle writes to cheer their bereaved hearts by assuring them that when the Lord does come, the departed ones will not miss any privilege, for they will rise first, and then the living ones will be changed, and so altogether to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so to be for ever with the Lord.

Notice also how he comforts them by referring to the departed ones, as "*those who sleep in Jesus.*" Their spirits were with the Lord, at home with Christ, enjoying conscious communion with Him

there. This is seen in our Lord's words to the dying thief, "To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise," also in the prayer of Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and the Apostle Paul said to "Depart and to be with Christ," &c. The "sleep" refers only to the *body* of the believer, which is laid down to rest during the present night until the morning of the resurrection. So the early Christians called their burying places "cemeteries" or "sleeping places." But Christ is coming to awaken all His sleeping saints. They belong to Him, "spirit, soul, and body," and He is coming in person to claim His blood-bought, spirit-sealed property. He will say to the north, "Give up," and to the south "Keep not back," and in a moment the grave shall be robbed of its power and shall yield up the ransomed dust, and the Almighty Potter will remould it anew, and fashion it into a vessel of glory to shine to His own eternal praise. The death and resurrection of Christ have thus robbed death of its sting, and gilded the grave with light and glory.

The Apostle thus links together the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and the resurrection of the saints. The one is the pledge of the other. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

Again the Apostle bases this mighty truth upon the Word of God in verse 15, "This we say unto you by the Word of the Lord." He does not state it as his opinion, or his private judgment, but upon Divine Authority. It had been made to him by special revelation, and so he had passed it on to the church. It is thus not only a heart-comforting hope, but it is **a sure and certain hope**, for heaven and earth may pass away, but not one jot or tittle of God's Word can ever do so, till all be fulfilled. Twice in the last chapter in the Bible our Lord says, "Behold, I come quickly," as though He would rivet our attention, and ravish our hearts with the thought of His speedy return, and then the last time He speaks to His blood-bought Bride from the throne in glory, He changes the word "behold" for a still stronger one, a still more emphatic word, "Surely" (without a doubt)" I come quickly."

The next time He speaks will be when the Father shall bid Him step into the air and shout us all up into His presence to be for ever with and like Himself. This is what the Apostle proceeds to show in this scripture. In verse 16 he says, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout." **He is coming in person** for

this very thing. He will not entrust the gathering of His ransomed people even to Gabriel. It is a privilege He will share with none, a joy that is to be peculiarly His own. Just as Isaac had the joy of meeting the home-coming bride, before she actually reached the Father's house, so shall it be with Christ and His Church. The "**Shout**" is a word of command, like that which a general would give to his men. So the great Captain of our salvation will utter a word of authority, and all His saved ones will rally around Him in the air. The "**Archangel's voice**" will penetrate the bowels of the earth, sink to the depths of the mighty ocean bed, and throw back the portals of the tomb. It will break the silence of ages, and will awaken every sleeping child of God from Abel down to the last saint that shall fall asleep. It matters not where that ransomed dust is resting, it may be in the Catacombs at Rome or amid Alpine snows, or perchance lying in desert sands, the dead in Christ shall hear His voice and shall come forth. The "**Trump of God**" shall sound, and its clear, clarion note shall be heard by every living child of God. Its mighty blast shall sound through every continent of earth, and every island of the sea, and every waiting saint will rise to meet their coming Lord. It is called "**the last trump**" is 1 Cor. xv., which may refer to a military custom among the Romans at the time Paul wrote. The first blast gave notice to "strike their tents"; the second to "prepare to advance"; and the third, or last, was "forward." Then we are caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

" Oh ! the blessed joy of meeting,
 All the desert past !
 Oh ! the wondrous word of greeting,
 He will speak at last ! "

Who can describe the joy that will fill our hearts at that supremely blessed moment ! Faith lost in sight ! Sighs exchanged for songs ! Tears swallowed up in triumphs ! The heart yearnings of earth giving place to the " Hallelujahs " of the skies.

Observe also *the eternity of the bliss* which shall then be ours. " And thus shall we ever be with the Lord." We are not going to the Father's house on a brief visit ! Neither are we to enjoy the sight of His face, and the ineffable joy of His Presence for a few fleeting months, or passing years, but through all the generations of the age of the ages the smile of His countenance and the joy of His presence will be ours. Then it is *an ever nearing hope*. Every setting sun brings it nearer, and our very next meeting may be " the

meeting in the air"! Our next song may be sung by the great congregation! We shall never weary of gazing upon Him, Who is the altogether Lovely One! Never shall we tire in praising Him Whose love brought Him down to save us, and has taken Him back to live for us, and which in that day will place us by His side to share with Him the very glory which the Father has given to Him, and

"In the glory, Bride and Bridegroom reign for aye."

"Child of sorrow—suffering, tried, and tempted one—such is thy Saviour! What composes your bitterest cup? What constitutes your keenest, deepest sorrow? Has a loving Father removed thy mercies, withered thy gourds, darkened thy landscape, and dried up all thy sweet springs? Is this the cause of thy shaded brow and anxious look? Ah! He has trod this path before thee! He has felt all the bitterness of thy sorrow. Thou hast not a burden He did not bear, not a pang He did not feel, nor a cross He did not carry. Every footprint of His path was sprinkled with blood, and the heart that now yearns over thee was rent with agony on earth. Then go in thy sorrow to this "Brother born for adversity." Go to this "gold tried in the fire"; to this "Bread of Life" heated in the furnace. In all thy afflictions He is afflicted. Unfold to Him thy tale of sorrow. It may be an oft-told tale—it may have wearied the patience of thy nearest and dearest—but it cannot weary Him. His ear is ever open; His love is never chilled; His sympathy never exhausted; His arm never shortened that it cannot save. Go to Him and there spread thy sorrows, and remember His faithful, unchanging promise, "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

Reader, Christ calls Himself "that living Bread"—the manna which came down from heaven. Remember how the manna fell. It lay all round the tents of Israel. The Israelite could not stir from his tent without doing one of two things—he must either *gather* the manna, or *trample* upon it. Every man living is doing either the one or the other now. He is either accepting the Saviour or trampling upon Him. There is no medium. Reader, either one or the other *you* are doing. Which is it? "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

J.K.McE. Ques. : *Was Christ a Priest on earth ?*

Ans. : With all due deference to some who would answer the above question in the affirmative, we cannot do so. Our reasons are : (1) there is not one word in the gospels either as to his being a priest ; when He was constituted one ; or acting as if He were one ; (2) we never find Him in the temple fulfilling the functions of a priest ; on the contrary we read that He said to some He healed, " Go shew yourselves to the priest " ; (3) He was not of the tribe of Levi to which the priestly family belonged, and this fact alone would be sufficient to prove that on earth He was not a priest ; for had He been (4) there would have been two orders of priesthood, that after Aaron and that after Melchisedec ; (5) if Christ were a priest on earth it must have been after the order of Melchisedec, but then nothing is said in Scripture about sacrifices in connection with this order of priesthood, and therefore though Christ made propitiation, according to Heb. ii. 17, this in itself (for the reason stated) does not prove Him to have been a priest, in spite of its being ordinarily a priestly act ; (6) it is distinctly stated of Him " for He of Whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar " ; and again (7) " For if He were on earth, He should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law " (Heb. vii. 13, 14 ; and viii. 4).

J.P. Ques. : *Is there any hope held out in Scripture for those who will be left behind after the Church of God has been taken to glory, &c. ?*

Ans. : We must not attempt to be more precise than Scripture, and it is well to keep to the broad lines there laid down. Its teaching on the above subject is, that, in the time of the Antichrist those who have refused the truth that they might be saved will come under a " strong delusion that they should believe a lie ; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth." This passage is found in 2 Thess. ii. 10-12, and may be compared with Rom. xi. 20-2. Just as blindness and hardness of heart came upon Israel because they despised the goodness of God, and refused all His offers, so will it be over again in the case of the Gentiles who act in the same way with respect to God's gracious dealings to-day.

As to the latter part of your question respecting the accidents, etc., which may happen consequent upon the sudden removal of so many Christians at the Lord's coming, we must not draw upon our imagination, and where Scripture is silent it is well for us to be. Such things we must leave.

A.G. Ques. : *Would you please say a little on 1 John i. 7?*

Ans. : The apostle has been speaking of fellowship in the most intimate way—fellowship “with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.” But then “God is light,” and light makes everything manifest. If we are to have fellowship with Him we must be in the light, too. Then what about our sins? “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.” The words “if we walk in the light” refer to *where*, and not *how*, we walk. But the light is just what would expose our sins. How can we be there? The blood cleanses from *all* sin, so that even the light itself detects nothing. What a testimony to the cleansing power of the blood! It enables us to enjoy the full revelation of all that God is without any sense of unfitness. You will see from this it is not a question here of our practical state but of our *position*. Not that the former is unimportant, as we see from the next chapter (vv. 6 and 9), but position must always come first.

C.R.F. Ques. : *What or when is the Day of Judgment spoken of in 1 Jno. iv. 17, and is the statement that “as He is so are we in this world,” our standing in Christ, or our state, &c.?*

Ans. : There are various judgments spoken of in Scripture, but the Day of Judgment would cover all. The thought is, that, if the Day of Judgment does not terrify us, what can? For then God's anger will be poured out upon all that is obnoxious to Him. Love with us is made perfect in this, that God has already made us like Himself, though not fully conformed yet to the image of Christ. It is needless to say we do not share in Deity, but we share in God's nature, we are born of Him, and loved as Christ is loved. The words “as He is” have to do with nature and relationship, and the love which is the accompaniment of both.

“If I enter into the truth practically of being, ‘risen with Christ,’ the other side of the question is, ‘mortify therefore your members which are on the earth.’ A ship must be ballasted in proportion to the sail she carries, or she will inevitably be capsized.”

“The Stone which the Builders rejected, the same is become the Head of the Corner.”—Matt. xxi. 42.

THIS quotation from Psa. cxviii. 22, relates to a remarkable incident connected with the construction of Solomon's Temple.

As we know from 1 Kings vi. 7, all the stones used, were hewn, and shaped, before they left the quarry, so that each one dropped into its right position, without any tool of iron being used upon it. The Jews have a tradition that there was one stone brought to the place which was so remarkably chiselled and cut, that it fitted into no part of the building. Every mason and builder turned it over, examined and rejected it as being useless for any part of the vast structure, till at length, it was thrown on one side as worthless. When, however, the most important stone of all, the keystone of that marvellous Temple, which was to hold every other portion in position, was looked for, it was discovered that this wonderful stone (unlike every other one) was *the one* which exactly fitted in there, and *it* became the Head of the Corner. The Lord alluding to this, reminded the Chief Priests that the Rejected One would, in a future day, occupy the highest and grandest place of all. The Prophet Zechariah prophesied of this, when he said, “He shall bring forth the Head Stone with shoutings, crying Grace, Grace unto it,” Zech. iv. 7, and the Apostle Paul reminded the Ephesian Saints that they were built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself, being the Chief Corner Stone.

JOSEPH TRUMPER.

COULSDON.

“We are sanctified to the obedience of Christ, Let me say one word on the obedience. I say of my child, who wants to go another way, but who yields to me, ‘It is very pleasant to see such obedience,’ but it was not so with Christ. He never had a will to wish to go the other way.”

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—Will you kindly allow a few additional remarks on the question in the May number of *Faith and the Flock*—*What is the meaning of “ free from the law of sin and death ? ”*

As Christians we *may* sin and we *may* die*, but there is no law or necessity either in the new nature or in the Word of God why we should do the one or be subject to the other. On the contrary, unbelievers do sin and do die by a necessity in the old nature and also by an inexorable law in the Word of God. We have been delivered from the **law** of sin and death—not, mark you, “ from sin and death,” but from the law which incites to sin and leads necessarily to death. The emphasis in the passage is on the word *law*—that borne in mind removes the seeming difficulty.

WALTER SCOTT.

* “ May ” not in the sense of *permission*, but only of *possibility*.

From J.T.A., BERMUDA.

“ For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”—MATT. XII. 40.

J.N.C.’s question in the February number of *The Faith and The Flock* called to my mind the exercise that I had some time ago over that same portion, at which time I was led to read Gen. i. 6, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31 ; and there I found that the evening of a day preceded its morning. So I saw that immediately after the sunset of Wednesday, Thursday evening began, at which time the Lord was taken, and His trial began then, and was carried on to the morning of Thursday, and during the day of Thursday He was crucified. Now after sunset of Thursday Friday evening began, at which time Joseph obtained the body and laid it in the tomb, on that same night (1 night). Friday morning followed, and on through the day to sunset (1 day). Then Saturday evening began, and on through the night (2 nights). Saturday morning followed, and on to sunset (2 days). Then Sunday evening began, and on through the night (3 nights). Then Sunday morning came, at which time He arose (3 days).

56, BEDFORD ROAD,
EAST FINCHLEY, N.

DEAR SIR,—In connection with the answer to J.C.N.'s question concerning Matt. xii. 40 in the *Faith and the Flock* for February, the enclosed notes may be of interest to your readers.

Yours,

J. F. ADAMS.

COPY OF NOTES BY B.G.C.

- 9th, Friday** Jno. xii. 1: "Six days before Passover Jesus came to Bethany," *i.e.*, from Jericho. If Passover had been on Friday following, six days before would have been Jewish Sabbath. We know, however, from the above verse and context, that He came from Jericho to Bethany on that day, a distance of 23 miles, which He would not have done on the Sabbath.
- 10th, Sat.** Jewish Sabbath. Jno. xii. 12: "On the next day, &c." Jesus' entry into Jerusalem as King (Zech. ix. 9). The 10th Abib, the very day the Passover Lamb was to be chosen (Ex. xii. 3). So Jesus was rejected as king and chosen for death—the Pharisees, though not knowingly, fulfilling the Scriptures. From Bethany to Jerusalem, which is a Sabbath day's journey. Acts i. (a distance of two miles).
- 11th, Sunday** First day of the week.
- 12th, Monday**
- 13th, Tuesday**
- 14th, Wed.** "Preparation of Passover" (Jno. xix. 14). Jno. xix. 31 proves with this and other scriptures that it was not the preparation of the ordinary Sabbath, but of the Passover Sabbath. The first day of the Passover being a Sabbath whatever day of the week it fell on—the 15th Abib of course falling on a different day each year. Mark xv. 42: "Crucified day before the Sabbath"—hence wrongly concluded to be Friday. Passover eaten with disciples after sunset Tuesday, *i.e.*, at commencement of 14th day Jewish reckoning. Judas went out when dark. Gethsemane. Very early in morning before judgment. Crucifixion. Christ died about 3 o'clock, "between the two evenings," exactly fulfilling Ex. xii. 6 to the day, in spite of the resolution Matt. xxvi. 5, "not on the feast, &c." The time referred to in Gospels, "when the Passover must be killed."
- 15th, Thur.** Passover Sabbath, *i.e.*, first day of Passover Jno. xix. 31: "(that Sabbath was an high day)" the reason for these words in brackets is now seen—they are intended to show it was not an ordinary Sabbath, *i.e.*, Saturday. Ex. xii. 16. Lev. xxiii. 7. Num. xxviii. 16, 18. Passover as spoken of Jno. xii. 1 began Thursday, but lamb was killed on 14th, *i.e.*, Wednesday. Matt. xxviii. 63: Pharisees come to Pilate saying, He said "after three days I will rise again" . . . make the sepulchre sure until the *third day*." He was buried at sunset, Matt. xxvii. 57, as 15th day began. In sepulchre Wednesday night and Thursday, 1 night and 1 day.

16th, Friday	In sepulchre Thursday night and Friday, 2 night and 1 day.
17th, Sat.	In sepulchre Friday night and Saturday, 1 night and 1 day.
18th, Sunday	First day of the week. Christ rose at sunset, Saturday having been in grave exactly 72 hours—3 days of 24 hours. Early in morning grave is found empty, and soldiers have gone. Luke xxiv. 21 : " To-day is the third day since these things were done." This was on the first day of the week—the day He rose. Luke xxiv. 13 : " That same day."
19th, Monday	
20th, Tuesday	
21st, Wed.	Would be the second Sabbath, <i>i.e.</i> , the seventh day of Pass-over (Lev. xxiii.).

“We cannot see that the ordinary method of reckoning presents any difficulty, or that there is any reason for altering the day. If we turn to Luke xxiii. we find it stated, “ And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment ” (v. 56). This fixes the day of crucifixion as Friday. Another proof is this: Joseph had just previously laid the body of Jesus in the sepulchre, and it adds, “ And the Sabbath drew on.” If that was the case, proved as already shown by the further statement that the women rested, it seems difficult to get away from the fact that our Lord was crucified on the Friday. What had happened on that memorable day? If we go back to verse 66 of Luke xxii. we find the council was held and Christ was questioned. He was then led to Pilate. Thence to Herod, back again to Pilate, and afterwards led out to be crucified. It was on the previous evening (Thursday) He was taken in the garden. How then was our Saviour three days and three nights in the grave? If we calculate according to Jewish reckoning there is no difficulty. Their Friday began on Thursday evening. Thus from Thursday evening till Friday was one night and day; Friday evening till Saturday, two nights and two days; Saturday evening till Sunday, three nights and three days. It is not at all necessary that there should have been a *complete* period of seventy-two hours. Such literal exactness is not required, and quite foreign to scripture.—ED.]

Christ needed in joy as well as in sorrow. Have you ever felt you wanted Christ as much in joy as in sorrow? Perhaps, if possible, you need Him more. For you need Him not only to sustain and keep you in it, but to draw you to Himself. In sorrow you naturally turn to Him. It is when your prayers have been answered; your hearts' desires granted; when success has come after long waiting; and hope is realised after patient endurance—then, it is, you most of all need **Him**. Otherwise, you will be drawn away, and there will soon be a dash of bitterness in your cup of joy. So when everything smiles, let your eye rest only upon Christ. Carry to Him what makes you glad as well as what makes you sad. Lest you learn as one did who sang—

“ I know too well the poison and the sting
Of things too sweet.”

Let us be more in prayer than ever when things prosper.

THE FAITH AND THE FLOCK

Vol. II.—No. 7.

JULY, 1910.

PRICE—ONE PENNY.

EDITORIALS.

THE Fall of Jerusalem. We refer to what took place in A.D. 70. Then it was our Lord's words were fulfilled, as recorded in Luke xxi. 24. "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." "Warned, it is said, by a divine revelation (more probably mindful of the predictions of the Lord), the Christians had withdrawn to Pella, in the Decapolis, and there beheld the storm sweep over the doomed nation which wrought its overthrow." Yes, the destruction of this favoured, but guilty, city had been foretold, and the prediction was fulfilled to the very letter; and it remains to this day a witness to the truth of God's word—to the unique place occupied by the Jews—as well as of the ultimate fulfilment of all that has been spoken concerning them.

* * * *

It is the thought of this silent witness to the truth of God, which is so impressive. Men may cavil at the Bible, they may contest its statements, they may laugh at its predictions, they may reject Christianity, but they cannot blot out the history of Jerusalem, or wipe it off the map. It makes its silent but irresistible appeal to all who will listen. No sensible man can doubt the Bible

while the Jew and Jerusalem remain. Some years ago, a gentleman, who was deeply interested in the condition of Israel and their place amongst the nations of the earth, was thrown into contact with the late Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, the infidel. They travelled by the same train and were bound for the same destination. On alighting, the gentleman referred to, knowing Mr. Bradlaugh's views, said to him, "Have you ever seen a Jew?" Mr. Bradlaugh, not knowing what was coming, said "Yes." Immediately the reply came, "Is there not a God then?" The simple remark struck home with so much force that it was strongly resented.

* * * *

The Jews are scattered; they were led "away captive into all nations," in accordance with our Lord's prediction, and in that condition they have remained until the present time, exhibiting the unique spectacle of a nation without a city, and without a country. And all this was coincident with their rejection of Jesus of Nazareth, and was in fulfilment of His words as recorded in Scripture. What a testimony both to Him and to them! Had they received Him, such a fate would never have been theirs; but their rejection of Him, and the wrath that would come upon them in consequence, were both foretold in the Scriptures of truth. This is evidence that He is what He claims to be—their long-promised Messiah, and the Son of God. How it establishes likewise every word of the Bible.

* * * *

In the light of this what an intensely solemn interest attaches to the latter portion of the verse we have already quoted: "*Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled.*" As surely as the first part of the verse has become a matter of history, so, in due course, will the second. The word *until* indicates that Jerusalem is not to be trodden down for ever. The Higher Critics place the date of Luke's gospel after the fall of Jerusalem because of this verse. They can find no room for the foretelling of events. Their argument is that these words could only have been written after the event. But what about the last clause which we are considering? This prediction refers to something *still* future. The times of the Gentiles are to come to a close, and Jerusalem is no longer to be trodden down. This is in the nature of a prediction as much as the other. If there *is*

no such thing as prophecy, what are we to think of our Lord and Saviour? For He certainly prophesies here, or the words are untrue. The view the Higher Critics adopt leaves us in a quagmire of doubt and uncertainty. No, Christ foretold Jerusalem's destruction, and He equally foretold her coming deliverance.

It is now the times of the Gentiles. They began with Nebuchadnezzar, they will end when Jerusalem emerges from her captivity. This is a solemn word for the nations. The era, thus described, will close in judgment. How much the Gentiles will have to answer for, both on account of their treatment of the Jews, and their neglect of the gospel. Material prosperity has become their God. The Day of the Lord will bring it all to nothing. The image which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream, and which represented every form of Gentile supremacy, is demolished by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands.

In the light of these things what manner of people ought we to be? Certainly not building our hopes upon anything down here, but looking for and hasting the Coming of the Day of God. "We have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place."

"Is it God's mind that the only evidence of eternal life being in the soul should rest on a charitable "may be?" Is it God's mind that there should be no clear, unmistakable evidences of it? Is it God's mind that His people should be so like the world as they seem to be? Was it ever intended that Christianity should be that veering, dubious, uncertain thing, as should strain a man's eyes to see the difference between the true Christian and the mere professor? Surely not! Alas that there should be such a state of things around us! But how often do we see it! And what, reader, think you, is the cause of it? We are so little alone with God! What makes the great difference between the holy man and the nominal Christian? Living companionship with Jesus. Secret prayer. Being often alone with God."

* * * *

"Faith habitually takes its language from what God is doing, and He is dealing in grace, and not in judgment now."

AN OUTLINE OF "THE REVELATION."

(See Chart issued with February Number.)

FIFTH SECTION. CHAPTERS VI.—VIII. 1.

By WALTER SCOTT.

THE Apocalyptic judgments under the Seals, the Trumpets, and the Vials are heaven-sent chastisements upon Christendom. But why are these lands to be swept by the hurricane of Divine judgment? Apostasy has long settled down on the east. The Bible has been supplanted by the Koran, and Christ by Mahomet. Now in the west, the scene of gospel light and triumph, the dark clouds of apostate unbelief and contempt of God are settling down. *Soon* the west will be a vast moral ruin, and given over to Satanic rule and occupation. The flood gates of hell shall be opened (Rev. ix. ; xviii. 2), and the earth turned into a veritable pandemonium. Need we be surprised, therefore, at the increasing severity of the threefold series of judgments—comparatively light under the Seals but widespread ; heavier under the Trumpets, yet not embracing such a wide sphere of operation as the earlier ones ; then the Vials in which the concentrated wrath of God is poured out without mixture ?

Connect the Lamb with the Seals ; Angels with the Trumpets ; and God directly with the Vials.

A reference to the Chart, issued with the February number, shews this section distributed into three parts : first, six Seals occupy chapter vi. ; second, the Seventh Seal announcing the Trumpets is noted in chapter viii. 1 ; third, an interesting parenthetical episode of great importance forms the subject matter of chapter vii.

Further, the seven Seals are divided into two groups—four and three. Each of the four is characterised by a living creature and a horse. The living creature is the unseen power and the horse the instrument in effecting the providential purposes of God respecting His then government of the earth. The three remaining Seals have not this character so distinctly impressed upon them.

First Seal, verses 1, 2.

Under this Seal we witness the *first* great political event consequent on the removal of the Old and New Testament saints to heaven. For those therefore, who believe in the verbal or word inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, it is not without interest to note

that the words " I saw " occur twice, and that the cardinal *one* and not the ordinal *first* are characteristics of this Seal. We may also remark that the words " and see," in verses 1, 3, 5, 7 should on the best of authority be omitted. These verses do not present a call to John as the retention of the words would indicate, but a call from the living creatures to the human agents to come and accomplish the providential task assigned them.

All power is of God. Every kind and character of power has its source in God. In its administration, however, the creature is responsible. The living creatures who represent the governmental and judicial action of the throne summon the human instruments and guide and move them to the divinely appointed judgment. What is the first recorded judgment ?

A conqueror, either of royal birth or of royal position, enters the prophetic scene and carries all before him in a career of triumph and victory. The *white* war horse on which he sits denotes victorious power. The rider is not named. Speculation as to the name of this brilliant warrior of universal fame, and from what quarter of the earth he arises, is useless and mischievous. We must respect the silence of scripture on those points. Both Ps. xlv. and Rev. xix. as to time and circumstances must negative the thought entertained by many that Christ is the unnamed royal conqueror of the first Seal. Others strongly hold the opinion that the Antichrist, who first comes upon the scene as a King, is the distinguished rider on the white horse. There is a measure of probability in this supposition, but that is all. Certainty there is not, for on the point scripture has not spoken.

" A crown was given unto him " signifies that he was invested with royal dignity. " He went forth conquering and to conquer " intimates a career of unchecked and brilliant victories. The crown was given *before* the victorious monarch entered upon his conquests. His power, his name, and a certain prestige will no doubt greatly contribute to his wonderful success.

Immediately, or soon after the translation of the redeemed to the Father's House, the spectacle will be witnessed of a crowned head of fame and name leading his invincible and victorious armies, making conquests of kingdoms and countries, and bearing down all opposition, more by stratagem and diplomacy than by actual warfare. Certain characteristic signs point to the providential rise of just such a personage. Unless we except the national restoration of

Judah to Palestine, the first prophetic and political event of importance is the rise of the white-horsed rider and his marvellous career.

Second Seal, verses 3, 4.

“ And there went out another horse that was red.” The personal witness of the Seer, “ I saw,” or “ I beheld ” is omitted in the introduction of the second seal, but is found in all the others. Then the words, “ *another* horse ” show that this Seal both as to time and circumstances is not independent as the others are in its character. There is a certain connection between the two first Seals. The white and red horses stand related to each other.

The red horse denotes *bloodshed*. There was given to the rider on the white horse “ a crown.” There was given to the rider on the red horse “ a great sword.” This latter has a twofold commission entrusted to him, which he no doubt fulfils to the letter : (1) to take peace from the earth ; (2) to create a time of mutual slaughter. The state of things contemplated under this Seal is not that of civilised war—nation against nation, but to the providential advent on the scene of a man of fierce and ungovernable passion—one who in every part of the prophetic earth breaks in upon the general peace and sets the peoples and inhabitants of cities, towns, and villages against each other. It will be a time of civil war. Blood ! blood !! blood !!! everywhere. Probably the time when the forces of socialism and of order come into deadly grips—for such a conflict is as sure as the sun shines in the heavens. “ Kill one another ” is the simple yet awful account of this scene of almost universal and mutual slaughter. May God graciously preserve our children and loved ones from ever having a part in these scenes of apostasy and bloodshed. We Christians—*all* Christians—shall be caught away previous to the opening of the Seals—they are opened by the Lamb and in our presence in heaven.

Third Seal, verses 5, 6.

The various horses represent separately an aggressive power in action. The white horse signifies *conquest*, the red horse *bloodshed*, the black horse in the third seal *mourning*, and the pale horse in the fourth seal *death*.

Under the second Seal agricultural pursuits must have largely ceased, and commercial life become paralysed on account of the masses being engaged in deadly strife and mutual slaughter. The inevitable consequence is pointed out in the third Seal. The rider

“had a pair of balances in his hand.” Bread is sold by weight and at famine prices. The necessities of life are scarcely obtainable. A famine ensues. Thousands—probably millions—will endure hunger and starvation. A general scene of lamentation and mourning in these Christian lands is intimated in the colour of the horse—the aggressive power providentially and judicially employed of God for this purpose, namely, famine, starvation, and death.

“And see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.” The command to spare the luxuries of the rich while dealing in judgment with the absolute necessities of life is significant. Socialism is spreading rapidly. Class hatred is fomented, and the doctrine of public plunder of the wealthy and forcible distribution of their money and property is the open and avowed purpose of an atheistic and godless socialism. Hence the masses, the working classes who are so eagerly imbibing the “Gospel of equality”—a doctrine illogical and mischievous—are the first to suffer in the recoil *sure* to follow. The rich, with all others, come in for judgment under the sixth Seal.

Fourth Seal, verses 7, 8.

Here for the first time the name of the horseman is given—Death. The name of his attendant is also told us—Hell or Hades. Death demands the bodies of men. Hades the souls of men. These two are the respective custodians of the body and soul till the resurrection, when at the command of Christ they yield up their prisoners and are themselves destroyed, as their work is for ever over (Rev. xx. 13, 14). The lake of fire takes the place of Hades. The former is eternal, the latter is temporary. It will be noticed that the fourfold judgment—sword, hunger, death, and beasts, is limited to one part of the prophetic earth—probably the worst (verse 8). These “four sore judgments” (Ezek. xiv. 21) are contemporaneous, not successive. The “beasts” must be understood as literal wild animals, who will flock in upon the starving inhabitants to kill and devour. What a mercy that God has limited the operation of these judgments to a fourth part of the earth—whether in Europe or Asia we cannot say.

Fifth Seal, verses 9-11.

Each of the four Seals already briefly considered is characterised by a living creature giving the word of command to a special aggressive power. But in the three Seals to follow there is no mention of either living creatures or horses. In the *four* the course of providential judgment is traced. God is not seen in them, but in the *three*

God's activities—His heart in the fifth and His hand in the sixth and seventh Seals—are witnessed.

The imperial persecutions under pagan Rome, as those subsequently under the papacy, have not exhausted the wrath of the human heart against the faithful followers of the Lamb. Persecution again bursts forth. The church is in heaven during the martyrdom of saints under the fifth Seal, whose souls under the altar cry aloud for vengeance. Probably they are Jewish sufferers. Their cry is right and in keeping with the character of the then dispensation—one of judgment. The cry of the Christian martyr is one of grace (Acts vii. 60), in keeping with the present age of grace and of God's long suffering. We should ever breathe the spirit of the dispensation in which our lot is cast. The sacrificial word *slain*, not killed (verse 9), helps to the understanding that these are Jewish witnesses. Gentiles as well as Jews are contemplated in verse 11, hence the word *killed*, not slain, as in the earlier reference. God hears the cry, and bestows on each a white robe expressive of His approval and pleasure. But their appeal for vengeance is not immediately answered. They are to wait "a little season" till their number is augmented by a company of fellow martyrs. These latter suffer under the Beast. Both companies are subsequently seen in the separate state, "I saw the *souls* of them" (Rev. xx. 4), also as raised, "and they *lived*." What led to the fierce and Satanic outburst against these martyrs is stated—"Slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." It is ever so, faithfulness to God and to revealed truth rouses the slumbering enmity of the human heart. Man hates God, God loves men.

Sixth Seal, verses 12-17.

The scene herein described is one of awful sublimity and of equal horror. The powers of nature are summoned to set forth a catastrophe which for magnitude and character is unequalled in the world's history. The general idea is that of the total subversion of all governing authority—supreme and dependent. Everything deemed secure and stable on earth breaks up. Crowns are shattered, governments overturned, and every phase and character of even social order goes in the universal wreck. *This* is what the socialism of the day leads to—*this*, its goal. The effect upon all from the highest to the lowest is next shewn. It is an hour of mortal dread. There is a universal cry of terror, not to God, but to mountains and rocks to screen them from the Sitter on the throne and from the

wrath of the Lamb. Vainly they hide themselves in cave and rock, vainly they appeal for shelter, and in their awful terror they imagine that the wrath of the Lamb has overtaken them. But that wrath is yet future, and even more awful days and times are yet to come. We gather that out of the vast political, civil and ecclesiastical system thus utterly smashed up, the Roman Empire, strong and powerful, will emerge. It would be difficult to suppose the existence of the Empire during the state of things described under the sixth Seal.

Seventh Seal, Chap. viii. 1.

The opening of the seventh Seal completes the revelation of God's counsels respecting the earth. The secrets of God are disclosed and lie open to view. The immediate effect of opening this Seal is not judgment, but "silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." Trouble on earth yet silence in heaven. The throne in heaven is the source of the judgments on earth. Silence there, means that there is a brief pause, a brief cessation of further chastisement. The seventh Seal introduces the Trumpet series of judgments, and it may be that during the brief pause in heaven the sealing of Israel (Chap. vii.) has its place.

Two Parenthetic Visions, Chap. vii.

"I saw" introduces the first vision which concerns Israel (verses 1-8). "I beheld" connects itself with the second vision, which relates to the Gentiles (verses 9-17). Both are visions of grace. The contents of this chapter are introduced between the sixth and seventh Seals, and yet form no part of the Seals. It is a chapter without dates. The chapter anticipates the millennium. The hundred and forty-four thousand of *all* Israel are sealed and preserved, and must not be confounded with the hundred and forty-four thousand of Judah on Mount Sion (Chap. xiv. 1-3). This later company emerges out of the great tribulation, not so the former company.

Then the Seer calls attention to the blessedness of a countless multitude of Gentiles who have come out of the great tribulation. Probably they are the *same* Gentiles received into millennial life at the return of the Lord in glory (Matt. xxv. 34). Here, however, their blessedness is more fully developed. But the chapter in its two parts and two classes of mankind presents scenes of blessedness on earth in the coming day, and not in heaven as is supposed by some. Verse 15 refers to a moral standing and position before the throne.

“ WE SEE JESUS.”

“ We see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour ; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”—Hebrews ii. 9.

C. HICKMAN.

THIS scripture brings the Lord Jesus before us in three ways :—

In Humiliation—“ Made a little lower than the Angels.”

In Death—“ For the suffering of death.”

In Glory—“ Crowned with glory and honour.”

Let us reverently consider Him in each of these aspects.

In His Humiliation. “ He was made a little lower than the Angels.” But what a stoop was this for the Creator !

He was “ over all, God blessed for ever,” the eternal Son, co-equal with the Father. Angels were but the fruit of His creatorial power. Yet He was made a little lower than the Angels : He became Man. “ The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.”

In pondering the pathway of Christ in His humiliation we note :

1. *He was poor.* He was born in a stable. Cradled in a manger, grew up in obscurity, and dwelt among the poor. To one that professed a desire to follow Him Jesus said, “ Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests ; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.” If the reader is poor, and slighted on this account, let him know that the Lord Jesus does not despise. The Apostle Paul writes, “ Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.”

2. *He was despised.* The poorest shrink from scorn, and yet the Lord Jesus was despised by the creatures of His hand. When a guest at the house of Simon the Pharisee, the ordinary courtesies were not shown Him—no kiss of welcome, no washing of the feet, no anointing of the head ; He was despised. Isaiah in prophetic vision beheld Him, and said, “ He is despised and rejected of men.” And by many He is still despised. Men look at His manhood and deny His deity ; they see His lowliness and deny His glory.

3. *He was a Man of Sorrows.* His holiness made Him a man of sorrows, for on every hand sin abounded, and the whole world was lying in the Wicked One.

His *love for man* made Him a man of sorrows. When He beheld the heavy burdens that men bore, and the sorrow and affliction resulting from sin's entrance into the world, it filled Him with grief. Hence it is written, "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" (Isaiah liii. 4).

His *knowledge of the doom awaiting the impenitent* made Him a man of sorrows. He knew the terrors of a lost eternity, and warned men that the flames are never quenched and that the worm never dies. Yet in spite of His warnings men persisted in their rebellion against God, and continued in the path that led to destruction. The Lord Jesus sorrowed over the impenitent, and said, "Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life" (John v. 40).

4. His *pathway was one of unwearied service*. He "went about doing good." He opened the eyes of the blind, cleansed the leper, and raised the dead. He preached the gospel to the perishing, He patiently instructed His disciples, and, even when the dark shadow of the cross lay athwart His path, He stooped to wash His disciples' feet. No wonder that the heavens were opened, and that God expressed His approval of the Lord Jesus, saying, "This is My beloved Son" (Luke ix. 35).

II. In His Death. "He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death." We do well to reverently ponder the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus.

When our friends lie upon the death-bed there are loving ministrations to alleviate pain and smooth the passage to the tomb.

But consider the death of the Lord Jesus. He was betrayed by a friend, He was sold for thirty pieces of silver, the price paid in compensation for a slave gored to death by an ox. His kingly claims were mocked as men crowned Him with thorns, and clothed Him with a purple robe, and for a sceptre put a reed in His hand.

Yet this was only the introduction to the awful tragedy. With hammer and nails they fastened the Saviour to the cross, and then, gathering around, they mocked at His sufferings and exulted in His shame.

But all these sufferings at the hand of man pale into insignificance.

God arose, and said, "Awake, O sword against My Shepherd and against the Man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts: Smite the Shepherd" (Zech. xiii. 7).

That sword was sheathed in the bosom of Christ. The wrath of God was poured upon the Holy Victim of Calvary until in anguish of soul He cried, "All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over Me" (Psalm xlii. 7).

As we see Jesus in the suffering of death we ask, Why should the perfect One be forsaken of God? and the holy One bear the wrath of God?

The answer is, "That He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." "He died the Just for the unjust." The grace of God has provided a Saviour. In the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus the claims of Divine justice in regard to man's guilt have been met, and therefore God has a righteous basis upon which salvation is offered to every creature. The Victim was infinite, and the dignity of His Person gives efficacy to His atoning work, so that it is impossible to limit the value of His death. "Therefore . . . through this Man is preached . . . the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

III. In His Glory. "We see Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honour.

God has raised Jesus "from the dead. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour" (Acts v. 31).

Man put the Lord Jesus upon the cross, but God has placed Him upon the throne; man crowned Him with thorns, but God has given Him a diadem of glory; man in derision put a reed in His hand, but God has given Him the sceptre of universal dominion. Never again can Judas betray the Saviour with a kiss, nor Pilate threaten, "Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee?" nor Roman soldiers treat Him with derision. He is crowned with glory and honour, and all heaven owns Him as universal Lord. Has the reader owned Him as Lord? It is written, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9).

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS:— A Simple Exposition.

CHAP. X., 19-25.

THE HOLIEST.

WE now arrive at the climax of our epistle. The work of Christ has been dwelt upon in order to show how completely it has prepared us for entering the immediate presence of God. Through it we have a purged conscience—or, to adopt another inspired phrase, “no more conscience of sins”—because sins—the sins of the one who has come to the sacrifice of Christ—are for ever taken away. A purged conscience—no more conscience of sins—perfected forever—remission of sins—sins and iniquities remembered no more—these are some of the expressions the Holy Spirit uses in testifying to the believer of the value of the sacrifice of Christ which has for ever removed his guilt from before God. And the final proof that his sins are gone is—as we pointed out last time—he has liberty to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.”

Yes, “by **the blood of Jesus.**” No works of ours have gained admittance for us there, nor any worthiness on our part. The worth and merit are all in the blood.

If this is so why are we so slow to avail ourselves of this inestimable privilege of drawing near to God? What greater joy or blessing could there be than being in the immediate presence of One so glorious in Himself, and Who has been so lavish in His gifts? The answer is, We only partially understand all that has been done to bring us there, and make us at home there. Let us then try and find out from the verses under consideration: first, what the holiest is; and second, our fitness to enter.

I.

“*Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.*” The very language used conveys to our minds some sense of the difference the sacrifice of Christ has made, for we are invited to do with “boldness” what a Jew would have absolutely shrunk from. He might, once a year, on the great day of Atonement, have seen the High Priest, carrying the blood, enter the sanctuary, but as to any thought of going in himself it never entered his mind.

He knew it would be instant death. Nor does the apostle single out here any special class of Christians, either on the ground of some official distinction, or superior grace ; he addresses all believers, for he says " brethren." To enter the holiest has become the common privilege of all.

What is the holiest ? To know what it is we must enquire, first of all, what it was. In the holiest of all, in connection with the tabernacle, there was only the ark and the mercy seat, shadowed by the cherubims of glory, and the golden censer (Heb. ix. 3, 5). This ark formed God's throne (Ex. xxv. 22). Here the cloud of glory rested. We read of no window, for no created light entered there. It was lighted by the glory of God. All was glory, and all was gold, in that holy place. The ark of gold, the mercy seat of gold, the cherubims of gold. It was the very presence chamber of the King. If we think now of what these things pre-figured we shall have some idea of the glory of the place. The ark spoke of Christ. In its double composition of wood and gold we have symbolised the divine and human natures of our Lord. Certain things were placed inside it—the golden pot of manna, the rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant—setting forth the fact that here was pre-figured One Who could sustain every office, whether for God or His people, and in Whom all the purposes of God were secured. This is indeed the idea of the ark or chest—to maintain intact all that is placed within it. Upon this rested the Mercy-seat ; and here the blood was sprinkled. The work of Christ and His Person are inseparable. The one rests upon the other. The length and breadth of this Mercy-seat, or lid of the Ark, were the same as the Ark itself. Our blessing can only be measured by Christ. The cherubims above represent the attributes of God in their judicial character (Gen. iii.).

Such then is the Holiest ; it is the glory of Christ seen in the presence of God ; and these things find their answer in the Epistle to the Hebrews. In Chapter i. we have the Son presented to us in Whom God has spoken—the true Ark. What glory rests upon Him. One Who is " the brightness of God's glory and the express image of His Person " (or substance). He is also the Heir of all things, and having made purgation of sins He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. In all this we have the antitype of the Ark and the Mercy-seat. Then we have the throne introduced which the Ark of old was ; and, finally, judgment as represented by

the Cherubims. "Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies Thy footstool."

Let us look now at Chapter ii. Here we have Christ presented as man, just as in Chapter i. He was equally presented in His divine character. The two together give us the gold and wood of which the Ark was composed. "We see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for everything." The ark had a crown of gold round about it. "We see Jesus *crowned* with glory and honour." We may say that He was so on the Mount of Transfiguration. "He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory," and He went down from thence to death. Now that glory and honour, which, for a moment, He laid aside, have been given back to Him, having won, if we may say so, fresh laurels.

"We see Jesus." What is this but the Holiest? Did not everything there speak of Him? He is now in God's presence crowned. But there is more than this, we are in company with Him; for we hear Him saying, "I will declare Thy Name unto My brethren, in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto Thee." We have His presence as the Mighty Conqueror singing the triumphant pæan of resurrection. The realisation of this is the Holiest. And, further, the throne was in the Holiest, and the High Priest. And we are told to "come boldly unto the throne of grace," and, that "We have such an High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens: a Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." In coming to God we come into the presence of all this glory that is expressed in and sustained by Christ.

II.

What is it gives us admittance to all this? The **blood of Jesus**. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus." How simple, yet how profound, and how sufficient. Nothing more is required as a *title*. Not only are we sheltered, but brought to God. Has the reader ever noticed the difference between Exodus xii. and Lev. xvi. with regard to the blood? In the one case the blood was put *outside* the houses of the children of Israel to shelter them from God's judgment; in the other it was placed on the mercy seat inside God's house to bring them

into His very presence. In the former case it kept God out of *their* habitations—as a Judge ; in the latter it brought them into *God's* habitation—as saints.* But it was the *blood* in both cases : and it as truly, to-day, opens the way into the light and glory of the Holiest as it obtains pardon for all our sins. Yet how many who enjoy the one fail to appreciate and appropriate the other.

In order to make this point clear let us use a simple illustration. Imagine a large park with the King's palace in the centre. His Majesty has given orders that all who have a right to enter the park gates have an equal right to enter the palace and come into the presence chamber of the King. But many who enter the park never approach the palace. Yet there sits the King waiting to receive them, and they have as much right to see his royal face as to anything else ; but many linger outside, content with a certain amount of privilege.

Why are Christians not as anxious to be near the One Who has blessed them as He is to have them near ? This reluctance exists ; and because of it we need the exhortation, " Let us draw near." Two things might influence the people we have described, and hinder their entrance to the palace. Insufficient acquaintance with the King, and a sense of their unfitness for his presence. The same things hinder us in our approach to God. Yet the fault is on our side, for ample provision has been made. This will be seen if we pursue our exposition of the passage.

Having spoken of " the blood," which is our title, it proceeds :—
" By a new and living way, which He hath consecrated (new made) for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh ; and having an High Priest over the house of God ; 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." The " new and living way " referred to here is of course in contrast to the old, which had been proved to be a way of death (*cf.* Lev. x. 1, 2). The reader will remember that in the tabernacle a veil separated the holy from the most holy. Into the latter the High Priest entered alone, and that only once a year. God never came out and man never went in. We know from the passage just quoted that that veil was a type of Christ's flesh. God, in the Person of His Son, took flesh and blood—" God was manifested in flesh." All through the life of Jesus on earth it

* We speak merely of the figure ; this was never realised until Christianity was established.

was God that was seen (*cf.* John i. 18 ; xiv. 9, 10 ; 2 Cor. v. 19), but this was specially so in the death of our Lord ; and it will be remembered that when He died "the veil of the temple was rent in the midst." This significant fact is recorded by no less than three of the evangelists, and it meant not only that the old order with its types and shadows had for ever passed away, but that God was no longer hidden, for He had been fully made known in Christ, and henceforth a way was opened for man into His immediate presence.

Is not God fully declared in the death of His Son, and are not we fully prepared by it to enter the holiest ? Blessed be His Name, both are true. What could more fully reveal the divine heart than this : "*He that spared not His own Son ?*" Or this : "*God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin ; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him*" (Rom. viii. 32 ; 2 Cor. v. 19 and 21). And does not the last clause dismiss for ever from our minds all thought of unfitness ? God has done it ; we have only to be content. In the ministry of Christ and in His wounds we learn to know the God that made us, and that made all things, and

" His perfect love dismisses
All terror from our breast."

The new and living way is made. Death, instead of being God's judgment upon us, is the expression of His love.

" Now to the Father's heart received
We know in Whom we have believed."

No longer, then, is there any veil to shut us out of God's presence. The veil has become a revelation of what He is. It was a type of Christ's flesh, and in that flesh sin has been judged and God revealed. Do we not wish to approach One made known to us in such perfect righteousness and love that He could give His Son to bear what was our due ? " Now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

But there is more. " And having an High Priest over the house of God." We (believers) are God's house (see Ch. iii. 6), and all through the Epistle to the Hebrews we have presented to us Christ as our High Priest. We read of His ability to make propitiation (Ch. ii. 17) ; that He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities (iv. 15) ; that He has entered within the veil as our forerunner (vi. 20) ; One Who is " Holy, harmless, undefiled, separated from

sinner, and made higher than the heavens," and therefore perfectly suitable as our representative in God's presence (vii. 26) ; and, above all, He is the Son—"perfected for evermore" (verse 28). Need we then, with such an High Priest, fear to draw near? Who would fear to approach the King of England with the eldest son to introduce him and in suitable attire? In view of our access to God, what provision has been made for us. Well may it be said, "In Whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him" (Eph. iii. 12).

Is it any wonder we are urged to take advantage of this privilege? "**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.**" This introduces the practical side of the subject. No one plotting sedition in his heart would be fit to approach any earthly monarch; so our hearts must be true; *i.e.*, everything judged there and disallowed of which God might have just reason to complain. But, on the other hand, no mere timidity is to keep us at a distance; there must be "full assurance of faith." Also "hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience"; *i.e.*, hearts in the full knowledge of the power and efficacy of the blood; and "bodies washed with pure water"; morally separate from all defiling associations and influences.

Thus it will be seen that the two great facts to be apprehended, in order that we may avail ourselves of this inestimable privilege of approaching God in the Holiest, are: (1) the way the death of Christ has cleansed us in the eyes of God; and (2) that we have a High Priest (or *Great Priest*) who represents us before God in the highest heaven, and by Whom we draw near. Who can describe all that the soul enters upon in its approach to God, or declare what the holiest means where God's presence is felt, where Christ is known both as to His Person and work, and where every whit of it utters His glory? Let us only obey the exhortation to "draw near," and we shall experience it.

From this point the verses we are considering look on to the actual appearing of Christ, and give us some practical exhortations in view of this. Christ has gone within the veil, and our place is with Him there, but soon He will come out and be manifested. Blessed indeed for those who have lived with Him where He now is. The glory we know there will one day spread over the whole earth.

In the meantime this is our hope—a heavenly people waiting for the approaching day : for this is what the passage indicates. The words should be—not “ the profession of our faith,” but—“ the confession of our hope.” Just as with Israel of old they watched the High Priest enter with the blood on the day of atonement, and waited for him to reappear, so we wait for Christ, though, of course, coming with Him. In the meantime we are to consider one another to provoke unto love and good works—alas ! that we should so often provoke one another to anger instead—and to assemble ourselves together and exhort one another, *and so much the more as we see the day approaching.*

LOYALTY.

F. FAIR.

IN I. Chronicles, Chapter xii., there is recorded for us an incident of a very striking character, most rousing and inspiring in its teaching, and setting forth an example of true loyalty which every Christian believer should follow.

David was then at Ziklag, in hold for fear of Saul, and in verse 16 we read that certain of the children of Benjamin and Judah came to the hold unto David : and when David saw them coming, he questioned them, and asked them whether they were come peaceably, or to betray him to his enemies.

The answer to this challenge came from the chief of the captains, a man named Amasai, elsewhere called Amasa, himself a near relative of David.

The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he said : “ Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse ; peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thy helpers ; for thy God helpeth thee.

“ Thine are we.” These words convey two distinct meanings to the Lord’s redeemed ones : they have had experience of its first meaning, for they are Christ’s possession, purchased by His blood, pardoned, justified and sealed, accepted in the Beloved. We see the type of this in 1 Samuel xxii. 2, where “ everyone that was in distress, and everyone that was in debt, and everyone that was discontented,” came unto David, and he received them, and became a captain over them. So has our Lord received us—insolvent debtors

crushed by a load of debt we could never discharge ; in distress, for we were afflicted with a sense of sin and of judgment to come, from which we knew not where to flee ; discontented, because we found no lasting pleasure or satisfaction in the things of this world and the pleasures of sin ; the things that we thought would satisfy us turned to gall and bitterness. And He received us freely—just as we were with all the guilt of sin upon us, bankrupt, helpless, and undone—“ washed us from our sins in His own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God.”

But from those who are thus redeemed Christ looks for loyal service ; it is this which is brought before us in Amasa's words : it was not as one in distress, or bankrupt, or discontented, that Amasa came to the hold to David, but as a willing, loyal subject—not to get, but to give. Thus Amasa stands before us in these Spirit-breathed words, as the type and representative of Christ's true consecrated servants.

“ Thine are we.” To yield ourselves a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service. “ Thine are we.” To deny ourselves, to suffer loss, to follow God's Anointed One, to fight His battles, and to share His lot—suffering and rejection now, glory and endless blessing in the time to come.

Dear brethren, have you come to this ? Have you seen and acknowledged your responsibility to serve, to suffer loss for Christ to take your place as His servants and on His side ?

How many believers there are who seem to be but children in respect to things like these : they enjoy the good things provided for them, they rejoice in their security and in their many mercies ; but the sense of loyalty is lacking, and a hint of trouble or loss or persecution is enough to turn them from the path of service and obedience. God has given them to Christ, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in Him, and yet they have no sense of discipleship, no zeal for the honour of their Lord and Master.

This is a solemn question, and if we be truly conscientious we cannot but feel how urgent is the Master's claim and how great is our responsibility : we are called to serve, and how ? “ If any man serve me, let him follow me ; and where I am, there shall also My servant be : if any man serve Me, him will My Father honour.”

“ Where I am, there shall also my servant be.” “ As He is, so are we in this world.” His position in the world was that of the

rejected One, the lowly One, the pilgrim, the persecuted, the faithful amidst unfaithfulness. Here in the story before us we see David a fugitive and an outlaw, in constant danger of his life ; but Amasa and his comrades knew their place was there, for he whom they came to serve was the man whom God had chosen ; they counted the cost, and took their place with him, to triumph in his triumph, or share in his adversity.

Have you seen your place to be with Christ ? Have you learned that you are not your own ? Are you willing to suffer loss, to suffer reproach, to bear contempt and shame for Him ? Are you willing to stand on His side and fight His battles ? Does your heart throb at the mention of His name, and does it burn within you when He is offended and His name dishonoured ? Is He the first and chiefest in your thoughts, before all other ties ?

O consider it well : will you be wanting in this day, when Christ is calling to His people to show their love for Him ; to love His word, His ordinances, His people, and His service ; to uplift the banner of the Cross, to fight the battles of the Lord, to live in expectation of His coming, as those that wait for their Lord—holy in heart and conversation, their lamps trimmed and their lights burning, eager to welcome Him when He shall come ? Will you be wanting ? Do you prefer your ease and pleasure ? Do you prefer your worldly profit, or your earthly friendships ? Do you prefer the easy path of compromise ? Will you be found barren and unfruitful in the knowledge and service of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ?

Shall we not learn a lesson from this devoted man of old ? His words, inspired directly by the Holy Spirit, are words that point to Christ. " There shall come a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." This is the one whom we acknowledge, Christ Jesus the Son of David. Thus we read in the book of Ezekiel, " My servant David shall be their Prince for ever."

Will you not heed His loving voice, and take your place with Him—counting the cost and weighing the worthlessness of earthly things against the preciousness of serving Him ? And, looking forward to the time of His appearing and the exceeding recompense of the reward, will you not to-day take up those glorious words and live them out throughout life's pilgrimage : " Thine are we, O Christ, thou Son of David, our Lord, our Life, our Saviour ; thine are we, and on Thy side."

THE TABERNACLE: SOME OF ITS TEACHINGS AND LESSONS.

BY WALTER SCOTT.

THE Tabernacle of old stood for about 500 years, when it gave place to the Temple. The former was for the wilderness; the latter for the land, hence the provision made for the journeys of the wilderness in the case of the Tabernacle (Num. iv.). If God would discipline the people by sending them back to wander in the desert, He would go with them. Jehovah never leaves His people.

The Tabernacle and the Tent are terms applied to the same sacred building. The former intimating that it was God's dwelling; the latter where He met the people.

The Tabernacle was erected by Israel, but under divine direction. "Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (Exod. xxv. 8). The materials were, for the most part, the free will offerings of redeemed Israel (Exod. xxv. 1-7). The exception was the half shekel of silver for atonement, compulsory on the males of 20 years old and upward (Exod. xxx. 11-16). This was atonement money, *not* redemption money which was five shekels (Num. xviii. 16).

In the construction of the Tabernacle only the *willing*-hearted gave, and only the *wise*-hearted wrought in the work. There was service for all who had heart and will. So fully did Israel respond to the grace of Jehovah in their deliverance that the people had to be *restrained* from giving (Exod. xxxvi. 6, 7). We often sing:—

"Were the whole realm of nature mine
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, *my all*."

Beloved in the Lord: Is it word or deed? Is it sentiment or fact? May God search us each one so that we may get into the reality of the things we say and sing.

The materials employed in the erection of the Tabernacle are carefully enumerated twice over and in the same order (Exod. xxv. 3-7; xxxv. 5-9). These are—

Gold—Divine Nature, Divine Righteousness, Divine Glory. •
Silver—God's grace in providing the **Blood** for Atonement.
Brass—Judgment borne according to human responsibility.
Blue—Heavenly character of Christ.

- Purple*—Sufferings of Christ.
Scarlet—Earthly glories of Christ.
Fine Linen—Holy life of Christ.
Goats' hair—Christ's separation from evil.
Rams' skins dyed red—Devotedness unto death.
Badgers' skins—Outward repelling of evil.
Shittim wood—Incorruptible humanity of our Lord.
Oil—The Holy Spirit.
Spices—Moral perfections of Christ.
Onyx stones—Certain moral glories of Christ.
Stones—Glories of Christ, many and varied.

We have not referred to those special scriptures, nor adduced the considerations which warrant the foregoing deductions. We do not insist nor dogmatise, while of course satisfied that what we have penned is *of God*. The spiritual signification of these materials and colours may be apparent as we proceed in our Tabernacle-study.

The Tabernacle and all connected with it, including its priesthood and sacrifices unfold two great truths which may be severally expressed under two words, *manifestation* and *approach*. From Exod. xxv. to xxvii. 19 the main thought is God manifesting Himself, revealing Himself to us ; whereas from xxvii. 20, to xxx. inclusive, it is the ground and means of our approach to God, hence certain vessels have been termed " vessels of display " and " vessels of approach." Now there are two ways in which the Tabernacle may be studied. We might begin from the inside and work our way out to the outside ; or from without to within. We shall adopt the latter plan.

The Court and its Gate (Exod. xxvii. 9-18). The length of the court from east to west was 100 cubits, in breadth from north to south 50 cubits, the height five cubits (verse 18). Reducing the cubits to English measurements, we understand the length of the court to be 150 feet, breadth 75 feet, and the height $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet. We adopt the cubit of antiquity, which was 18 inches ; this, too, was the measure of the cubit given by Josephus. There were 20 pillars for the court south, and on the pillars were suspended 100 cubits of fine twined linen—five cubits between the pillars. The same on the north side. The pillars were of Shittim wood, each resting on a socket of brass, while at the top there were fillets of silver or connecting rods between pillar and pillar, and silver hooks to suspend

the hangings. Silver above, brass beneath. On the west end there were 10 pillars and 10 sockets with fillets and hooks of silver. The brass signifies Divine Judgment sustained according to the requirements of human responsibility. Silver the blood of Christ in Atonement. The linen the holy life of the Blessed One. The basis *Judgment*; the blood in *God's presence* the silver above; the pillars—*stability*; the *life* of the Holy One—the linen.

The court was uncovered. Its canopy—the heavens. Angels, no doubt, looked down as interested spectators (1 Peter i. 12). The Tabernacle and its services were then as ever God's object lesson to saints and angels. All round the court—north, south, and west—there was one unbroken line of white linen hangings representing Christ the Righteous and Holy One here on earth. The court was a place of privilege. Within that sacred enclosure Jehovah spoke to His redeemed people; within stood the brazen altar where acceptance and forgiveness were known and enjoyed. The *gate* of the court stood on the east side, called also a *door*. You can only get into the *court* by its one and only gate. You can only get into the *Tabernacle* by its one and only door. You can only get into the *holiest* by its one and only veil. These doors exactly faced each other in a direct line from the brazen altar of judgment; they each pointed to Christ—"I am the door." He is the gate to the privileges of the court, the door into the holy place, and the veil into the immediate presence of God.

The gate of the court was of the same material as the hangings, the beautiful curtains, and the veil, namely, fine twined linen (see Rev. xix. 8; xv. 6, for the force of *linen*). But why *twined* linen? There was no sameness in the life of Jesus. The principles which governed His life and the minutest details of that life formed one complete whole. All that went to make up His holy and righteous life were entwined—not separable. The gate of the court was *wide* 20 cubits, or 30 feet; the door of the Tabernacle was *narrow*, 10 cubits, or 15 feet. In the application of this to us: the wide and generous gate is for *unbelievers*; the narrow and exclusive door into God's presence is for *believers*. But it is the *same* Christ for both. The same quantity of fine twined linen—100 cubits—was in the gate and in the door. In the former the cubits of linen were 20 by 5; the latter, 10 by 10. In the texture of the linen for the gate of the court were wrought the three Tabernacle colours, blue, purple,

and scarlet. Those three colours are always stated in the same order. Purple, as we know, is produced by the combination of blue and scarlet, and *that* has its own significance. *Blue* is heaven's colour, and points to John iii. 13, 31 ; 1 Cor. xv. 47. *Purple* directs us to the sufferings and death of our blessed Lord ; this we gather from Num. iv. 13.* *Scarlet* intimates that the future glory of the world will be inherited by Christ ; see Rev. xvii. 3, 4 ; xviii. 16 ; also Ps. lxxii. Thus the wondrous tale of Christ as man come down from heaven (yet of it), of His sufferings, and of His future glory, is wrapped up in these colours, which would meet the eye of any one desirous of entering the court. The gate was supported by four pillars, while these again rested on four unseen sockets of brass. The breadth of the court being 50 cubits, and the gate only 20, left 15 cubits of linen hanging on either side of the gate, with, of course, their respective pillars, and sockets underneath, and fillets and hooks above. We enter the court by the gate at the east end.

(To be continued.)

BIBLE BRIEFS.

Peter's Precept :	" That ye may grow "	..	1 Pet. ii. 2.
God's Purpose :	" That ye should shew "	..	1 Pet. ii. 9.
Paul's Prayer :	" That ye may know "	.. ..	Eph. i. 18.

W.T.R.

WISDOM FOR THE WORRIED.

Why should I " careful " be, when God has said to me,	Phil. iv. 6.
That everything is working for the best ?	Rom. viii. 28.
Though He my faith may try, He shall my need supply :	Phil. iv. 19.
His promise gives me solid, perfect rest.	Heb. x. 23.
Relying on His care, He will my sorrows share,	1 Pet. v. 7.
And " good things " He will surely send along.	Ps. lxxxiv. 11.
Each day I'm bound to tell, He " doeth all things well : "	Mark vii. 37.
He only is my Comfort and my Song.	Ps. cxviii. 14.

W.T.R.

* This may suggest also the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.—ED.

NOTES ON PSALM XXIII.

I HAVE been reading 23rd Psalm, and I see that *Shepherd* denotes Ownership. John x. 11-15, "Whose own." "Ye are not your own" (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20).

I shall not want, because, Free from Sin (Rom. vi. 22).
 ,, Christ liveth in me (Gal. ii. 20).
 ,, Now . . . children (1 John iii. 2).

Lie down— Having heard Jesus say, "Come unto Me and rest" (Matt. xi. 28).
 Because no other name can satisfy (El-Shaddai), All Sufficient (Gen. xvii. 1).

Leadeth— Hear—follow Me (John x. 27).
 A true Shepherd never *drives*, always *leads* the flock.

Guideth— The ways for the sheep are oftentimes very dangerous, and the sheep must follow the Shepherd's footsteps. "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and I will hold thine hand, and will keep thee" (Isa. xlii. 6, and Psalm xxxii. 8).

With me— "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Heb. xiii. 5).

Rod— Defence (John xvii. 15). Lions and Bears (1 Sam. xvii. 34).
 Wolves (John x. 11, 12).

Staff— Guidance and Support. The Lord shall *guide* thee continually and *satisfy* . . . and make *strong* (Isa. lviii. 11).

A table— In the Eastern countries the *Shepherd* from time to time seeks fresh pastures for the flock. He has to examine the grass and separate from it the poisonous plants (or herbs), also there are vipers to be cleared away by burning hog's fat at their holes. This is just what Christ Jesus does for us each day; He prepares the ground (or way) for us; He drives away the enemies, and by His presence protects us from the enemy of our souls, the Devil, and so, realising that He is with us, we have peace, although all around is roaring and strife.

Anointing the head—Cup running over— At the end of each day the Shepherd does the rodding (Ez. xx. 37, and John x. 9). He is at the door and He examines *His* sheep, and at His side there is some olive oil and cedar tar and a vessel of water, with a cup which has two handles; as the sheep come he notices one bruised, and he puts on some cedar tar and heals the bruise or wound; another is exhausted, and so he pours on the olive oil, and puts the cup into the water and brings it out overflowing, and gives the sheep to drink, and so refreshes it: and this is just what He (Jesus Christ) does for us each day when we have had a severe fight of temptation and are wounded, or else we may have lost hold of *the hand*, and slipped, and got bruised, and so He anoints our wounds, and heals our soul; or else we have had a hard day, and are worn out and weary, then He refreshes our souls while we pray to Him, and so we are *sure* of goodness and mercy following us, and determine "I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

SOME BRIEF REFLECTIONS ON HABAKKUK.

GEO. B. EDWARDS.

THE book of Habakkuk is among the Old Testament writings what the Epistle of Jude is among the New. Brief and intensified in expression, both writings are most comprehensive in dealing with extremes of moral condition, and in setting forth God's ways of mercy and of judgment during entire dispensations. But the one feature common to both writers, which may command our closest attention, is that the condition and welfare of God's people lay so close to their hearts, that they involuntarily seek to shield and preserve the Lord's beloved sheep from scattering and depletion. While they pronounce upon the enemy God's fearful and final judgment, there is also in both portions a noticeable ring of victory, which in the energy of faith, gives them to rise above all present evil, and to rejoice in the "God of Salvation," or as Jude writes, in "God our Saviour" (Hab. iii. 18 ; Jude 25).

But there is one point of contrast in the position of these two prophets which we would observe. Jude lived and wrote at the beginning of the present dispensation, when as yet individual testimony had not as prominent a place as it has to-day. While Habakkuk lived at the close of the past age, when iniquity so abounded among God's professing people as to make His judgment upon them necessary in consistency with His holiness. And, therefore, individual testimony and triumph are prominent in the experience of Habakkuk, as we follow his short prophecy to its close. And this experience, quite proper to the last and evil days of any age, coincides very much with the experience of the beloved and faithful Apostle Paul, as recorded in 2 Timothy.

But Habakkuk, while he enjoys this wondrous, blessed victory of faith as an individual, nevertheless keeps before him, as governed by the Holy Ghost, the blessing of the people, who were so soon to be trodden down by the violence of the enemy. He loved God's people, and, therefore, was most zealous for their safety and blessing. He would see Jehovah's judgment falling upon the enemy rather than upon Jehovah's people. Still, the holiness of God demanded that judgment should first begin with His people, and afterwards end, in all its fulness, upon the enemy. And so the prophet bears the condition of the people upon his heart as a burden, and in agony of

soul intercedes with God in their behalf. *The mark of holiness is never to spare evil, but the way of love is to spare, by all means, if possible, those who are guilty of it.*

The experience of Habakkuk may illustrate what God's way is in the midst of evil, but more than this, we see the way the Spirit leads in all holy affection, in an undying interest and solicitude for those who are contaminated by evil and held by its power. And we refer here to that character of evil which has ever wrought such woeful havoc both in Israel and in the house of God, even moral degeneracy and corruption.

And in the ways of God, how obvious it is that a positive testimony unto Himself invariably appears, just at the close of every age, as against and in contrast to such evil, though such testimony be ever so feeble in its expression and brief in its duration ! Habakkuk was clearly a beautiful example of this in his day as an individual. Enoch also was a bright witness of it at an earlier time. And the Lord Jesus Himself came as God's faithful witness of the truth against the supreme manifestation of this evil, displayed in the Pharisees.

In the decline of the early Church, Paul very closely imitated His Master in individual faithfulness and testimony, and the case of Antipas, at a still later time, shows how precious such individual loyalty is to Him Who knew what it was to be left alone and forsaken of men (Rev. ii. 13).

He knew that Israel was a failure, and a spectacle of ruin to the nations in respect to glorifying God's law by first keeping it and then teaching it. And this failure of the people is connected by Habakkuk with the failure of the law, in its power of judgment in that age to glorify God. And there were two conditions that accounted for this failure of the law. First, it was the bad moral condition of the people themselves, displayed in "strife and contention." "Therefore," says the prophet, "the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth" (Chap. i. 3, 4).

And there would be a vast difference, as touching the moral condition, between contending *about* the law, or God's word, and contending *for* it. The Pharisees of Jesus' time were utterly failing to keep the law, but were ready, on every occasion, to contend with any and every one about the law.

And again, because of this defective moral condition among the people of Habakkuk's time, power was gone to resist wickedness, and also to walk in separation from the wicked. "The wicked doth compass about the righteous, therefore wrong (or wrested) judgment proceedeth." There was, it is true, a kind of judgment that went forth, but it will be observed that a wrested, or wrong judgment is, in God's sight, as no judgment at all. And how much, in the history of the Church of God, answers to this wrested judgment, we may leave it to the reader to judge.

(To be continued.)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

T. M. (Longsight) Ques. : *What is putting off the body of the sins of the flesh (Col. ii. 11), and the old man put off with his deeds and the new man put on (iii. 9, 10) ?*

Ans. : In Col. ii. 11 the words "of the sins" should be omitted. It is the "flesh" that is put off by death and resurrection with Christ in baptism. Christ has died as regards the flesh, He receives everything in resurrection. The flesh has no standing or place before God whatever. Christ was cut off, and in baptism we take the same ground. Thus we get the expression "*Buried with Him.*" A person who is buried is completely out of sight. So have we been in the waters of baptism—as regards the flesh—because of Christ's death. Thus the flesh is a thing put off, it has been discarded, and we are to have no confidence in it, and not to allow it a place.

As regards the second part of the question, the putting off the old man *with his deeds* and putting on the new flow from what has already been said. But there is to be practical conduct in keeping with this. In other words we are to be true to our baptism, and walk in newness of life.

J.K.McE. Ques. : (1) *As to the word "wake" in 1 Thess. V. 10 ; (2) Was Paul looking for the Lord to come at any moment ? (3) Is there any difference between the coming in 1 Thess and "the day" in 2 Thess.?*

Ans. : (1) It is quite true that the word for "wake" is the same as in Chap. v. 6, and should have been translated "watch." (2) It is also true that Paul gave instructions as to future dangers, and also predicted what would be the state of the Church after his

departure ; and he also spoke of his death in 2 Tim. iv. ; nevertheless, the rapture is what we wait for as the proper hope of the Church, and when Paul is unfolding this *doctrinally* he links himself with the *living* saints and not with the *dead* (see 1 Thess. iv. 17, " we.") What may happen to any of us as *individuals* is one thing ; what our proper hope is as belonging to the Church is another. If this distinction is borne in mind the difficulty disappears. (3) In answering the third part of your question all depends upon which part of 1 Thess. is meant. No doubt Ch. i. 10 takes in both the rapture and the appearing. We are occupying until Christ comes, and yet we are coming with Him. Like a man who is waiting in a certain town which the king intends to visit. He may be both waiting for the arrival, and, yet, enter with the king, for on the morning of the event it is arranged for him and others to go outside the city boundary and meet His Majesty and escort him in. This is our position. But there is clearly a difference between 1 Thess. iv. 14, 17, and v. 1, 3 ; 2 Thess. i. 10 and ii. 2—a difference which is explained by our illustration. 1 Thess. iv. refers to our going out to meet the King ; the other scriptures to " the day of the Lord," and His dealings with the earth. Notice how 1 Thess. iv. 14, 17 refers only to those in Christ. Whereas v. 1, 3 refers to the world.

C.H.B. (Oswestry) Ques. : *What is " Justified in the Spirit " (1 Tim. iii. 16) ?*

Ans. : Christ was God. He was rejected. He did not, however, force men to accept Him by an act of power, His justification was in the Spirit. " God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, Who went about doing good." The spirit in which He lived was His justification, as, also, what took place at His baptism. The Apostle Peter makes use of a somewhat similar expression, though in a different connection. " Put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." Christ Himself came and did all His works in the power of the Spirit, and the same thing characterises Christianity. Peter in writing to the elect Jews virtually insists they were not to look for a living, present Messiah on earth, but as He had once by His Spirit preached by Noah so now, in this later age, He was present and working by His Spirit. The Spirit is the justification of Christianity, as formerly it was of Christ Himself. In fact we are inclined to believe that 1 Tim. iii. 16 takes in the Assembly as well as its Founder and Head. " Received up in glory " is the Church's terminus as it was Christ's.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE THREE DAYS AND NIGHTS CONNECTED WITH OUR
LORD'S DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

DEAR SIR,

With reference to the replies in May *Faith and the Flock* to J.C.N.'s question as to Matt. xii. 40, it may perhaps interest your readers to summarise the conclusions on the subject which Sir Robert Anderson has arrived at, and which he has set out in detail in his book "The Coming Prince."

He emphasises the fact that the Lord Jesus was crucified on the "*Feast Day*" (see Lev. xxiii. 6: John xiii. 1, 29, &c.); not on the Passover Day, but the day following. By processes which need not be repeated here he fixes the "*Feast Day*" of that year as corresponding to Friday, April 11th, A.D. 32. Then, if we adopt the Jewish method of reckoning, and consider any part of twenty-four hours as a whole "day and a night," there is no difficulty in accepting the current Christian belief that the Lord suffered on Friday and rose again on Sunday.

Sir R. Anderson also ventures to identify the close of the "sixty-nine weeks" of Dan. ix. 25, 26 with Christ's entry into Jerusalem on the Sunday previous to His crucifixion. He maintains that the period between Artaxerxes' decree to rebuild the city (which he calculates as dating from 1st Nisan B.C. 445) and the above-mentioned day of Christ's entry, consists of exactly 483 prophetic years of 360 days each.

I am certainly not competent to express an opinion as to the value or otherwise of Sir R. Anderson's learned researches. But they are at least suggestive and, coming from a Christian of his standing, are worthy of consideration and of being offered as a contribution to the point under discussion.

H. M. M.

If a word may be added to your remarks on the "Three days and three nights," I think it can be proved from Scripture that the method of reckoning is as the Jews, counting a part of a day or night as one. We find it so through scripture, it is not mere conjecture. Thus, a child was reckoned eight days old and was circumcised accordingly *on the eighth day* (Gen. xvii. 12; Lev. xii. 2; Luke i. 59, ii. 21). Is it not obvious that it may only have lived six whole days and two parts?

Again, 2 Chron. x. 5-12: Rehoboam told the people to come "*after three days,*" and "*they came on the third day as the king bade.*" This proves how they understood three days. Nothing could be plainer.

Again, 1 Sam. xxx. 12-13: "The Egyptian had neither eaten nor drunk for 'three days and three nights,' yet he himself speaks of the period as 'three days ago I fell sick.'"

And lastly, the Pharisees understood the Lord's words in connection with Jonah in exactly the same way. They quoted His own words to Pilate "*after three days*" (Matt. xxvii. 63). Yet they only asked for a guard "*until the third day*" (v. 64). It is perfectly clear they did not deem it necessary to watch for seventy-two hours, and Cleopas (Luke xxiv. 21) says on the evening of the resurrection day, "**To-day** is the *third day* since these things were done;" *i.e.*, since He was crucified. If we interpose seventy-two hours between the death and resurrection, He must have said: "*fourth day since*"; but he said "*third.*" And the Lord had been alive all that **days**

C.M.

Dr. Torrey states that the Jews had other Sabbaths besides the weekly Sabbath, quoting Ex. xii. 16, Lev. xxiii. 7, Num. xxviii. 16-18 in support, but "the Sabbath" is not mentioned in these places, it was on the seventh day numerically as the last of the seven days they were to eat unleavened bread. The only proper Sabbath day was that which the Lord

speaks of in Gen. ii., and which was the same as Ex. xx. 10, Lev. xxiii. 3, and this is the only Sabbath noticed in the gospels. Mark xv. 42, to which Dr. Torrey refers, is no exception. "The preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath," which was Friday (see John xix. 31). That Sabbath was a high day because immediately connected with the passover.

"The preparation," then, was the day immediately preceding the Sabbath, on which day our Lord was crucified (John xix. 31), and on the evening of which just before the Sabbath commenced our Lord's body was hastily put into Joseph's tomb and the women who were there beheld where He was laid, and they returned home preparing spices and ointment, and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment (Luke xxiii. 55, 56). In verse 54 Luke writes, "And that day was 'the preparation.'" When the Sabbath was past, the women came very early in the morning the first day of the week to anoint His body. Now, had our Lord been crucified on Wednesday, surely the women would not need to wait until the first day of the next week before coming to anoint His body.

Another thing Luke records (xxii. 1): "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called *the passover*." The two feasts were so closely connected that one name is interchangeably used for the other. Mark xiv. 1, however, distinguishes them. In Exodus xii. 18 we find Jehovah says, "In the first month on the fourteenth day of the month, at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread." Now the fourteenth day of the month would begin at sunset on Thursday evening, and inasmuch as the eating unleavened bread was called the passover (Luke xxii. 1, 7, 8, 11, 15), the Lord and His twelve apostles including Judas, were carrying out the instructions contained in Exodus xii. 18 by partaking together of the unleavened bread which they were enjoined to eat, and that too on Thursday evening, which would be before the Jews partook of the Paschal Lamb or passover properly so called, and which they did not do until Friday evening following (see John xviii. 28). Christ being the anti-typical Paschal Lamb, "Christ our passover," Who was to be slain on the Friday, we see the fitness of this great event coming in before the Jewish passover lamb was eaten. "In all things He must have the *first* place."

Dr. Torrey remarks further, "that Jesus died on Wednesday. Just as the next day was to begin at sunset, Jesus was buried. He was in the sepulchre Wednesday night and Thursday (one day and night), Thursday night and Friday (a second day and night), Friday night and Saturday (a third day and night). Just as the first day of the week drew on at sunset, Saturday, Jesus arose." These are serious statements, and if not according to fact, it is a grave thing to teach that our Lord's body was actually in the tomb for three whole days and three whole nights, which, too, means that He did not arise from the dead until the *fourth* day, a plain traversing of Jesus' repeated statement that He would be raised the *third* day (Matt. xvi. 21; Mark x. 34; Luke xviii. 33).

Christians universally believe that Christ arose from the dead the first day of the week, not at sunset on Saturday evening, as Dr. Torrey states, but early the first day of the week, that is early *morn*, which the word "early" means (Mark xvi. 9). Now the first day of the week is also called the *third* day viewed in relation to our Lord's crucifixion. "The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and the *third* day rise again" (Luke xxiv. 7). The *third* day is reckoned from the preceding Friday which is the *first*, Saturday the *second*, and Sunday the *third* day (see also Luke xxiv. 21). Dr. Torrey's teaching makes it the fourth, or even the fifth day.

Now, taking the delivering up of our Lord into the hands of sinful men to be virtually the time when Judas betrayed Him into the hands of the Chief Priests, who were pre-eminently sinful men, which would be on the Thursday, then His crucifixion would be on the Friday, and His being in the grave on the Saturday under the guard of Gentile soldiers, we have substantially the three days and the three nights corresponding to Jonah's three days and three nights in the whale's belly, and the three days and three nights the Son of Man was "in the heart of the earth." W. L. P.

THE FAITH AND THE FLOCK

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EDITORIALS.

HABAKKUK'S wonderful resolve. The last chapter of Habakkuk presents a remarkable contrast. The greatness and majesty of God are portrayed in language and imagery that for loftiness and power of expression are almost unequalled, and then, ere the chapter closes, we have, like the rippling of the rivulet succeeding the roar of the cataract, these words of peace and assurance: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

What makes the foregoing words even more striking is that they follow upon a description of God going forth for the salvation of His people. The point is, Can we rejoice when there is no evidence of this? When everything fails, can we still lift up the head? When every natural support goes, can we still be confident? It is not *one* thing here, it is *everything*. If the fig tree did not blossom it wouldn't matter much as long as the vine flourished, and the fields yielded their meat. But in the scene before us there is a general blight. Yet one thing remains—Jehovah! "Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

This ability to rejoice when clouds are in the sky and obstacles in the path is greatly to be desired. It ought to be more cultivated by us. Everywhere in Scripture this spirit of rejoicing is inculcated. The Psalmist says, "But let all those that put their trust in Thee rejoice : let them ever shout for joy, because Thou defendest them ; let them also that love Thy Name be joyful in Thee." The Apostle Peter speaks of rejoicing "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." And the Apostle Paul says, "Rejoice in the Lord always." In both cases it is joy produced by the knowledge of a Person. Oh, that we revelled in all that He is willing to be to us, and believed more fully that in Him there is compensation for every loss. *He* counts for so little with us sometimes. This is not as it should be. Habakkuk was not a stoic. Peter and Paul were not stoics. They were not simply unaffected by circumstances because of stolid indifference ; they knew what joy in the Lord was, and they found that that joy continued and even increased in spite of adversity, if only the eye and heart were kept steadfastly fixed upon that blissful centre.

How is this experience to become ours? We may be "Strengthened with all might, according to the power of His glory, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness" (Col. i. 11). *Strengthened*. How? The words that go before are these : "Increasing in the knowledge of God." We come back to the same point—acquaintance with a Person. As we know God, and His glory occupies us, we are strengthened, and the joyfulness abides even in the midst of long-suffering

"He took it out of the way, *nailing it to his Cross*." This has reference to an Eastern custom. When a debt had been paid, or a bond had been fulfilled, it was usual to take the bill, or parchment, and, affixing it to the house of him who had owed it, to drive a nail through it, so that all who passed by might see that the creditor had no longer any claim—that the debt was cancelled. Thus can the believer point to the Saviour nailed to the Cross, as the canceller of the great debt which he owed to the law.

* * * *

"Having surrendered his place, he (Adam) is to bear the penalty of it, and become the great slave and labourer on the earth, of which he was intended to be the ruler and prince."

AN OUTLINE OF "THE REVELATION."

(See Chart* issued with February number).

SIXTH SECTION. CHAPS. VIII. 2—XI. 18.

By WALTER SCOTT.

IN the Trumpet series of judgments the angels are prominent, and even the Lord Himself is introduced more than once in Angelic Character (viii. 3). In the former series of Divine chastisements the Lamb prominently figures. Not only are the judgments under the trumpets successively inflicted, but they follow the seals, and are not contemporaneous as some suppose. It is the seventh seal which introduces the trumpets, and these latter bring us down to a subsequent date.

The first four trumpets are briefly described in verses 7-12. The remaining three are termed "Woe" trumpets (verse 13). These latter are more severe and searching in character than the "four."

Before the first trumpet is sounded, circumstances of unusual interest are introduced (verses 3-5). During the period here contemplated there will be a body of suffering saints on earth—from amongst Jews and Gentiles. These sufferers are evidently characterised by prayer and intercession. The troubles through which they pass will exceed all the sorrows of past ages (Mark xiii. 19). The glorified saints in the heavens are intensely interested in the struggles and witness-bearing of those on earth (v. 8), but deeper still is our adorable Lord in heaven. Christ is the Angel-Priest of our chapter who goes from the brazen altar to the golden altar adding efficacy to the prayers of these holy sufferers on earth. *He* alone could do this. The prayers of earth are answered in heaven, for in immediate response to these tears and prayers, "there were voices, and thunders and lightnings, and an earthquake" (verse 5).

FIRST TRUMPET, Verse 7.

Detailed exposition is impossible owing to the necessarily brief space at our disposal, and the largeness of the subject. "Hail and fire mingled with blood" refer to the destructive agencies and powers of nature. "The earth" in contrast to the sea, signifies Christendom under settled government. "Third part"—eleven times in our chapter—points to Western Europe or the revived Roman Empire (see xii. 3, 4). "Trees" eminent persons in the political and social life of the empire. "Green grass" a general state of prosperity

* Still on sale. Order direct from the Publisher or from any newsagent.

amongst the populations within the Empire. Under this trumpet, therefore, is intimated judgment from heaven upon all the distinguished persons in authority and influence, and the destruction of the general prosperity in the revived Latin kingdom.

SECOND TRUMPET, Verses 8, 9.

“ A great mountain burning with fire ” signifies a great earthly power under Divine judgment (Jer. li). Nations in a state of anarchy and confusion. “ Became blood,” spiritual and physical death. “ Had life died,” moral death, as in ii. 23 ; iii. 1. “ Ships,” commerce.

What is intimated is the infliction of Divine judgment upon the peoples, then in wild commotion, and by a great world-power, itself under Divine judgment. The revolutionary peoples here contemplated are visited with death—physical and moral—as also the destruction of trade and commerce. A state of misery on every hand is the sure result of these heaven-sent chastisements.

THIRD TRUMPET, Verses 10, 11.

“ There fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp,” points to a distinguished dignitary in moral relation with God but apostate and under judgment. “ Rivers,” the principles which guide and order the life of nations. “ Fountains of water,” the sources of the principles and influences which mark the life of a nation or people. “ Wormwood,” bitter.

The character and dire results here produced are worse than those under the previous trumpets. In fact, the increasing severity of those judicial dealings is a solemn indication of the increasing hardness of heart on the part of men determined to break all Divine bands and cords (Ps. ii. 3). But God has His grip upon men, and judgment must follow judgment, till the iron will is broken and men lie humbled in the dust before God. Here an apostate power infuses his own character amongst the peoples, poisoning the political, civil, and social life of the nations—corrupting their principles at the fountain head, hence all the springs of action are similarly affected. Nations without a religion! Without a code of morals! Without one principle of practical righteousness for guidance in life! Without morality and without God! Such is *only* the negative side of this awful picture of national misery. What must it be when the character of Satan is imprinted upon that nation and people who have deliberately cast off God?

FOURTH TRUMPET, Verse 12.

“Sun,” supreme governing authority. “Moon,” subordinate and derived authority. “Stars,” lesser authorities. The sun, moon, and stars combined as here, present a complete system of earthly government in all its parts. The Roman world revived in territorial extent—ten kingdoms—is here in its government, political and social, the subject of this judgment. There is a complete description of the bonds which unite the empire in all its parts. The effect of this visitation is that moral darkness (*night*) settles down upon the empire and envelopes it as a funereal pall.

FIFTH TRUMPET, ix. 1-12.

We come now to the three “Woe” trumpets (viii. 13). The first of these occupies the first twelve verses; the second the remainder of the chapter; the third is mentioned in chapter xi., verses 14-18.

This awful judgment has its source in “the pit of the abyss” (R.V.)—the lowest depths of Satanic misery and wickedness. The abyss, or bottomless pit occurs seven times in the Apocalypse. But “the pit of the abyss” is only here employed. Here it is opened by a distinguished fallen star. There are two such. We read of one in Chap. viii. 10; the other in Chap. ix. 1. The apostate dignitary of our chapter is the personal Antichrist of prophecy. He acts religiously on behalf of Satan, first in Palestine, second in the wider sphere of Christendom. He opens the pit and the long imprisoned darkness in which the demon host of Satan dwelt bursts forth. The smoke gave birth to the locusts—not literal. The description of the locusts points to a horde of Satanic agencies let loose upon Palestine—not now a “third part.” It is not the revived power of Rome, but apostate Israel in her land which is the subject of this dire judgment—upon the “men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads”—in contrast to sealed Israel (vii.). The locust army is resistless, cruel, and directly Satanic. Satan is the unseen yet real leader, while the Antichrist is the human commander. Men in their awful misery will seek death as a welcome release but even that is denied them (verse 6). The last state of Israel is distinctly Satanic—worse than ever it has been (Matt. xii. 45). Israel’s Saturday night of agony has to be endured ere the millennial day of Sabbatic rest dawns upon the land and people of

Jehovah's choice. But for the apostate part of the nation, here the subject of Divine judgment, there can be no peace either in time or eternity.

SIXTH TRUMPET, ix. 13-21.

Here the "third part" reappears (verse 18). We are transported once again into the territory of the guilty Latin kingdom. The first woe falls on apostate Israel. This second woe descends on the equally guilty Western Empire. The first on *Jews*, the second on *Gentiles*. There is no destruction of human life under the first woe, but "torment" more awful than death inflicted under the leadership of Satan; but, under the second woe, we witness the "yellow peril" in actual accomplishment. The East will overrun the West, devastating these lands with the abominable doctrines and teachings for which the East is famed. The Crescent will supplant the Cross. We had locusts under the first woe. Here we have horses. These latter we saw under the Seals signified aggressive agencies. The Euphrates—the eastern boundary of the Roman Conquests—is named as the quarter from whence this judgment proceeds (verse 14). Vast hordes from the east will invade the west, bringing with them soul-destroying doctrines, and marked also by a vast and unparalleled destruction of human life. The east will conquer the west. But the multifarious idolatry, gross wickedness, and various forms of Spiritualism within the Empire are as rampant as ever (verses 20, 21). "Repented not" is the Holy Spirit's comment. This truly awful judgment leaves the peoples of the revived Empire hardened as ever. The two concluding verses of the chapter reveal an awful picture of human depravity. What then remains? The Personal Return of the Lord in Power.

SEVENTH TRUMPET, xi. 14-18.

It is not now Israel as under the first woe, nor the Gentiles in Christendom under the second woe, but the third "woe" and concluding trumpet involves judgment upon men universally. The whole scene under heaven is more or less visited in judgment. God's hand is felt—north, south, east and west. Christ comes in public manifested power. The angry nations are crushed and broken under God's wrath. The setting up of the kingdom, universal in its territorial extent, righteous and gracious in its character, and enduring as the ordinances of heaven, is anticipated (verse 15). In truth the results of the sounding of the seventh trumpet embrace

both the Millennium and the eternal state. What a range of weighty subjects is contained in verse 18! Thus we are brought down to the very end of man's misrule and government, and even beyond that, to the blessed era of Christ's kingdom and God's eternal rest.

THE SECOND GREAT PARENTHESIS, x., xi. 1-13.

This weighty parenthesis comes in between the sounding of the sixth and seventh trumpets, as before we had the interesting parenthesis (vii.) between the sixth and seventh seals.

In Chapter x. we have the descent of the Lord in angelic power and character to assume the government of the earth. It is His by right of purchase (Matt. xiii. 44, 38); His by Divine decree (Ps. ii.); and His because of the rights of His Person (Col. i. 16). His sovereign rights are indisputable. The action is very grand. The rainbow round His head tells of governmental goodness, and that in wrath He remembers mercy. His feet on earth and sea implies His possession of the *whole* world.

Then with uplifted hand the mighty angel swears by God—the Creator—that there will be no further delay. The mystery of God in bearing with human iniquity is to be brought to a close. Christ assumes the Sovereignty of the earth. The Jubilee of earth has come.

The first thirteen verses of Chapter xi. transport us to the City of Jerusalem. The Lord has special witnesses there who are immortal and invulnerable so long as their testimony lasts—1,260 days. They work miracles similar in character to those wrought by Moses when Israel was in *Captivity*, and by Elijah when Israel was *apostate*. These two states exactly characterise the coming days of Judah previous to the advent of the Lord. When the defined period of witness-bearing is up, then the Beast breaks in upon Jerusalem and slays the witnesses, whose dead bodies lie in the street for shameful and public exposure. What a scene of hellish rejoicing over the temporary triumph of the Beast! (verse 10). But it is short-lived. In full view of the affrighted enemies of the Lord and of His people, these witnesses are called up to heaven, "and they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them." Both their resurrection and ascension were public events (verses 11, 12). The triumph of the witnesses and the hour of retributive judgment upon the city and guilty inhabitants of Jerusalem are closely connected (verse 13).

WHAT GOD HAS JOINED.

By STUART E. MCNAIR.

SURELY we may learn something from the study of the things which are linked together in Scripture, and shall find profit in keeping them together in our thoughts and practice.

Especially instructive is it to note the divine grouping of *persons*, and to observe how significantly different God's classification is to man's.

Men of the world will classify their fellows according to social status, or wealth, or education. Religious leaders will group them according to their assent to divers doctrines or disciplines, or their pronouncement of a party shibboleth. How does God classify? What has he joined together?

To the cave of Adullam God drew all who were in distress, debt, or discontentment around His anointed; and so also to the Saviour He calls each one who is burdened with spiritual need and repentant of spiritual failure.

No association devised by man's wisdom or preference ever proposed such a grouping as that, and it is not impossible that a merely human judgment will declare that the resulting combinations are often incongruous and even undesirable. Yet God has *joined together* the repentant by the bond of a common need; and the union that He has created, it is our highest wisdom to respect.

We learn that in Malachi's day, *those that feared the Lord* were sufficiently "together" to speak often one to another. The statement has before now attracted our attention and commanded our approval. But have we really owned it as a divine principle of classification as exactly applicable to our day and condition as it was to Malachi's? Perhaps, as we think over it we realise that any such grouping would have a very revolutionary effect upon the various religious parties and associations, all of which have been modelled on entirely different principles. But how far do the boundary lines which we each severally adopt coincide with this divine limit?

Are we not too often ready to say, I like to speak with those who fear the Lord *and who agree with my views as to certain matters?*

Malachi registers no command. He merely states a circumstance and records Jehovah's approval of it. Yet the true heart will hold that sufficient ; for what his Lord loves, is *law* to the one who lives in communion with Him.

But a more explicit charge is not far to seek. As surely as Timothy was taught to flee youthful lusts, was he told to follow righteousness, faith, love and peace "*with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*"

What a scope and breadth there is in the divine plan ; and yet how wonderfully it safeguards everything that is essential to God's glory ! What a crumbling of party walls would follow a simple obedience to this charge, on the part of Christians generally ! What unexpected blessing and enlargement results when even one endeavours to be true to it !

But how sadly our poor narrow hearts tend to modify and qualify and neutralise the vastness of God's glorious plan ! What ! are we indeed enjoined to follow righteousness and love with all who are really right at heart ? Has not every sect from time immemorial applied its test to the *head* ? How then can we admit a heart-test as the sole and sufficient clue to a right classification of our brethren ?

We read in Acts ii. 44 that "*All that believed were together.*" We are not told anything about their views upon abstruse questions. It is not improbable that they differed widely in spiritual attainment. It is even possible that they by no means saw eye to eye on matters of some moment, but they all *believed*. They had all found Christ precious to their hearts, and their every hope for here and hereafter was linked up with Him.

It would seem almost revolutionary to suggest that all that believe should be together now. Any ardent partisan could at once give a dozen excellent reasons why it is desirable that all that believe should be parcelled into diverse and sundry groups—classified according to some system that cannot possibly embrace anything so divinely comprehensive as "*all that believe.*"

As we read between the lines in Ephesians ii., how we see the triumph of God's grace over the proud isolation of the Jew's ingrained religious superiority. We trace the words "*we*" and "*ye*" and then the "*together*" that links them, and as we meditate

on all they mean, we begin to realise the mighty power of a living, loving, faith in Christ that could break down "the middle wall of partition" that separated Jew and Gentile, and could build them *together* for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

May the deep significance of "what God hath joined" speak to each of our hearts and lead us to search our ways, lest after all we may discover that we have forsaken "the assembling of *ourselves* together," wishing to associate only with the select few instead of with the whole elect company.

COLOSSIANS III., 1—4.

"For ye are dead,"
The Lord hath said.
His word is true
Of me and you—
Oh! murmur not
'Tis good our lot,
If He declares
That from all snares
Of sinful ways
And evil days
We'er free by death,
For so He saith!

"Your life is hid,"
For Christ He did
In safety place,
Until His face
In glory see,
Both you and me—
Blest be our lot,
Nor care one jot
Need you or I
Whilst He is nigh.
A hidden life
Is saved from strife!

"With Christ in God,"
His staff and rod
Shall comfort me
And also thee,
Till days on earth
Give place to birth
In happier spheres,
Where even tears
Are lost for aye
In timeless day
With Christ above,
Where all is love.

But that's not all,
Our Lord shall call,
When we get home
No more to roam,
Both you and me,
That all may see
How with Him there,
In regions fair
He'll have us to
Appear in view
And share His joy
Without alloy.

Until He come
Don't let's be dumb,
But boldly say
'Tis now Christ's day
To save your soul
And make you whole,
Good news to all,
Both great and small,
He makes you glad,
And never sad;
Then come to-day,
Don't stay away.

As risen indeed
There's one great need
For you and me
To clearly see,
It is to let
Our mind be set
On heavenly things,
Which always brings
Our Saviour near,
And casts out fear,
And glory gives
To Him who lives.

C.W.C.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS:—

A Simple Exposition.

CHAP. X., 26-39.

SINNING WILFULLY.

“ For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses : of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace ?” (vv. 26-29).

IT is not wise to try and reconcile one passage of scripture with another, or endeavour to make them fit. Often to us there seem to be statements which neither fit each other nor fit in with our preconceived ideas. What ought we to do in such cases? The more usual course is, either to accommodate them to our system of truth by considerable lopping and bending and twisting, or find no place for such as seem out of harmony with our way of thinking. But, if we do the former, the truth suffers ; if the latter, we suffer. Let us accept every truth as it is stated, and leave off troubling about how it fits. The truth is not a machine, in which each part has to fit in to some other, or it won't work ; but an orchard, where trees of every variety grow, producing fruits of different size, colour and flavour, without asking any questions. We never introduce the thought of reconciling and fitting with regard to an orchard. Why should we insist upon doing so with the truths of revelation? The other day somebody expressed his surprise that somebody else took no sugar in his tea. Presently he saw him eating jam with his bread and butter. “ No sugar in your tea,” he said, “ and yet you eat jam. Both are sweet.” He could not reconcile the two things. But they do not want reconciling. Jam is not sugar (though there is sugar in it), and bread and butter is not tea. And he would be a foolish man who said, “ I will never eat jam because I take no sugar in my tea.”

Some such thoughts as these are suggested by the passage before us. Its statements seem to conflict with others elsewhere. Is it not affirmed that God foreknew His people, that He predestinated them ; that they are elect ; that nothing can separate

them from His love, and no power pluck them from His hand? (Rom. viii. 29-39; 1 Pet. i. 2; John x., 27-29). Why then, does it speak here of "a certain fearful looking for of judgment" and remind us of a "sorer punishment" awaiting those who sin wilfully, than ever fell upon those who broke the law of Moses? Well, we have no more got to reconcile these apparently contradictory statements than we have God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. All we have to do is to take care that we find plenty of room for both. There are some passages of scripture which seem to imply that after a man has received the knowledge of the truth he is safe for evermore. There are others which distinctly convey the opposite impression. We are afraid that instead of each receiving due attention in its turn, we favour one, and scarcely ever think of the other. We need not go beyond the very chapter that is engaging our attention for examples. In the earlier part we read, "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once." Again, "By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." And again, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Yet what a different voice seems to speak in verse 26 and onward. In the one case all seems to hang upon the work of Christ; in the other, upon whether we sin wilfully or not. But one is as true as the other. As true as that the elect are exhorted to make their calling and election sure (2 Pet. i. 10).

Some would attempt to escape from the difficulty by assuming that only a certain class is addressed in verse 26. But the writer says "we." No, such a way of treating the passage would only be an escape at the best, and not an explanation. The fact is the most advanced Christian needs such a passage as much as one who has only just made a profession. And for this simple reason, that, although a person may have believed, he has yet to give all diligence to add in his faith various moral qualities; though he may think himself justified by faith, he has nevertheless to be justified by works; and though, as a helpless sinner, he may feel that everything depends upon what has been done for him, he yet has to live every day as though everything depended upon himself. (cf. Rom. iv. 3-5; 2 Pet. i. 5-11; James ii. 17-24).

Yes, a man may go a great way along the road to heaven, and receive a great deal of knowledge of the truth, and yet be lost after

all. And the passage we are considering is placed where it is as a warning.

What a fearful warning it is. It tells us that we may sin against light and knowledge. A person may know that Christ died for sins ; he may know that that death is sufficient to clear him of all charge, and perfect him in the eyes of God, and he may assemble with others who hold these doctrines, and with his lips he may even thank God for what Christ has done, and yet—he may deliberately take up with a course of sin that is nothing short of treading under foot the Son of God, and a resistance to all the strivings of the Spirit. A course which is virtually saying he will have sin though Christ died on account of it ; and he will follow his own desire though the Spirit would lead him away from it.

These words, however, are not intended to discourage one who, though a true believer, may have slipped, through want of watchfulness or special temptation. David sinned, but his repentance proved he was a true child of God. Peter sinned, and was restored. With Judas it was different. Though outwardly like the rest of the Apostles, a long course of thefts and avarice led him at last to consummate his villainy by betraying his Lord, and he only repented when it was too late. Thus we see how important is the warning contained in the passage under consideration, in order that we may not abandon Christianity by wilful sin. Even as the blessed Lord warned Judas on the very eve of the betrayal (see John xiii.) in order that he might at the eleventh hour escape, or, failing this, be without excuse. And we also see how important it is to hold both sides of the truth, and find room for every aspect of it, that thus we may be fully armed against every device of Satan.

In addition to what has been already said, these verses plainly tell us that outside of Christianity there is no hope, for nowhere else is there provided a sacrifice for sin. This one fact places Christianity apart from all other religions. If a man deliberately forsakes Christ in order to enjoy the sin for which Christ has suffered, he cannot find a sacrifice elsewhere. And the whole bearing of The Epistle to the Hebrews is to emphasise the unique character of Christianity in this respect, that it provides what can be found nowhere else ; as well as to insist upon the danger of falling away (cf. Chap. ii. 1-3 ; vi. 4-6 ; x. 26-29).

In verses 30-31 we have the fact further emphasised that these warnings are addressed to God's people. "*For we know Him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge His people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*" It is important to bear in mind that professors are treated as belonging to God's people. And, also, that in a very real sense we are *all* professors. Such may be divided into two classes : those who profess and possess; and those who profess only. But *all* are professors. And even a genuine believer is regarded by God from both standpoints, and the individual himself must also do the same. Each one has to live up to his profession. That profession is made by everyone in baptism. A person unbaptised is, from this standpoint, a nonentity. He may be a child of God, of course, and as sure of heaven as anyone else, because baptism does not make us the one, or take us to the other ; nevertheless, baptism is a very real and a very solemn act, full of meaning, and full of promise, if rightly apprehended, whether performed in childhood or riper years. It is profession, and links us outwardly with God's people, and it is a fearful thing to be untrue to it. Few seem aware of the awful solemnity of bringing up a baptised child for the world, or of such an one, when arriving at years of responsibility, giving way deliberately to a course of sin. Such may well read, or have read to them, the tremendous warnings in the passage before us. But the passage itself would have very little meaning apart from what we have just said, that professors are reckoned amongst God's people, and because the truth of this is not apprehended, we fear, to some, it has very little meaning. Notwithstanding, it remains true that God will have vengeance on those who have made a profession which they have never carried out, and as our text affirms, "*The Lord shall judge His people.*"

Nevertheless, the writer of this epistle recalls, and bids his readers recall, what had been true of them in the past. He had done the same thing before in chapter six, when uttering the most solemn warning against falling away. This, however, while tending to show their reality, only further proves the point upon which we have been insisting. All they had endured in the past, and all the confidence they had inspired by their conduct, does not prevent the warning, or stay the inspired writer's hand. How little some of us would have thought of addressing those who had been "illuminated," "endured a great fight of afflictions"; and of whom it

could be said, ye have taken "joyfully the spoiling of your goods," as the Holy Spirit causes them to be addressed in verses 26-31. Yet each statement has its place. And our part, as we have said, is to accept them both, and not try to reconcile them. We may have the confidence that we are God's children; yet we are to tremble lest we fall "into the hands of the living God," and give diligence lest ours should be only a profession after all. Is there not a very one-sided teaching abroad which loses sight of this double aspect of truth? with the consequence that souls are either kept in a state of trembling and uncertainty all their days; or abandoned to an overweening confidence which leads eventually to an overthrow, or lands them in a state of deadness and indifference.

Let us ever bear in mind the closing words of our chapter: "*Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*" We must live by faith. It must be a constant thing. Thus only are we safe.

Before we finish, let us contrast the closing verse of our section with that which opens it. The writer speaks of the danger of sinning wilfully, and does not hesitate to introduce the most fearful consequences of so doing, and all the time he is addressing the people of God, himself included (the words being, "if we sin wilfully"), and yet after writing in this way, and before the ink is well nigh dry, he can also write, "We are not of them who draw back unto perdition." Can you fit these two statements in? Can you quite reconcile them, as addressed to the same people? You cannot do either perfectly. Nor is it necessary that you should. But you can accept them both. You can accept the warning and equally accept the assurance, because you are regarded from two opposite standpoints, viz., that you are a professor; and a professor may abandon his profession; but if a true believer, it is equally possible to "live by faith," and "believe to the saving of the soul."

In a common lodging-house, the other day, there was found a young man of education who had been well brought up, but who had wallowed in the very dregs of sin, and sunk and sunk until he had reached the very bottom—health, character and position all gone. Yet he asserts that for two years he had known what communion with God meant, and Christians had been his companions. The solemnity of such a position it is hardly possible to exaggerate.

NO FORMS NEEDED.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

IT is most certain that no form of worship has been divinely provided for the Church of God. The epistles may be searched in vain for a liturgy of any kind. Men in Christendom, recognising this, yet feeling their need of stated forms, have been driven to devise some of their own. Hence the Roman Missal and the Anglican Book of Common Prayer.

If it be urged that we have the Lord's Prayer (Matt. vi.), the answer must be that it was given by the Saviour to the disciples before the accomplishment of redemption and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Christianity, properly speaking, had not yet come in. For Christianity dates not from the birth of the Lord Jesus, but from the descent of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts ii.).

The period of Christ's absence is emphatically the day of the Holy Spirit's presence. This fact is fraught with the mightiest consequences for us who believe. Our sins having been put away by the one offering of Jesus, and the veil having been rent in His death, we have liberty of access into the holies. As the basis of accomplished redemption, the Holy Spirit has been given, and this constitutes the assembly on earth the Temple of God (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17). The living presence of the divine Spirit suffices for the saint's every need. When the assembly comes together, He is prepared to meet the special requirements of every occasion, if only faith is willing to trust Him. Human forms necessarily lack flexibility. Words that may be eminently suitable at one moment may be sadly lacking at another. Pious souls, who accustom themselves to the use of liturgies, must frequently feel this. Yet no variation may be permitted. By ecclesiastical law the stated forms must be strictly adhered to, let hearts ache ever so sorely at their inability to express what they really feel.

What freshness and power result from the realised presence of the Holy Spirit! What divine variety in all the expressions of praise, prayer and worship! God thus gets the portion that His heart desires, and the saints themselves are comforted and blessed.

Liturgies, and stereotyped forms in general, are the fruit of unbelief in the abiding presence of the Spirit in the church. The only way of escape from these things, and from *dreary repetitions of every kind* is not mere correctness of doctrine concerning the operations of the Spirit of God, but living faith in His divine presence amongst us.

TO LIVE—CHRIST. TO DIE—GAIN.

PHILIPPIANS I. 21.

S. B. BROOKS.

SUCH words as these proceeding from the lips of any Christian in the present day would at once be regarded as evidence of the self-sufficiency and egotism of the speaker ; but in the case of the writer of this epistle no such suspicion is aroused in the mind of the reader who has any adequate acquaintance with the life and character of the Apostle Paul. Saul of Tarsus, whose heart was previously filled with bitterest enmity to the Lord Jesus, has now become the willing slave and most devoted follower of Christ that history is acquainted with. A change more radical, a revolution more complete has never been witnessed in the history of the world.

It is needless to detail the incidents of the journey from Jerusalem to Damascus for the readers of this journal. We have only to note the fact of Saul's conversion and allow our hearts to be devoutly and joyfully affected as we contemplate with holy wonder the blessed results of that interview between heaven and earth, results which accrued not only to Saul himself, but to thousands who have been the recipients of that truth which was revealed to Saul when he " was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision," as well as other truths which were made known to the apostle in later days. This epistle is often spoken of as the epistle of " Christian experience." Not necessarily the experience of all Christians, which indeed it is not—but the epistle where we learn what is true Christian experience. Need it be said that the experience of most Christians rarely attains to the level set forth in this epistle? In our epistle we have set forth by the apostle the experiences through which he himself was passing at the time he wrote, and this may most appropriately be called true Christian experience, *i. e.*, experience which is proper and becoming to the saint of God who is walking in communion with Christ. Had not this been true of the apostle how could he have uttered the expression " For to me to live is Christ? " It is this plain, bold, confident utterance of the apostle which awakens within us such wonder and amazement. Surely he is not exaggerating when he speaks thus of himself. It is possible for some Christian readers to think so, but the more fully we study and the more intimately we become acquainted with the life and character of the

apostle the less disposed are we to allow such thoughts to hold a place in our minds.

Paul is now well advanced in years. He can speak of himself as "Paul the aged." His manner of life for many years past has been sufficient to prove his whole-hearted devotedness to his Lord and Master. His intense convictions, his absolute sincerity, his willingness to sacrifice himself in the service of Christ—all these considerations should at once dissipate from our minds the slightest suspicion we might entertain of his right to utter these emphatic words, "For to me to live is Christ." The apostle is here stating the fact that the life which he himself lived down here upon the earth was to Christ, was for Christ, indeed it was Christ Himself. In other words, Christ was his object, his aim, his desire. All that he did was done unto Christ and for Christ. As it is sometimes said, "Christ filled the vision of his soul." The happy result of this was that he had "Learned in whatsoever state he was to be satisfied." This, then, was Paul's experience. May we not say that this is proper, true Christian experience? Experience is something which is capable of growth and development. This is true in every department of life, and not less so in the Christian life. Peter emphasises that truth when he says, "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." It becomes then a question of the very highest importance; by what means shall this increase of divine knowledge be obtained, and more intimate acquaintance with the Lord Jesus be realised so that our experience might be more closely assimilated to that of the apostle Paul? One deep longing of his heart finds expression in Phil. iii. 10, where he cries out, "That I may know Him," *i.e.*, that he might know Him where He is now, in the glory of God. It was from heaven that He first appeared to Saul of Tarsus, and this impression made on the mind of the Apostle was ineffaceable. From that time he had, more or less, continued to behold the glory of God in the face of his adorable Saviour and Lord, and so that change was effected which became more pronounced with the advance of time, so that he who was once Saul the persecutor, became the most ardent and affectionate lover of his fellow Christians, as well as the most self-sacrificing of the servants of God. There appears to be, now that he writes to the Philippians, such complete self-effacement, such absolute devotedness to his Saviour, that he can say with perfect honesty, "For to me to live is Christ."

Let us not be so unwise as to think that such a state of mind could be reached at once. What painful disciplinary lessons the apostle must have passed through, so that, notwithstanding his own naturally stubborn and perverse will, the proud Pharisaic persecutor has become one of the tenderest and gentlest of those who cared for the lambs and sheep of the flock of Christ.

Since divine grace and power wrought so effectually in the case of the apostle in producing such devotedness to Christ, such freedom from selfishness, such self-sacrifice for the sake of others, may we not ask ourselves why amongst those who "profess and call themselves Christians" these characteristics are often so sorrowfully deficient, if not actually absent?

The apostle is so conscious of his own sincerity in his faithful service to Christ that he does not hesitate to exhort those to whom he writes to imitate himself (1 Cor. xi. 1). Here he says, "Be ye followers of me as I also am of Christ." In an earlier chapter—4th—he beseeches them to be followers of him. Again, in the 3rd Chapter of our epistle (v. 17), he exhorts them to be followers, or rather fellow-imitators, of himself. While he can speak in this way we may be perfectly sure of his own integrity in presenting himself before them for their imitation, and may we not say that as we read these earnest exhortations we have the consciousness of the absolute sincerity of the apostle, and nothing strikes us as being incongruous or extravagant in pressing upon us his own example. Would it not then be possible for us in this day to say, not in the hearing of our fellow-creatures, but in the ear of God, "For to me to live is Christ"?

Life, then, being what it was to the apostle, we need not be surprised when he says "to die is gain." This is the language of confidence, of assurance. He had a strong desire to "depart and be with Christ, which was very far better." How strongly this language contrasts with that of the Old Testament saints in prospect of death, such as Hezekiah, whose experience is recorded in Isaiah, 38th Chapter. Also of David in Ps. vi. 5, where he says, "For in death there is no remembrance of Thee; in the grave who shall give Thee thanks?"

In Old Testament times the revelation of divine truth was incomplete, and it awaited the death and resurrection and ascension of Christ ere the full truth of the Gospel could be made known.

Now that Christ is on high, and the Holy Spirit has come down to dwell in believers, "life and incorruptibility have been brought to light by the gospel." Believers need no longer walk in the gloom and darkness of Old Testament times when the revelation of divine truth was incomplete, but are privileged to walk in the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God." . . . "Seeing it is God that said Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (R.V., 2 Cor. iv. 6).

Does death deprive the saint of this present age of this marvellous blessedness? Does communion with our beloved Saviour cease when the spirit leaves the body? If so it seems that to die is loss, not gain, and that the apostle must have been mistaken. What is gain? Is it not something obtained in addition to what was previously possessed? The apostle tells us it was to "be with Christ, for it is very fār better" (R.V.). That good man Richard Baxter wrote, "He leads us through no darker rooms than He went through before"; but if death leads us into the land of forgetfulness and oblivion, where all our sweet and joyous experiences cease, then, surely, we shall be in darker rooms than while upon earth, for now we can at times at least look up and catch the glances of His eye and taste the sweetness of His love, but then this would be lost; even the memory of past enjoyments would have ceased, for we should be in "the dark" and "in the land of forgetfulness" (Ps. lxxxviii. 12). These thoughts, then, may we not regard as truly sad and depressing? We gather what was the experience of the Old Testament saints in view of death, and surely we, with the full revelation of Christianity, shall never be led to entertain beliefs which were proper to them, but which are manifestly out of harmony with the revelation we have received of the "illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (Revised Version, margin).

"There is no forgiveness for our evil nature; God condemned sin in the flesh on the Cross. If I have got to the real conviction that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing—just as a man in my house may be a rogue, and perhaps I do not distrust him, but once I know he is a thorough rogue, I look everything up—so once I have got to know what my flesh is, the trusting it is over."

SOME BRIEF REFLECTIONS ON HABAKKUK (*concluded*).

By G. B. E.

BUT Habakkuk pours out before God, in all the intensity of a chastened heart, filled with burning desire, the iniquity of His people, and then immediately gives utterance to an awful prophecy as Jehovah's answer to their iniquity (Ch. i 5-11). Yet no sooner does he predict judgment as imminent, than he is again seen in God's presence, pleading for the salvation of the people and inviting Jehovah to judge the iniquity of the enemy, than to behold which He was of purer eyes (Ch. i. 12-17). The condition of the people, however, formed no warrant for God's intervention in mercy, and the prophet, therefore, grounds his intercession upon the unchangeable character and goodness of Jehovah. He was the "Holy One," and He was "from everlasting." Judgment must fall, but in the very face of it, what a vindication and glorifying of Jehovah's name.

But Habakkuk also addresses Jehovah as the "mighty God." And faith may ever find encouragement and prevail with God upon such ground, however discouraging and desperate the condition around. If God is both holy and powerful in His people's behalf against the enemy, then, truly, faith has a full title to exult and triumph in Him. And such triumph by faith in a *living* God it is which exclaims: "*He shall not die, O Lord, Thou hast ordained them for judgment.*"

If judgment, as God's chastisement, comes upon the Lord's people, it is not to destroy them, but rather to correct them and restore them, that they might live in His sight.

But the prophet was called upon to await God's answer to all this. And while he thus waited upon God, he watched to see what He would say unto him. And this answer from Jehovah was to form Habakkuk's testimony in the vision he was summoned to write (Ch. ii.). But how precious to see here that God reveals His secret to this prophet, who, as guided and filled with His spirit, waits upon Him. He *prayed* to Jehovah, he *waited* upon Him, and he *watched* for Jehovah's answer.

Now the vision that was granted him, was not one of judgment against Israel, but rather against the enemy, and of glory for Israel

and the whole earth (Ch. ii. 14). Blessed and lovely reward to the exercised, burdened soul that waits upon God, and cries to Him on behalf of His people! The office of Habakkuk was to write this vision and to make it clear, while others, who observed it, attentively, might run to proclaim it. And so, beloved Christian reader, if such a "vision of glory" was, in that dark day, revealed to this prophet for Israel, how much more have we to-day a vision of the glory of Christ in the gospel, to run and proclaim to all men and to all nations! And what a vision too, of the coming Bridegroom in His glory, to proclaim in the ears of the professing church!

But the vision reveals what Jehovah's answer was to the prophet's former declaration—"we shall not die." It was only the *just* who could so live, and He only by his faith. And thus the great line of distinction is here drawn for all ages, and marks those who will, and those who will not, partake of the coming glory of Christ. The unjust, whether of the open enemy, or among God's professing people, include all who do not thus live unto God by faith, and they must partake of God's coming wrath and judgment. And that this great truth—"The just shall live by faith"—has formed the slogan, as it were, of important revival movements in the past, none would attempt to deny. Habakkuk voiced it in his day, though no outward revival was for the time evidenced. The Apostle Paul proclaimed it in establishing the truth of the gospel, which gospel had the effect of reviving Israel in part unto God, by a living hope in the resurrection of Christ. And he also insisted upon the same truth when the Church was about to be swept away by a determined effort to revive the legal system. And, finally, Luther was raised up of God to stand for it, in all boldness, when the church had been swept away, and was adrift from her moorings.

If Israel or the professing church "would not believe though it be told them," still God would ever preserve or revive a testimony unto Himself, through "just men" (Heb. xii. 23), whose testimony as well as themselves, should live "by faith." And so we find in all dispensations. In a future day, following the present church period, there will be some, who as a faithful remnant of the Jews, will "keep the commandments of God, and *the faith of Jesus.*" (Rev. xiv. 12). And the Apostle Paul, at the beginning of the present age, ere he departed to be with Christ, again and again referred to this faith, which, as once delivered to the saints, he had

kept, but concerning which some had already made shipwreck, while others were about to depart from it (1 Tim. i. 5, 19 ; iv. 1 ; vi. 12, 21 ; 2 Tim. i. 5, 13 ; ii. 2, 18, 22 ; iii. 8, 15 ; iv. 7).

But there was one remarkable claim made by Habakkuk, which could hardly be understood save by faith. *The Lord was in His holy temple* (Ch. ii. 20). Contrast this with the unholy condition of the people generally, and with the unholy activity of the enemy just before described, and see how exceedingly precious and encouraging such a recognition of God's presence must ever be to faith. But what, we may inquire, is the meaning of this recognition and fact of the Lord's presence in His holy Temple, whose temple *His people are to-day?* (see 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17 ; 2 Cor. vi. 16). By the energy and power of the Holy Ghost, it means—triumph ! And so, in the consciousness of Jehovah's holiness and in the confidence of His power and presence, the prophet breaks forth, with sublime fervency and ecstasy, into a prayer which by faith became a song of triumph. For faith can pray and sing unto God in the same strain, when assurance possesses the soul that He hears, and will answer the cry of His afflicted people in His own time. And Habakkuk prayed for that, which one of feebler faith might not have hoped for. He earnestly asked God for *a revival of His work* (ch. iii. 2). And this asking may have seemed, indeed, as being too much, or beyond reason, when nothing but judgment appeared to fill the sky. But it was the faith of this God-fearing, mercy-loving prophet, as led by God's spirit, that could so boldly address itself to God.

And this leads to a remark which we believe to be most needful for the present time. While the Word of God clearly foretells what the end of Christendom will be, and while we are living in dark, evil days, we should by no means give way to this evil, and settle down as ready to say, "Who will show us any good?" No, beloved. God will ever visit His redeemed people in reviving mercy and blessing in answer to the prayer of faith. 'Tis true the prayer of Habakkuk found not its answer with God at the time, for the nation soon went into captivity as subjects of the Chaldeans. Yet God, who never forgot the prayer, answered it in His own time. The return of the captives unto Jerusalem in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah was surely a revival in answer to this prayer, though we are not sure that Habakkuk ever lived to see and enjoy it. God

has many times revived His work, both in Israel and in the Church. And He will yet revive it in the midst of His people, until the Lord comes.

But may it not be seasonable to be reminded that God has the blessing of *all His people* before Him to-day, and that Christ is concerned for *all His body*, in His vigilant and unceasing care for it ?

And so may the Lord grant us this spirit of supplication just now for all saints, and form in us a readiness and fitness to be used of Him in the blessing of all, that His works may be revived among all. And for ourselves may each one of us know the blessedness of "rejoicing in the Lord" in the midst of the greatest failure and barrenness, and so shall we ever "walk upon our high places" (Ch. iii. 17-19).

THE TABERNACLE (*continued*).

SOME OF ITS TEACHINGS AND LESSONS.

ERE we pass into the Tabernacle which stood at the west of the court, we first of all approach the brazen altar. We meet *God* at the brazen altar, and we meet Him individually there. The altar was the basis of the Levitical system. What the cross is to Christianity—its centre and distinguishing glory—that the brazen altar and sacrifice laid thereon were to Judaism. The altar was made of shittim wood—the incorruptible human nature of our Lord—and overlaid with brass, or native copper—the great fire-enduring metal. Hence the capability of Christ to endure the utmost judgment of God. The altar was four square, thus intimating its universal application. God's love and the Cross are for the *world*. The height of the altar was three cubits, or four and a half feet. It was hollow, and half way down there was inserted a network of brass attached to four rings. On this network the sacrificial victims were laid and tied with cords to the horns of the altar (Ps. cxviii. 27). The four horns refer to the strength and security of all who by faith grasp these horns on which blood was put in the case of a ruler or one of the common people who had sinned (Lev. iv.). Israel of old were taught three things, and the same three truths are taught us but in a fuller way : (1) The judgment of sin ; (2) the acceptance of the offerer ; (3) the forgiveness of sins.

We next approach the brazen laver—no wood was used in its construction. It was wholly of brass ; made of the highly polished brazen mirrors of the women of Israel (Ex. xxxviii. 8). There are two striking circumstances about the laver. It was not covered in the journeys of the wilderness (Num. iv.), nor is its size and shape given. It was filled with water and placed between the altar and the door of the Tabernacle. In it the priests washed hands and feet ere they ministered at the altar or trod the floor of the Tabernacle. The altar is where we witness sin judged for the *sinner*. The laver is the practical judgment of sin by the *believer*. Christ is the altar. Christ is the laver. The Word is the water. *On* the altar was blood. *In* the laver was water. The former for the sinner ; the latter for the priestly worshipper.

THE TABERNACLE AND ITS VESSELS.

The Tabernacle was 30 cubits, or 45 feet, in length from east to west, and 10 cubits, or 15 feet, in breadth from south to north. It was divided into two unequal sized apartments by the beautiful veil, rent at the death of Christ. The first and larger apartment is termed the sanctuary or "holy place." It was 20 cubits, or 30 feet, in length, and 15 feet in breadth. The other part of the sacred building was termed "the holiest of all"—the most sacred spot on God's earth. It was a square apartment 15 feet by 15 feet. In this small but holy scene, its floor the desert sands, Moses, the Mediator, entered *without* blood (Num. vii. 89 ; Lev. i. 1). As a man and a sinner he needed the blood of atonement, but as Mediator his entrance into the sanctuary was not characterised by blood and incense, as with Aaron, the High Priest. It was the Priest, and not the Mediator, who represented the people before God. The holiest was never entered by Aaron save once a year, and that not without blood (Lev. xvi.). The holy place was the scene of constant service (Heb. ix.).

The Tabernacle boards were 48 in number. On the north and south were 20 boards on either side, six boards west with two corner boards. These were made of shittim wood, being inlaid with gold—typically pointing to the human and divine natures of our Lord. We see Christ in the structure as a whole, as also in each individual board. The boards were 10 cubits, or 15 feet in height, and a cubit and a half in breadth. Thus the breadth of each board was the exact height of the mercy seat. There were

two sockets of *silver* under each board. The pillars of the court rested on sockets of *brass*. The door of the tent was suspended on five pillars also resting on sockets of brass. To get into the court you enter by the door of *four* pillars—**Christ on earth** as witnessed in the *four* gospels; but if we are to view **Christ in Heaven** we enter by the Tabernacle door resting on its *five* pillars, and it is thus Christ is seen in the Epistles, the work of *five* inspired writers.

Then the solid structure was further strengthened and secured by cross bars of *shittim* wood gold covered, being inserted in rings of gold attached to the boards. The middle bar was made to shoot through the boards from the one end to the other (Ex. xxxvi. 33). This singular arrangement must have added greatly to the strength of the building. Thus, inside and outside, through and through, it was one solid, strong, compact whole. The unity of nature and attributes in the Person of our Lord marks Him off as the Rock of Ages, and such He is to us. It is the truth of Isaiah ix. 6 which seems embodied in the peculiar construction of the Tabernacle—the mighty basis of our faith.

(To be continued, D.V.)

“COME YE YOURSELVES APART.”

A CONFERENCE HYMN.

Tune: S.S. & S., 731, “Abide with me.”

“Come ye yourselves apart, and rest awhile.”
 Lord Jesus, at Thy bidding, we draw near;
 For we would know the sunshine of Thy smile,
 As pilgrims in this dreary desert here.

We bless Thee we can thus together meet
 To magnify Thy hallowed Name alone.
 Oh, let us have with Thee communion sweet,
 And may we all Thy Lordship gladly own.

Let ev'ry saint in calm subjection be
 To Thy blest Spirit now, we humbly pray.
 Oh, may we ev'ry one Thy glory see,
 While gathered in Thy presence here to-day.

And let our coming thus together be
 A foretaste of our meeting Thee above,
 When, through a long and blest eternity,
 We still shall praise the wonders of Thy love.

W.T.R.

DEPARTING FROM INIQUITY— WHAT IS IT?

“ Let everyone that nameth the Name of the Lord depart from iniquity ”—
2 Timothy ii. 19.

THE above injunction occurs in the second epistle to Timothy, which evidently has a decidedly *ministerial* bearing, whereas the first epistle is chiefly *ecclesiastical*. Paul not only had the care of all the churches (2 Cor. xi. 28) but also a deep concern for those who ministered the word with a view to safeguard sound doctrine (1 Tim. i. 3 ; Titus ii. 1).

This latter became growingly important because soon after the establishment of *Christianity*, many false prophets and “ many deceivers ” had entered into the world (1 John iv. 1 ; 2 John 7). Such Paul calls “ false apostles ”—“ false brethren ”—“ deceitful workers ”—“ ministers of Satan ” (2 Cor. xi. 13, 15 ; Phil. iii. 2). Peter also predicts “ false teachers ” getting among the disciples who would privily introduce “ heresies of perdition,” chiefly those that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness (2 Pet. ii. 1, 10), promising liberty, yet themselves being the slaves of corruption (v. 19). Jude, too, speaks of certain men creeping in unawares, ungodly men turning the grace of God into lasciviousness (v. 4). This mixed state of things gives occasion for Paul’s using the figure of “ a great house ” in which were various sorts of vessels, some honourable and some dishonourable (2 Tim. ii. 20), answering at the present time to *Christendom* which is rapidly lapsing into corrupt heathenism (see 2 Pet. ii. 20-22). The Church of God—or the House of God or Christianity must never be confounded with Christendom, which latter only is likened to a great house. The former (the House of God) is the pillar and base of the truth (1 Tim. iii. 16) ; the latter is a gathering of every kind (Matt. xiii. 47), and so becomes the habitation of demons—the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird* (Rev. xviii. 3).

Our Lord bids us beware of false prophets which come to us in sheep’s clothing (outwardly) but inwardly they are ravening wolves

* Only we must remember there is a two-fold aspect of the House of God, one spiritual and built by Christ (for this see Matt. xvi. and Eph. ii.) : the other the whole sphere of profession (1 Cor. iii). It is because it is the House of God that makes corrupt Christendom so unspeakably horrible.—ED.

(Matt. vii. 15-20). These false leaders evidently take the name of Christian (Christian Science and the like), and often name the Name of the Lord both in pulpit and by pen, but they are only really known by their fruits. "*The Lord* fully knows approvingly them that are His." *Christians* can only know these false teachers by their fruits. To such He will disapprovingly say, "I know you not, depart from Me ye workers of *iniquity*" (Matt. vii. 22. 23).

Paul was a "chosen vessel" (and so a "*vessel unto honour*") to bear *Christ's Name among the Gentiles* (Acts ix. 15). In contrast to this Paul names two vessels unto dishonour, viz., Hymeneus and Philetus, who were profane and vain babblers which generated *ungodliness*, their word too, eating as a canker or gangrene, and this also because they had erred from "the truth," *i.e.*, "the truth which is after *godliness*" (Titus i. 1). The real cause of this *moral* departure was unwholesome and unsound doctrine. They taught that "the resurrection was past already," thereby overthrowing the faith of some (see 1 Tim. i. 19, 20). Notice, it is in this connection and relation that we have Paul's injunction, "let everyone that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity." The iniquity evidently being the ungodly conversation and unsound and unhealthy teaching of these two errorists, otherwise there is no apparent relevancy in Paul's injunction.

The iniquity Paul has in mind is evidently of a specific kind, being that which gained an entrance even into the Church at Corinth, not only in the case of the "wicked person," but the virus of it was working in the saints, which needed to be thoroughly purged out, for it leavened the whole lump (1 Cor. v. 6. 7). Hence Timothy was enjoined to keep himself personally pure from all such moral and physical contaminations. He must "*flee*" youthful lusts, lest he fall (1 Cor. x. 12; 1 Tim. vi. 11).

This energetic word "*flee*" is pregnant and significant, recalling the admonition of the angels to Lot, "Escape for thy life" (Gen. xix. 17; 2 Pet. ii. 7), not only to save his natural life, but also to save him from the vortex of moral pollution which threatened to engulf him (1 Pet. ii. 11; 2 Pet. ii. 18). "While he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful to him" (v. 16). This reminds us of Jude 23, "Others save with fear, *pulling them out of the fire*; hating even the garment spotted by

the flesh." And just as the Lord was *merciful* to Lot, so also must the saints be looking for the *mercy* of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal *life* (the very opposite of corruption) and counting upon Him till then to keep us (even amid abounding evil) from falling" (vv. 21, 24).

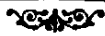
In view too, of the history of the antedeluvian world which, on account of its iniquitous corruption and violence, was destroyed by a flood of water (Gen. vi. 12, 13 ; 1 Pet. iii. 21 ; 2 Pet. ii. 5), and also of the like iniquity of the Cities of the plain (Gen. xiii. 13 ; xviii. 20 ; Jude 7) ; and inasmuch as similar iniquity was found in the house of Eli (1 Sam. iii. 13, 14) ; and even among the privileged congregation of Israel through Balak and Balaam (Num. xxv. 1-16, 1 Cor. x. 6-8 ; Rev. ii. 14-20) ; and considering the unmentionable wickedness and iniquity of the whole of heathendom (Rom. i. 21-32) ; and subsequently the iniquitous confessionals, monasteries, and convents of Papal Rome ; and finally the predicted corruption of modern Christendom (2 Pet. ii. 1-3, 20-22 ; Jude 4-13 ; and 2 Tim. iii. 1-9)—it is plain that the pungent and wholesome appeal of Paul as to departing from iniquity is urgently and imperatively needful.

The fact, too, that our Lord Himself compares the days immediately preceding His second advent with the corrupt and lawless state of things that obtained in the days of Noah and of Lot, indicates plainly enough how things will end (see Matt. xxiv. 37, 38). Inviting thus the vengeance of the Lord, and provoking the eyes of His glory (Isaiah iii. 6). The day of vengeance (Isaiah lxi. 2) will come, and must come upon such workers of iniquity.

The Apostle Peter (2 Pet. iii. 17, 18) gives a seasonable warning to *saints* likewise, lest *they also* being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from their own steadfastness. Growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the only preservative salt, amid abounding corruption and putrefaction. Surely in view of all this the apostle's appeal, " Let everyone that nameth the Name of the Lord depart from iniquity " is none too urgent or pungent, and the answer to the question what is it to depart from iniquity possesses a gravity that should lead to serious reflection and increased sanctification, so that as strangers and pilgrims we may " abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul " (1 Pet. ii. 11 ; 2 Pet. iii. 11).

W. L. P.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PAGE.



EXTRACTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

(The writer—a young lady—passed away at the age of twenty-one).

“THE signs of the times loudly remind us that the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh. How sweet and cheering it is, amid the gloom of the present, to discern, as it were, the sound of His footsteps, Who shall quickly descend with a shout (1 Thess. iv.). The hope of His Coming again has ever been the hope of His Church, and a blessed sanctifying hope it is! But as each hour brings us nearer to the long-looked-for day of redemption, it shortens our opportunities of service here. How precious then is the present moment. Let us therefore work while it is called to-day, and, as we have opportunity, let us do good unto all, especially unto those that are of the household of faith.”

* * * *

“What are we doing for the Lord? If we are indeed His, it is our high privilege to be identified with His blessed cause, and with His people, and His work in every land; and it is our honour to be permitted to spend, and be spent in His service. We shall feel this as we dwell upon what He has done for us, and what He is to us. No words can express what we owe to Him. We are His redeemed captives, His property, His purchased ones. He has ransomed us from hell with His own blood, and brought us into closest union with Himself. When we *consider* all the great things He has done for us we must feel

“Too much we cannot do or bear
For such a matchless Friend.”

* * * *

“We have arrived at a very important crisis in the world's history, and one which specially calls on us to come forward with one mind and heart, hand to hand, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Want of union amongst those who hold the truth in Christ is, as I have experienced, a stumbling block, and oh, how dishonouring it is to our profession! It is time, surely, for all who love the Lord to have done with a sectarian spirit, and to love each other, as Jesus would have them do, *as brethren*. How important it is that His

people should unite in His work, and give the right hand of fellowship one to another in all that concerns His cause. There is nothing of a sectarian spirit in the Word of God, all Christians are there spoken of as brethren, and continually exhorted to love one another *as such*, to 'walk in love, even as Christ loved us.' "

* * * *

"God says, 'Them that honour Me, I will honour' (1 Sam. ii. 30). It is then both the duty and the privilege of all who profess His truth in their thoughts, words and actions to aim at this great end, namely, to glorify Him. A regard to this should be carried into the most minute particulars of daily life, and those who through His grace are enabled to do so, will testify to the truth of the promise, 'Them that honour Me, I will honour.' "

* * * *

"I write a line to encourage you in your 'work of faith and labour of love,' and I would remind you of God's *sure* promise that 'His Word shall not return to Him void, but that it shall accomplish that which He pleases, and prosper in the thing whereto He sends it.' He lets none of His words fall to the ground, and when He works, none can hinder it. You must not, therefore, be discouraged by the little fruit visible at present in poor B—, but you must go on 'looking unto Jesus.' Set Christ, and Him crucified, before your poor deluded fellow sinners, and point them to Him as 'the way, the truth, and the life,' to His Blood as the only remedy for sin and uncleanness, and leave it with God to bless His own truth *when* and *how* He chooses, and oh, *plead with Him His own promises*. Let us expect that He will do great things. Let us not be unbelieving, but let us remember that 'His hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor His ear heavy that it cannot hear.' There is nothing too hard for Him, and all things are possible with Him. Let us wrestle with Him then for a fulfilment of His promise that He will 'pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground'; oh, let us cry earnestly for the Spirit to breathe upon the dry bones that they may live. I hope before long I shall hear good news from poor B— of some there being 'plucked as brands from the burning.' Whenever you may be able to inform me of one soul awakened, convicted, converted, it will give me most heartfelt joy. Be sure to let me know of a good work begun in any, that I may rejoice and be glad, and give God thanks."

“What an important station fathers, mothers, masters, and mistresses occupy! Children and servants are quick at observing. The examples before them may have a vast amount of influence for good or for evil. Oh, dear——, pray for grace to fulfil your relative duties faithfully *in* the Lord. Let your children see when you talk to them of a Saviour that you yourself love that Saviour. When you tell them of the vanity of earthly things, let them see that your heart is not fixed upon the world, but upon God—that your ‘affections are set upon things above, not on things on the earth.’ Oh, dear——, whether you ‘eat, or drink, or whatsoever you do, do *all* to the glory of God.’ How sweet to feel that we may seek to glorify Him in the *most common* actions of our daily life, sweet it is ‘in our calling wherein we are called, *therein to abide with God.*’ I was reading to-day that verse in Psalm cxix., ‘Let not any iniquity have dominion over me.’ This surely is the prayer of every child of God, and how precious to every believer the covenant promise, ‘Sin shall *not* have dominion over you’ (Romans vi.). In the unconverted man sin *reigns*, it has entire dominion over him. In the believer Jesus *reigns* though sin *dwells*, but it has not dominion over him.”

“IT IS THE LORD.”

JOHN XXI. 7.

Wait on the Lord, And He will guide thy steps along thy pilgrim way.	Ps. xxvii. 14.
Turn to the Lord: He will restore thy soul if thou shouldst go astray.	Lam. iii. 40.
Rest in the Lord: On Him cast all thy care—He’ll bear it day by day.	Ps. xxxvii. 7.
Ask of the Lord: He loves to meet your need—He loves to hear thee pray.	Zech. x. 1.
Ever with the Lord: Sweet consummation this! Lord Jesus, come to-day!	1 Thes. iv. 17.
	W.T.R.

“WITNESS.”

Sinner: <i>False</i> witness	Mark xiv. 56.
Saint: <i>Fearless</i> witness	Acts xxvi. 22.
Saviour: <i>Faithful</i> Witness	Rev. i. 5.
	W.T.R.

THE FAITH AND THE FLOCK

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EDITORIALS.

“**THEY** will reverence MY SON” (Matt. xxi. 37).

The foregoing utterance occurs in the parable of the husbandmen. A certain householder had planted a vineyard, and let it out to husbandmen. At the season of the year he sent to obtain the fruit, but his servants were beaten, killed, and otherwise ill-treated. This was repeated and the same thing happened. The lord of the vineyard yet manifests confidence, and wishing to appeal to the best in these men, who have acted the part of enemies, he sends his son, saying, “They will reverence my son.”

Here we have an exhibition and a lesson. An exhibition of God’s method of treatment, and the way in which He deals with men—and a lesson as to how we should deal with one another. We are too often suspicious and ready not always to put the best construction upon things. We are prone to interpret an unkind act as a sign of inveterate hostility, and immediately declare war. We take people at their worst instead of estimating them at their best. All this, alas! betrays evil in ourselves. In the parable referred to we have God—for it is really a picture God draws of Himself—acting in quite a different way to this. After repeated acts of hostility, and the worst possible behaviour, the lord of the vineyard would take his rebel servants at their best—he will do his utmost to discover good in them—he will at all cost make his strongest appeal to their better instincts—“They will reverence my son.”

Is not this ever God’s way with men? Is it usually our way with our fellow men? Surely after injury and even death had

been inflicted upon his servants the lord of the vineyard need not have done any more ; his case was sufficiently strong against the husbandmen. But no. "They will reverence my son." He will not yet permit himself to think otherwise. Terrible indeed was it that such purity of motive and infinite graciousness brought no response. Nevertheless, if the men could have been won that act would have done it.

What greater proof of God's goodness could there be than that in the face of such deadly opposition and desperate wrong-doing He can act as thus described ? "They will reverence my son." "They will *reverence*." As if any *reverence* remained after such conduct. Yet it was still looked for. There was the supreme effort to try and awaken it. And surely the lesson for us is to do the same.

The other day in Paris a man who had been a socialist and anarchist related his conversion. One day a friend of his came to him in difficulty. He wanted a sum of money to enable his daughter to enter upon a certain course of study. The anarchist after attempting in vain to obtain a loan from several acquaintances suggested to his friend trying the Protestant Pastor. "I could not," said the other, "my wife, not long ago, openly insulted him in the street." "Well," said the anarchist ironically, "that is just the reason you should ask, because they believe in forgiving others. I will write to him for you." He did so, and, then, never thinking for an instant that the pastor could forgive the insult, sat down to prepare an article for the socialist newspaper crying down the Protestants, who preached what they did not practise, and insulting this particular pastor by all kinds of abuse. However, in a day or two, the daughter of his friend wrote saying she had received more than enough money for her requirements from this very man. The anarchist was so impressed, that he was led to a closer examination of Christianity. In due time this ended in his conversion ; and he now preaches the faith which once he destroyed.

"They will reverence My Son." God opens His heart in order to win a response from man's. And He never imputes evil until absolutely obliged. "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 exposition of Hebrews will be continued (D.V.) next month, when we hope to consider Chapter xi.

AN OUTLINE OF "THE REVELATION."

(See Chart issued with the February Number.)

SEVENTH SECTION. CHAPTERS XI. 19—XIV.

By WALTER SCOTT.

THE contents of this wonderful book are divided into two parts. The *first* part brings us down to the judgment of the dead (xi. 18), that great and solemn fact forms the link between time and eternity. The *second* part begins with Israel (xi. 19) and closes with an awful sight—the lake of fire! the eternal place of punishment to the Devil, his spiritual associates in evil, and the unsaved of the human race (xxi. 8). The Church in governmental splendour (xxi. 9—xxii. 5) has its historical place in Chap. xx. 4, 6. Chapter xii. should commence with verse 19 of the previous chapter. This section pre-eminently concerns Israel. She is on the earth, but the signs relating to her are seen in heaven. Read "sign" not "wonder" in verses 1, 3. Chapter xii. is one of "great" subjects, the adjective is used six times. Heaven is the source of the great events on earth in the prophetic crisis nigh at hand.

The first sign beheld by the Seer is a Woman invested with the fulness of governmental authority on earth. Without doubt this is Israel in millennial days (Gen. xxxvii. 9). Israel is here presented as a woman, a queen, and a mother. There are four representative women mentioned in the Apocalypse: Jezebel (ii. 20), the *papal* system; woman clothed with the sun (xii. 1), *Israel* in millennial splendour; the great whore (xvii. 1), the corrupt, loathsome, and apostate *Christian profession*; the bride and wife of the Lamb (xix), the *Church*. The "Man Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron" (see Ps. ii) is **Christ**. Israel then is the mother of the Child of Might. It is absurd to suppose the Church as the mother of the Lord according to the flesh. Why the Church had no existence till the Lord's ascension and the descent of the Holy Ghost. Israel was the mother of the Man Child (Isa. ix. 6; Rom. ix. 5; Isa. vii. 14, with Matt. i. 21-23). Israel the mother, and the Church the bride of the Lord. The controversy of centuries would never have arisen as to the mother of the Child, had two facts been fully admitted: first that the Man Child is Christ personally, second that the Church dates her existence, not from or before the birth of Christ, but from His ascension, thirty-three years afterwards.

Next, we have presented the "great red dragon" with seven heads and ten horns. The *heads* are crowned. In Chapter xiii. the *horns* of the beast are crowned; the heads of the one, the horns of the other. Satan is the dragon who through Herod sought the death of the Man Child, but was foiled in his murderous attempt (Matt. ii.).

Observe the double parenthesis in our chapter: first between the birth and ascension of Christ (verse 5). Between these two events related in the passage before us, the life and ministry of our Lord comes in, which is the subject of the gospels; second, between the rapture of the Man Child and the woman's (Israel) flight into the wilderness, the whole history of Christianity comes in parenthetically—a period covered by the Epistles. The woman's flight is yet future, and has its start in the middle of Daniel's prophetic week of seven years. The reason why Christ is brought into this chapter is to connect Him with Israel.

Why Israel has to flee is told us from verses 7-13. There is war in heaven. The contending hosts are angels. Michael is the leader on the one hand; the Devil the commander on the other. The latter is defeated and is cast down from heaven to earth, and his militant host with him. The war takes place during the first half of the closing week (seven years) of prophecy. Satan never regains his old place in the heavens, never again shall he accuse the saints there. As cast down he turns his rage against Israel, or at least Judah, then standing as a witness for God. He seeks to destroy the woman who is providentially delivered from his purposed cruelty (verse 16). The Man Child was preserved (Matt. ii.), so now the mother. How wonderful are the ways of God!

The next chapter (xiii.) presents to our view the two chief ministers of Satan's activity on earth. The two beasts are two men—apostates from God and truth. The first beast is a Gentile (verses 1-10); the second beast is a Jew (verses. 11-18). Rome is the capital seat of the first beast. Jerusalem is the centre of the operations of the second beast. Brute force characterises the first, religious influence, Satanically inspired, marks the career of the second beast. The first beast is without doubt the revived power of Rome distributed into ten kingdoms, and headed by that great apostate and blasphemer—the little horn of Dan. vii. The second beast is the Antichrist, or man of sin. The two co-operate and through them Satan seeks to work out his plans and purposes. The

two associates in evil are associated in one common doom. Both are cast alive into the lake of fire (xix. 20). The second beast first acts in Jerusalem, then in the wider sphere of Christendom.

Now that we have had the sources of good and evil (Chapter xii.), the human instruments (xiii.), we witness the final results in a seven-fold series of events (xiv.). These are as follows :—

(1) An hundred and forty-four thousand of Jews standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion. It is an anticipative millennial scene of great beauty. This numbered company must not be confounded with that of Chapter vii. The former is of Jews who have emerged out of the great tribulation ; the latter is of all Israel. The two companies are distinct (verses 1-5).

(2) The preaching of the everlasting Gospel. This second event in the chapter commences the chronological order of subjects. The Gospel of God's grace to a ruined world as proclaimed now, the Gospel of the kingdom preached after the removal of the Church must both be distinguished from the everlasting Gospel. The Creator and not the creature is the alone object of worship, and that is the great and fundamental truth insisted upon here (verses 6, 7).

(3) The fall of Babylon is next announced. The false, corrupt, apostate Church—the consolidated religious system of the future is the next link in the chain of events. But while briefly and tersely announced as "fallen," it yet occupies a large portion of prophetic teaching, even more than that devoted to the beast (see Chaps. xvi., xvii., xviii., xix)—these portions give details of Babylon's character, doings, and doom. Here the simple fact of her fall is alone noted (verse 8).

(4) The worshippers of the beast and their awful doom. Babylon having been destroyed the beast enters on a brief career of wickedness and impiety. It knows no check. The beast is universally worshipped, but here we have the doom of those who do so. Verses 10, 11 are unequalled in the Word of God for horror (verses 9-12).

(5) The blessedness of the *then* righteous dead is announced. They are just about to enter on their eternal scene of undying happiness. They will not have long to wait. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from *henceforth*," *i.e.*, from the time contemplated in the passage, just on the eve of the Lord's assumption of the kingdom (verse 13).

(6) The two closing stages in the history of this age are the harvest and the vintage. The former is first presented to view. The harvest of the earth is to be reaped. The separation of the vile

from the precious, of the wicked from among the just is intimated in the harvest—a discriminating judgment (see also Matt. xiii. 49). This judgment is executed by the Son of Man, His instruments the angels (verses 14-16).

(7) The final scene is an awful one—judgment pure and simple. It is the time of Isa. lxiii., when the Lord treads the wine press alone—blood upon His garments and vesture, and vengeance in His heart. The carnage is so awful, the slaughter so immense that blood is said to reach to the bridles of the horses, and flows for about 200 miles. In Palestine and its vicinity will be witnessed the awful spectacle of apostate Jews and apostate Gentiles—Judaism and Christendom exposed to the utmost fury of an angry God. These events are nigh at hand.

“ He led them on safely.”—Psalm cvii. 7.

“ The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek Him.”—
Ezra viii. 22.

“ So He bringeth them unto their desired haven.”—Psalm cvii. 30.

How does He lead them ? This they cannot tell,
They only know “ He doeth all things well ” ;
Through fire and water, some—where floods do meet—
O'er briars and thorns, with torn and bleeding feet,
Where tempests rage, and storms break overhead,
And clouds portentous all around are spread ;
But still He leads them, rough or smooth the way,
And all “ His paths are peace ” and lead to day.

And some, where springs abound, and pastures sweet,
Go singing all the way with gladsome feet,
And some He leadeth gently all the way,
Guiding the wandering steps that fain would stray ;
With faith so weak, that will not see Him near,
But still He holds them, dark or bright the day,
Who “ Follow on to know,” He shows the way.

How does He draw them ? Some by cords of love,
That sweetest cord, to lift the soul above ;
But not all thus—(so wisely doth He lead,
Love would not always answer to their need),
And so by other cords—pain, fear, unrest,
But always just the one most fit and best,
And thus He draws them from themselves and sin
Until they find their perfect rest in Him.

How does He keep them ? This is theirs alone
To whom “ The secret of the Lord ” is known ;
In “ perfect peace,” though outward foes prevail,
They stand upon a Rock none dare assail ;
They rest in Him, their Comforter and Stay,
And so He keeps them till, their journey o'er,
They enter in where they go out no more.

LAURA HARLEY.

LOVE WAXING COLD.

W. T. R.

SURELY no one calling himself a child of God, and who is "a discerner of the signs of the times," can deny the fact that we are in "the last days." For "the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons." Alas! there are many who are no longer contending for "the faith once delivered to the saints," but are being "carried about by every wind of doctrine." And not only so, but how true is the word, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Matt. xxiv. 12). We would, therefore, in all humility and meekness, "put the brethren in remembrance of these things," and so strive to be good ministers of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine" (1 Tim. iv. 6).

A rousing word was addressed to a company of open-air workers in North London recently by one who lamented the dearth of conversions in this our day, the increasing indifference among Christians to the claims of the perishing around them, and the sad, sad picture of so many, who at one time did run well, being ensnared on every hand by the wiles and devices of the devil. "Brethren," said he, "there is a cause for all this. The fault is not with God. It is summed up in one word—worldliness." Alas! it is too true. A beloved brother who has been labouring in the mission field for some years, and who was recently home for recuperation, in conversation with the writer, sadly deplored the fact that worldliness was increasing to an alarming extent among God's dear children in the home country—that the houses of some well-known and much-respected servants of Christ in this land were "like little palaces." Is this imitating the example of our beloved Master, Who had "not where to lay His head"?

It was said of one eminent servant of Christ the other day, "He has much to commend him, is a sound teacher, and knows the scriptures well, but the fact that he indulges in the pipe, and smokes even in the presence of those who visit him, greatly mars his testimony." Does not the scripture still apply that our "body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" Shame on us that they should be

defiled in this way ! What have we come to when we have to mention the solemn fact that brethren who exercise oversight in Christian assemblies are addicted to the habit of smoking, snuffing, and drinking ! The testimony of one leader of my acquaintance was unappreciated because of the fact that he had his "beer" along with the others in the workshop ; and although at one time he saw the folly of using tobacco, and gave it up, he subsequently renewed the habit, and so his "light" was more dimmed than before.

One brother I know often bemoaned the fact of his children remaining unconverted. I confess I wonder not, for there is a great deal of self indulgence in his home, such as smoking, etc. And alas ! younger Christians adopt these habits because they argue that men who have been believers for years, have studied their bibles, and are able to preach and teach, feel not self-condemned, so "it is safe to follow *them*." Thus the elders become the young Christians' Bible. We are living in "perilous times." The night is fast closing in around us. Shall we not "walk as children of the day ?" Are we not commanded to "love *not* the world, neither the things that are in the world." How can parents expect their children to be converted when they (the latter) come home and tell us, "——is a fine Sunday school teacher, I must say ; I've just seen him smoking." And it is a lamentable fact that when such things are mentioned to these guilty brethren, they look upon it so lightly, some even making the remark, "We are not under law, but under grace ; we ought to have perfect liberty in these matters" ; and so on !

With regard to places of amusement—innocently, so-called—one will say, "Well, I can go there, and take the Master with me." But is this to be the way of the servant ? Is it for the servant to dictate to the Master ? In the matter of earthly things the Master chooses and dictates—the servant obeys. And, were the blessed Lord in our midst to-day, would we dare to say *He* would go to the theatre, or the concert room, or the sentimental song party, and ask His servants to accompany Him ? Not while souls by the thousand are perishing around us ! Is not this "sporting on the brink of everlasting woe ?" with those who are "bound by Satan's captive chains ?" How can we enjoy, much less sing, the songs of the world, and say with the Psalmist, "I will bless the Lord at *all* times ; *His* praise shall *continually* be in my mouth."

More than one young man of my acquaintance has been led away by the evening party—just a “social evening” on a humble scale. The taste has gradually been acquired for those things that ought to be *distasteful* to every child of God; and alas! there is now no sign of spiritual life remaining. What a hindrance this is to the spread of the Gospel! How the world sneers at those who seek to “go by the Book!” O that we might humble ourselves before God, and seek the needed grace to walk worthy of Him in the brief space we have before the welcome shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God sounds forth, and we are “caught up to be for ever with the Lord.”

But there is another aspect to be considered in connection with this matter. We are exhorted, as believers, not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God. I’m afraid this is done many times in our meetings. We seek to please men, and not to *displease*—we are afraid of wounding the feelings of our brethren. Consequently, the mouths of many of God’s dear children are closed at our meetings because remarks which ought to be made respecting these “lusts of the flesh,” already mentioned, are kept back for fear of giving offence to those who are addicted to them. Yet we are commanded to “exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching.” Oh, to be possessed of the courage of Paul, and to “speak the truth with boldness;” that we may “warn them that are unruly.” “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Who is in heaven.” It is because I feel “necessity is laid upon me” that I would obey the injunction of the prophet, “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression” (Is. lviii. 1).

“Suffering is the family badge, and those who are nearest and dearest to the Saviour have most of it. There is only one instance of the Lord’s *special* love to a family recorded in the New Testament, and that instance is associated with a *special* trial. ‘Now, Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.’ Yet, in the very next verse, as if it were the *design* of the Holy Spirit to present, in one view, this union of chastisement and love to our notice, it is written: ‘When he had heard therefore that he (Lazarus) was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.’ ”

UNEXPECTED COMPANY.

JOHN iv. 28, 29.

She has left her water-pot,
 Blessèd carelessness !
 Earthly things she heedeth not,
 Anxious to confess
 To her fellow-citizens
 Christ the Lord has come,
 He has sought and quickly found
 In her heart a home.

Living water she has got,
 Fresh and pure and sweet,
 She can leave earth's water-pot
 At her Saviour's feet.
 She has given Him a feast,
 He had hungered sore,
 He in sweetest grace has supped
 With a sinner poor.

"Come and see a man," she cries,
 "Down by Jacob's well,
 All my life, to my surprise,
 He to me can tell.
 Is not this indeed the Christ ?
 Come with me and see ;
 All my heart goes out to Him,
For He loveth me."

"Me, a sinner, poor and vile,
 Yet with soul athirst
 For a kindly look or smile ;
 And He asked me first
 For a drink, and oh, His words
 Were so passing sweet,
 I have left my water-pot
At Messiah's feet."

"He has satisfied my heart,
 Met its every need,
 Satan's chains are wrenched apart.
 And my soul is freed."
 Thus she spreads His fame abroad,
 Telling all around
 Of the new and Living Well
 She herself has found.

Reader, have you found the Christ,
 Companied with Him ?
 Has He all your heart sufficed
 Filled it to the brim ?
 Then go, leave earth's water-pot,
 Tell to all around
 What a precious Saviour-Friend
 You yourself have found.

Some will listen, and will seek
 Him of whom you tell,
 And when once they hear Him speak
 They will love Him well.
 He is thirsting still for souls
 While they thirst for Him,
 He alone can satisfy
 Fill them to the brim.

ANNA WOODCOCK.

THE TABERNACLE (*continued*).

SOME OF ITS TEACHINGS AND LESSONS.

THE CURTAINS AND COVERINGS.

OVER the solid Tabernacle boards were spread two separate sets of curtains ; then over these were laid two separate coverings. We shall now briefly examine these curtains and coverings, and hear their story of Christ. We do so in the light of Exod. xxvi. 1-14 ; xxxvi. 8-19.

Let not the reader suppose that the latter scripture is a mere verbal repetition of the former. God never repeats Himself. Chap. xxvi. records the Divine directions even to minute detail in the making of these textile fabrics, while Chap. xxxvi. is a witness to the obedience of the people in carrying out the Divine commands.

The curtains and coverings while differing in numerous respects, are each respectively a teacher, or at least an object lesson not only to Israel but to the Church in all ages—pointing to **Christ** in His Person, life, and varied glories. The curtains are fully described ; the coverings and all we know of them briefly named in but one verse. The first or innermost set of curtains is termed *one* Tabernacle ; the second set is spoken of as *one* Tent.

1. The exquisitely beautiful embroidered tapestry curtains were made of " fine twined linen." The pure and white linen formed the ground-work on which the three colours—blue, purple, and scarlet—were displayed, and on which the Cherubim were skilfully wrought (Exod. xxvi. 1). All were designed by God. The highest workmanship and divinely directed intelligence of the " wise-hearted " men and women of Israel were employed in the production of those curtains. The colours and hieroglyphic figures of the Cherubim were wrought into the very texture of the linen.

The offerings of those godly women, and their exquisite needle-work, were second to none. Little did they think that they were contributing in their intelligence and love to publish the wonderful story of Christ to future generations ! Those beautiful curtains formed the roof of God's dwelling-place, the floor was the desert, and the sides of purest gold. The roof was a mass of colour and beauty alone to be seen by the adoring worshippers *within*. The goats' hair* curtains were placed over the beautiful tapestry completely covering them up from the view of an outsider.

* *Hair* is in italics and is wrongly inserted in the text—the material is not specified.

The linen speaks of the personal purity of Christ. The colours, too, publish the wondrous story—ever new and never old—of Him who came from heaven (the blue), His sufferings and death (the purple), and His future glory when He assumes the government of the world (the scarlet). But what about the Cherubim so skilfully wrought into the texture of the linen? These set forth the judicial authority of our Lord—an inseparable glory attaching to His Person as such (John v. 22, 27). There were ten curtains in all, each twenty-eight cubits (42 feet) in length, and four cubits (6 feet) in breadth. Five of these were joined together—breadth to breadth. The other five were similarly arranged. But now how were the two sets of curtains coupled together? There were 50 taches of blue in the selvedge of the one, and 50 taches also of blue in the selvedge of the other, a 100 in all. These loops took “hold one of another.” In addition to these, 50 taches of gold firmly secured the two sets of curtains. The loops of blue would surely remind us of the heavenly One in Whom and by Whom (John iii. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 48) are united the respective glories foretold in these exquisitely beautiful curtains, while the clasps of gold would as certainly teach that Divine righteousness maintained all inviolate in the Person of our Adorable Lord. The curtains in their beauty, and exhibiting the glories of God’s beloved Son, could alone be seen and known by the worshippers *inside*. As priests we enter and, as the beauties of the Lord are displayed to the rapt gaze of the worshippers, heaven hears a song it never heard before.

The curtains were stretched lengthways across the breadth of the Tabernacle—that is from north to south—forming its roof and resting on the gold covered boards. The back or west end, 10 cubits (15 feet), was completely covered by the curtains. The sides, however, were not fully covered, there being one cubit on either side of the boards exposed to view. The goats’ hair curtains, however, being two cubits longer, not only entirely covered the embroidered curtains, but also the exposed part of the boards on the sides.

An important point to note is that the dividing veil in the Tabernacle was hung beneath the gold taches or clasps (Exod. xxvi. 33). Thus we fix with precision and certainty the size respectively of the Holy Place, the scene of *daily* priestly ministrations, and of the Most Holy, the place of *yearly* high priestly service. The Holy Place was 20 cubits long and 10 cubits broad. The Holiest

was a square apartment of 10 cubits by 10. But this small apartment of 15 feet square was the dwelling place of Jehovah—the God of Israel—and the most sacred spot on the face of the earth.

What is the symbolical meaning of the measurements of the curtains—"four" and "twenty-eight," for the separate width of each curtain was *four* cubits, and the length of each *twenty-eight* cubits? The "four" is that numeral which speaks of the world, of the race at large (Rev. vii. 9; Ezek. i. 5, 6, 8, 10), and embodies the truth of John iv. 42—**The Saviour of the world**. The four cubits of fine **twined* linen sets forth the complex yet harmonious *life* of the Holy and Righteous One towards the world, as the four square brazen altar tells of His *death* for the world. Both have a universal bearing. The 28 cubits in length of curtain give the moral value of four sevens. Seven is the ruling number in the Apocalypse and points to what is *morally complete* or *perfect*. Combine, therefore, the value of these numerals as witnessed in the righteous and perfect life of the blessed Lord. The binding, clasping, and uniting together of this wonderful story of Christ in one, is signified in the text of Exod. xxvi. 6, R.V., "And the Tabernacle shall be *one*."

2. The goats' hair curtains had their own special significance, while lacking in the beauty of those already described. The former, *i.e.*, the goats' hair, were not only larger in length by two cubits, but had also an extra curtain in addition. There were *ten* curtains, each of twenty-eight cubits in length, of embroidered needle work. There were *eleven* curtains of goats' hair each thirty cubits long (Exod. xxvi. 7-13; xxxvi. 14-18). The breadth of the linen and goats' hair curtains was the same, namely, four cubits. But why the additional goats' hair curtain? It was required for the front or east end of the Tabernacle, and was doubled up in the form of a pouch or bag (xxvi. 9)—"shalt *double* the sixth curtain in the fore-front of the Tabernacle." It is the same word used in the making and arrangement of the breast plate borne on the heart of the high priest in the Divine presence, "four-square it shall be, being *doubled*" (Exod. xxviii. 16). The breadth of the extra curtain being four cubits, and doubled would hang over the front two cubits length, thus covering the gold hooks, and gold fillets or connecting rods between the pillars, also the gold chapters or ornamental parts of the pillars. Two cubits of goats' hair were always

* *Twined* linen. Thought, word, and act, facts and principles were harmoniously brought into His wondrous life—no sameness.

seen by those in the court, no other curtain or covering was allowed to hang down in the front. Those *inside* could alone witness the beauties of the embroidered curtains in their wondrous story of Christ, from before His Incarnation, on and on in His rugged path of separation from evil and absolute devotedness to God, till the reins of universal government are grasped, and Christ reigns King over all the earth. What a tale these curtains unfold! Completely covered over by the goats' hair from outside observation, you must get inside and look up at the curtained roof if you want to see Christ in His varied beauties and moral excellencies. But why are these two cubits of goats' hair exposed to the view of all assembled in the court? Because there ever is and ever shall be the witness to all of God's condemnation of sin, and of absolute separation from it by Christ, to whom these curtains point. The goat, as we know, was preeminently the sin offering (Lev. xvi. 5, 10). Goats and sheep are sharply contrasted (Matt. xxv. 32), the wicked are denoted by the former, the righteous by the latter.

We understand, therefore, these goats' hair curtains to point to Christ in His prophetic ministry here on earth exercised in absolute separation from evil. There was no beauty in the goats' hair, the exterior was rough and possessing neither comeliness nor aught of beauty. It is that aspect of Christ which first presents itself to the natural mind and eye—"no beauty that we should desire Him."

The eleven curtains were divided into five and six. The five were coupled by themselves. The six were similarly arranged. Then the two sets were coupled together by 100 loops, of what colour we are not told, and by 50 taches of brass. There were 50 loops in the one set of five curtains, and 50 loops in the set of six curtains, then the taches or clasps were inserted in the loops and securely bound all together in one compact unity—*one* tent (xxvi. 11). The *brass* taches must have been placed exactly over the *gold* taches, and these again over where the veil was hung. Righteousness without (the brass) and within (the gold), resting on the veil which is Christ, is a lesson well worth pondering over. Righteousness is the basis of God's dealings with the world, and the ground as well of glory displayed in His own presence and to His own. The goats' hair curtains *seen* by all in the court refer to the condemnation of sin in the life of our Lord. The sockets of brass *unseen* by those in

the court point to Christ bearing sin in His own body. Both in the Incarnation and Death of our Lord we witness the condemnation of sin, and both are found together in Rom. viii. 3.

One Tabernacle (Exod. xxvi. 6) is expressed in the first set of curtains. *One* Tent is taught in the second set of curtains (verse 11). There are many and varied glories, offices, and dignities, but they all centre in *One*. There is but one and only *One* competent to fill these offices, wear these dignities, and bear these glories.

3. The two coverings were placed over the Tent ; the goats' hair curtains over those termed "the Tabernacle." The coverings are briefly described (Exod. xxvi. 14 ; xxxvi. 19). Neither are measured.

The first covering was of rams' skins dyed red. The ram was the consecration—sacrificial animal (Lev. viii. 22-29). The skins dyed red would express the truth of death (Heb. ix. 22). This covering, therefore, brings before us Christ in His absolute devotedness to God even unto death.

4. Over the rams' skins was placed a covering of badgers' or seal skins. This latter was put over all as a protection. This outward covering was impervious to weather and climatic change. What is meant by it ? The power of the Lord in repelling evil, and in guarding and protecting Himself in His life and ministry from evil seems the thought in this covering. It not only hid, but effectually protected and guarded all beneath. "I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." We may remark that in Num. iv. 25 the two sets of curtains and the two coverings are each separately named. But all speak of Christ ; they utter but *one* name—the sweetest ever spoken by human lips—the name **Jesus**.

(To be continued, D.V.).

WALTER SCOTT.

"The great thing is to know, by God's teaching, what God is occupied with. Suppose David had gone and put the ark into the tabernacle after Ichabod had been written upon it, it would not have been piety, however it might have been thought so ; to do so would have been like going back and saying, 'It is not Ichabod.' God was going to supplant the tabernacle and set up the temple. The ark had been carried into captivity, and God had let it go."

COPY OF AN INTERESTING LETTER.

MY DEAR ———,

“ I did think I had some knowledge of God and His salvation in Christ Jesus, that I knew some little of the way of salvation. I am learning day by day how small the knowledge I had was, and how dim and indistinct was the little knowledge I did possess. The tracts you gave me have, by their Scriptural teaching, not only taught me to know this ; they have done more. They have cleared away the mists that intercepted a clear view of the work of Jesus Christ for me. Ever since I had a concern for my soul’s salvation, I received the truth that by the merit of Christ only could I obtain that salvation, but mixed up with that belief was a feeling that *I must do something* to merit His merit. That I must be in a certain state of spiritual life before I could obtain the merit and fruit of His work. In fact, that I must *have life before I could obtain life*. Now, in the clear light of God’s word, how different the way of salvation proves to be ! Believing on Him I have life, full, perfect, eternal life : life not dependent in any way upon my feelings towards Him, but consequent upon His death, resurrection and ascension—*His love for me*, that love, like Himself, immutable. Oh ! how vastly different the security of these two. I weak, wavering, “unstable as water,” He without variableness or shadow of turning, who having loved loves unto the end ; I easily enticed by evil habits and the world, too ready to yield up eternal joys for the pleasures that last but for a season, whilst from His love nothing is able to separate me. How comforting, how sustaining, how glorious to know my *life* is hid with Christ in God. And now how different the motive of obedience, once from fear, now from love, once to merit His favour, now because I have His favour—His heart—in all its love, that love to me not as a sinner now, but as to His child, yea, the same that He has to His own Son. May the Holy Spirit enable me in my daily walk to show the glory wherein I now stand in Christ Jesus. By ever looking unto Him, His finished work and glory, having my heart towards Him, I shall receive and reflect His glory.”

Rejoicing in Him, believe me,

Faithfully yours,
—————

MY THREE-FOLD LESSON.

By J. T. A.

“Always abounding in the work of the Lord.”

No. 1.

HAVING been requested over and over, by several of my Christian friends to print this very remarkable three-fold experience, and believing that the Lord will bless it to the edification of both readers and hearers, I am sending it forth for His glory. After my conversion to **the Truth** in January, 1893, I sought to avoid, as far as possible, preaching the gospel of a full, free, and a present salvation to Roman Catholics, from the conviction that they did not wish to hear any doctrine (which did not agree with what they are taught) from such as they think to be heretics. But God's love for the souls of those whom I was thus ignorantly avoiding, was made to overrule my will, for their good and for mine likewise, as the reader will find; and the evidences of His leading in the experiences herein recorded, ought to be sufficient to silence all objections to the preaching of a full salvation through **One Name** only. The first incident happened as follows:—

In walking through the parish of D—— on my way to do some professional work at the Hotel F—— I met two soldiers of the L—— Regiment who were stationed at P——, and my mind immediately suggested a word of testimony, and a Gospel tract, of which I had a good supply; but as I neared them that good intention was displaced by the remembrance that about 80 or 90 per cent. of that regiment were Roman Catholics, and so I passed them with only a “good morning.” About an hour later, whilst engaged in my work at the Hotel F——, I was drawn into a very interesting conversation with one of the boarders, whom I found to be a true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. I asked him if he believed that a man could be “saved” right here in this world, and “know” it. He replied, “Certainly, why the Scriptures are full of it.” Our mutual quotations from the Word of God on this **assurance** called up a very emphatic inquiry from another boarder, who had been listening to our conversation. “What do you mean by being saved?” he asked. I replied—“the same as the Lord means, when He says, ‘He that **hath** the Son

hath life ' ; and praise His Name I have Him." He then inquired, " Don't you think that it is great presumption for you to say that you are **saved**, when you sin every day ? " I replied, " If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." Just here, he stopped me with " I don't want any scripture, I want you to answer me in your own words." I said, " I cannot do that, I must answer you in God's Word " ; and I finished the quotation from 1 John i. 8, 10. The conversation was carried on at some length, he objecting to all scripture quotations, and I using them freely, and the gospel of God's grace was clearly preached to him, and also to another gentleman who had been standing by manifesting his approval of the objections taken by the other. On these two leaving the room in answer to the call to dinner, one of them said, " Oh there's a lot of you people who say that you are **saved** : but it is not so." I answered, " That's true, sir, there are lots of counterfeits, but praise God, there are lots of realities too." As soon as they had left the room, the young man to whom I first spoke, and who had been a silent listener, fairly danced in his joy over the turn the conversation had taken. He exclaimed, " O I am so glad of this testimony. O I am so glad that you used God's word, and not your own words. Do you know to whom you have been preaching ? " I said, " No." He said, " You have been preaching to a Roman Catholic priest, and a Roman Catholic bishop ! " My surprise can be better imagined than described, when my former attitude is considered, and I informed the young man of my objections, and also of my refusal to address the Roman Catholic soldiers that I had met on the road about two hours before. I was fully convinced that the Lord had in this matter rebuked me, made me deliver His message, and taught me a lesson that I can never forget, and its most impressive mark is found in the fact that these two men were the very leaders of the soldiers in religious matters.

Now for incident number two, which occurred this same month. From my youth up I had known an R.C. man whose zeal for his religion amounted to something akin to fanaticism, for he would fight for it, if needs be ; and it was such principles as he possessed that had great weight with me in my decision to leave them alone ; and, certainly, I would never have chosen him to begin with, even had I changed my attitude, for he was so bound up in his religion that I could not otherwise than consider it to be a hopeless effort ;

but our thoughts are not God's thoughts, neither are our ways His ways, for He brought me into an interview with this very man in an astonishing manner. Here it is : On retiring to my bed one rainy night in this same month, I soon fell asleep, and in a dream I was brought face to face with this man, and I was shown that he was ill unto death. I inquired of him as to his hopes of salvation. He replied, " My priest tells me that away down in Rome there is something that I must depend on for salvation—but it is all buried up in the earth excepting the cross which was left above the ground." This answer of his was so delusive that I shouted out in my sleep, " There is **none other Name** given under heaven among men whereby we **must be saved** but the Name of Jesus " (see Acts iv. 10-12). This shout awoke my wife, and she aroused me, and I awoke trembling from head to foot. I told her of what I had just experienced in my sleep, and that I also was firmly impressed to get up and go to that man right away in the dead hours of the night. His residence was over two miles from mine, and I must cross the water likewise. I hurried on my clothes, and rushed to the boat, which was nearly full of rain water, which I only partially emptied it of, as my anxiety would not permit me to waste any time ; so I took the oars, and with my feet in the water that remained in her, I pulled with all speed for the opposite shore ; but I could not get the boat to go to the landing which I had decided on, for it resisted every effort, even to the pulling hard on one oar, so I was forced to let it have its own way, and it brought me to a snug landing some hundred yards further up in the direction of the house where I was bound, and so I was landed in a place which I had not chosen, but it was afterwards found to be just the right place for me at that time. I got ashore, and ran the long distance to the house, as I was impressed that there was no time to be lost. I arrived somewhat out of breath, and the first thing that I heard, even before I knocked, was the loud groaning of the afflicted man. My knock at such an hour of the night, and my presence from such a distance, were a surprise to the one who opened the door. My request to speak to the sick man was met at first with a little objection, but eventually I gained access to the chamber of him whose condition was in every respect exactly as shown in my dream. We had a very solemn, affecting meeting in that chamber in the dead hours of the night. The message of salvation was delivered in the very words that were presented to me in my dream. It was the Holy Spirit's proclamation of **none other Name**, and it demolished

the whole fabric which had been built with the name of Mary and the Saints, and left **Jesus only** for him to lean upon for salvation.

After explaining to his family the wonderful way that I was notified of his sickness, and sent to him, I returned to the boat with a feeling of having been delivered from a great burden, and joy put in its place. I reached it exactly at sunrise, and as I pulled out of the cosy nook into which it took me, I, on getting some distance out into the open water could look right into the cove that I had sought to enter, but failed, and I saw some persons moving about that very spot, and I was impressed that the reason of all this was I was to be seen by no one but those to whom I was sent, which would not have been the case had I had my way about the landing. In exactly one week from this event this man passed away, and my inquiry of one of his family as to how he died, did not obtain the response that I was seeking. Hence I was somewhat tried, for at times I would have a mind that he was saved, and then at other times I would get occupied about the seeming absence of any death-bed testimony from him. I was in this suspense for about five years, at which time I was led to preach the same glorious truth to an R.C. doctor of medicine, and in the midst of my conversation, to which he was giving the best attention, he exclaimed, "Yes, yes, it is true what you say. We must confess to God, He alone can forgive sins. Look here, I was at the death-bed of P. C., and when the priest came to him, he refused to accept the usual rites, saying, 'I don't need to confess to you, I have confessed to God.'" This information surprised me, and I said, "Doctor, you have lifted my soul up about ten degrees higher by that information, for I have been waiting for about five years to find out whether a message from God that I carried to him on his death-bed had been received fully, and now I know that he did receive it, for he never would have thrown overboard all that he had been holding to with so much zeal all his lifetime, and that, too, at a time when, if it was right, he needed it most, if he had not received something far, far better."

Now for incident number three. In the same month aforementioned I called by request at the residence of an R.C. priest to do some work in my professional line. He was not at home when I called, but as the house was open I entered and began work. There were several soldiers of the L—— Regiment in the yard waiting for his return. The room in which I was working was screened off in two sections, and behind this screen there was all the paraphernalia

of a confessional. I had not been long at work before I heard a most pitiful, heartbroken cry to the Lord for mercy from behind this screen. This cry was repeated, and I got so deeply exercised about it that I was trying to decide in my mind whether I would be justified in going in to the sorrowing one, but before I could decide, the priest came into the house. There was silence behind the screen as he entered, but he had not been conversing with me many moments before that cry was again uttered, at which the priest made a step towards the screen and opened it with a "Hallo, what's the matter in here?" The poor fellow cried out, "O, Father, I want Jesus." The priest replied, "My dear man, your nerves are unstrung." The man answered, "No, Father; my nerves are as strong as any man's, but O, I want Jesus," and he wept much. The priest then said, "I must certainly see the head surgeon and have you taken to the hospital," and then he called the soldiers who were in the yard to take him away, and they led him off. Here I was brought face to face with the absolute insufficiency of such a ministry to meet a case of deep soul need. Just fancy; sending this poor man to the hospital to get the help which he, as a spiritual adviser, should have been able to give. I hurried through my work to get after that poor fellow, whom I found was Sergt. M—— of the L—— Regiment, who had just been cleared from a trial for manslaughter for accidentally being the cause of his wife's death. The Lord's message that I gave him will, I trust, cause him to cease from man, and look direct to the Lord Who alone can save. Thus I have given the substance, in part, of this wonderful three-fold experience, and I earnestly pray that the Lord will use it to encourage His servants.

REDEMPTION.

"Redeemed with the precious blood of Christ."

GEORGE HUCKLESBY.

REDEMPTION is God's great remedy to recover and to restore that which had been lost through sin. It is the glorious result of a Ransom having been found and paid. The idea of redemption runs from the very threshold of the Bible in Genesis, to the topmost stone of the edifice in Revelation. Upon the ground of the redemptive work of Christ God will more than recover that which has been lost through sin. Believers are to be conformed to the image of

God's Son ; the earth is to be filled with the glory of God, and man's right and sovereignty over the earth will be re-established in the Person of Christ. Redemption means " to buy back something that had been sold." It implies previous possession. It speaks of a state of bondage, a price paid down to deliver from that state, and liberty as the result. Thus it includes *purchase*, but it goes beyond it. (Compare 2 Pet. ii. 1, and Rev. v. 9). We have it typified in Israel's bondage in Egypt, from which they were redeemed by the blood of the lamb, and the result was a complete emancipation from Pharaoh's thralldom, which drew forth their shout of victory on the banks of the Red Sea.

Redemption includes—" the redemption of the soul " (Ps. xlix. ; Eph. i. 7) ; " redemption of the body " (Eph. i. 14 ; iv. 30) ; also " the redemption of the inheritance " (Eph. i. 11, 14 ; Rev. v. 9, 10). (Compare Jer. xxxii.).

The needs be for redemption is man's ruined condition (Isa. lii. 3 ; John viii. 44 ; Rom. vi. 16, 22 ; Rom. vii. 14).

Redemption is entirely the work of God ; no finite mind could have ever conceived it, no mere creature could ever accomplish it. Man's fallen state is such that neither man nor angel could ever meet the case (Ps. xlix. 7 ; Micah vi. 7 ; Deut. vii. ; Isaiah lxiii. 4). Neither could the law do so, it could but condemn the guilty (Rom. iii. 20 ; compare Ruth iv. 6).

But the gospel tells us that a Redeemer has been found in the Person of the Only Begotten Son of God, who has found a Ransom, thus meeting God's highest claim and man's deepest need (Psa. lxxxix, 19, 20 ; Job xxxiii, 24 ; 1 Pet. i. 19).

A Redeemer in Israel had to establish three facts, first, that he had the *right* to redeem the needy one on the ground of near relationship ; he was next of kin ; secondly, that he was *willing* to undertake the case ; thirdly, that he had the *power* to accomplish the work. So Christ by partaking of flesh and blood had the right to redeem His brethren (Heb. ii. 14 ; Rom. viii. 3). He made manifest His willingness to accomplish the gigantic task, by coming of His own free will, saying, " Lo, I come to do Thy will O my God " ; and being divine as well as human He had the power to carry through the stupendous undertaking.

The Redeemer in Israel was called "the Kinsman," "the Redeemer," and "the Avenger." Even so with Christ, as seen in Heb. ii. By "partaking of flesh and blood" He became our Kinsman, as such His work was "to deliver His brethren," also "to destroy him that had the power of death."

The character of His redemptive work is said to be "plenteous" (Ps. cxxx. 7); "eternal" (Heb. ix. 12).

The object of His redemptive work was to bring glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace and goodwill toward men. It was to redeem His people from their bondage and to redeem them unto God. Compare Israel's condition of bondage in Ex. iii.; then God's purpose in redeeming them (Ex. vi. 6, 7; Ex. xix. 4-6; Deut. iv. 20; Eph. i. 19). Hence the joy which God finds in the salvation of sinners (Luke xv.).

The extent of redemption is seen in that we are "redeemed from our enemies" (Psa. cvii. 2). From "the curse of the law" (Gal. iii. 13; iv. 5). "From sin" (Ps. cxxx. 8; Titus ii. 14). From "the power of death" (Hosea xiii. 14). From "destruction" (Ps. ciii. 4).

The results of redemption are "separation from the world" (Ex. viii. 23; Ex. xv. 13; Isa. li. 11); and as redeemed ones we enjoy the special "favour and protection of God" (Isa. xliii. 1, 4), and as such we have the seal and the earnest of coming glory (Eph. i. 14; iv. 30).

Redemption will be the subject of heaven's highest note of praise and the theme of its new and everlasting song (Rev. v. 9). The first recorded "Praise Meeting" was the result of God's finished work of creation, as the angelic hosts beheld the Great Creator's handiwork in all its pristine beauty, "they shouted for joy" (Job xxxviii.), but the creature has been marred by sin, and that song has ceased, but God's redemptive work can never be moved nor marred, and so its song will never cease. The keynote of the old creation's song was "*It is good,*" but the keynote of the new creation song is "*He is good, and His mercy endureth for ever.*"

As the redeemed of the Lord, let us ever bear in mind these three "whats": *what* we have been redeemed *from*; *what* we have been redeemed *by*; and *what* we have been redeemed *for*.

GOLD DUST.

There were grains of gold in the river's sand,
 Washed down from the mountain height :
 Bright grains that were borne from the upper land
 By the torrent's arm of might.

A grain may seem but a tiny thing,
 Yet be it a grain of gold,
 Then its flashing lustre will gladness fling,
 As its name and wealth are told.

And so those grains in the river sand
 Were searched for with jealous eye,
 And washed till they lay in the seeker's hand
 Like star-dust strewn from the sky.

I watched those grains 'neath the hammer's fall,
 Where broken and bruised they lay ;
 But I knew that the atoms, however small,
 Would never be swept away.

And some were passed through the goldsmith's fire :
 And some felt the graver's hand :
 And whatever was done had but one desire
 In the future Wisdom plann'd.

For some of those grains from the river's bed
 Were stamped with the royal face :
 And some like jewels were hung to shed
 Their light on His royal grace.

Our race was once as the native gold,
 High up on the mountain height ;
 But torrents of sin have around us roll'd,
 And swept us down in their might.

Yet precious still are the golden grains
 That lie in life's passing stream ;
 And the gracious seeker His loss regains,
 Though only as dust they seem.

He knows the soul is a precious thing,
 Struck off from the vein divine :
 Though the torrents afar the treasure fling,
 He sees where His ransomed shine.

He gathers them out of the worthless sand,
 He washes them pure and bright ;
 And as they lie in His pierced hand,
 They are precious in His sight.

But ere He can fashion them to His will,
 They must pass through the furnace flame ;
 Must feel the blow of His arm, until
 He marks them with His Great Name.

And let them know that the kindling fire
 Destroys not the precious gold.
 No grain shall be lost till the King's desire
 Is wrought in a perfect mould.

WILLIAM LUFF.

PREPARE THY WORK.

“Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house.”—Proverbs xxiv. 27.

By JAMES STIMSON.

THE Lord Jesus Christ is the central figure of the counsels of God and of His revelation of them to us. In infinite wisdom and grace, God the Father has given to us His Son—the Living Word; and God the Holy Spirit has recorded the written Word which reveals that Son.

With ineffable delight, God the Father glorifies His Son as “being the effulgence of His glory and the exact expression of” Himself (Heb. i. 3), and ’tis the Divinely gracious office of God the Holy Spirit to reveal, exalt and glorify God the Son. So it is, that when we leave the Lord Jesus—the Living Word—out of any portion of the written Word, we fail to get the real thought and mind of God. With these facts before us, let us, in simple dependence on Him Who wrote it, consider this portion of God’s revelation to us. “*Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house*” (Prov. xxiv. 27).

In Proverbs viii. 22-31, it is revealed to us, that “Jehovah possessed Me (the Lord Jesus) in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. . . . I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; . . . and my delights were with the sons of men.” Thus are we let into the secret of the love of God for His creature, man, from Eternity. In this word—Prov. xxiv. 27—we get the *prophetic* expression of the will of God concerning the Son; recorded by the Holy Spirit about one thousand years before the Christ came to do it. We get—also prophetically—the Son’s expression of infinite subjection to His Father’s will recorded in Psalm xl. 7-8, “Then, said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do Thy will, O my God.” Looking, then, upon this Subject One God the Father says:—

“PREPARE THY WORK.”

There is but One to Whom God could thus speak. Only His Eternal Son—the Lord Jesus Christ—could obey such a command, and “*prepare*” a “*work*” which God the Father could accept and use for His own glory. What the *preparing* of “Thy work” was—what it meant for both the Father and the Son, and

all it means for the unsaved and the saved ; what it cost them both, and the depth and force of the Divine love which prompted it all, we cannot and shall never know. Leaving "the glory which He had with the Father before the world was" (John xvii. 5), coming into a sin-cursed world, Himself infinite holiness, suffering by the presence of and contact with sin, suffering by Divine sympathy, with those under the power and effects of sin, suffering, by anticipation, the agonies of the Cross, suffering "by contradiction of sinners against Himself" (Heb. xii. 3), the "spitting in His face," the "smiting with rods," the "scourging," the "mockery," the "crown of thorns," the nails through His hands and feet, "bearing our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Pet. ii. 24), being "made sin for us" (2 Cor. v. 21), the hiding of God's face (Ps. lxxxviii. 14), those three hours of darkness, the cry "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Ps. xxii. 1). Who can conceive, but the Infinite Trinity, what all these meant, or what the cost, to the Father and the Son, this infinitely perfect fulfilment of the Father's word—

"Prepare Thy Work."

Infinitely perfect "Preparation" of an infinitely perfect "work"—the "work" of redemption for lost souls. Passing through this scene, we hear Him saying, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John v. 17). On the Cross, speaking of His redemption "work," He testified to the world which murdered Him, "It is finished" (John xix. 30). To His Father He says, "I have finished the Work which **THOU** gavest Me to do" (John xvii. 4). God the Holy Spirit records, by the hand of Paul, "In due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6). Thus did He, in infinite GRACE, "do the work" which He had "prepared."

"Prepare thy work without." "And He, bearing His cross, went forth, into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha, where they crucified Him" (John xix. 17, 18). "The *bodies* of those beasts whose *blood* is brought into the holy of holies by the high priest (as sacrifices) for sin, are burned **without** the camp. Wherefore **Jesus also**, that He might sanctify the people by **His Own Blood**, suffered **without the gate**" (Heb. xiii. 11, 12). Thus did He, the Eternal Son of God, "once for all . . . put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself—**Without the gate**" (Heb. ix. 26 ; xiii. 12). *Outside* of all that was, until then, instituted by God for man—*outside* of all that was of man—was the

Person and the Work of Him Who thus "Prepared His Work **without.**" The salvation of man **must** be by what is utterly outside of Himself—the *work* and *power* of **God**. Only **HE** can bring a *dead man to life, or life to a dead man.*

"**Make it fit for Thyself in the field.**" What infinitely blessed precious significance in those words, for both God and man. Neither He Who gave His only begotten Son to bring Eternal Life to perishing souls, nor those whom He came to save, could do without that *infinite Divine "fitness."* The Light, Holiness and Justice of God demand it. The utterly ruined, lost, helpless condition of the sinner can be fully met by nothing less. How blessed beyond all expression the truth, that 'tis its "*fitness for Himself*" which gives His "work" infinitely perfect fitness for the sinner. What peace and joy for the anxious soul to learn that the work of Jesus Christ is *infinitely fit* to meet all his soul-need!

"**In the field.**" "The field is the world" (Matt. xiii. 38). These are His own words. "The world," as it left His creating hand, had been pronounced "Very good" by God Himself (Gen. i. 31). But "sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Rom. v. 12) and "the whole creation groaned and travailed in pain" (Rom. viii. 22), and man, a complete ruin. Into such a world the Lord Jesus came. He tells us, "He sold all that He had to buy *that field*" (Matt. xiii. 44). Infinite grace! To make *such* a field His own by *purchase*—for **Him** to "prepare" His soul-redeeming "work" and "make it *fit for Himself*" in "the field," the tenants of which He well knew would never rest until they had "put him to death" (Matt. xxvii. 1). God's enemy had first ruined, then usurped possession of "the field"—then the enemy's children rejected and murdered the True Possessor of it.

AND AFTERWARDS BUILD THINE HOUSE.

God's order is infinitely perfect. The "house" could not be "built" until **His** "work" had been "prepared" "without" and "made fit" for Himself, "in the field." No "house" "fit" for "His habitation through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 22) could be "built" until He had Himself laid the infinitely perfect Eternal Foundation.

More than seven hundred years before it was laid, Isaiah (xxviii. 16) foretold the laying of this Foundation by God Himself. "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion for a Foundation, a Stone, a Tried Stone, a Precious Corner Stone, a **Sure Foundation.**"

After God the Father had laid His "Sure Foundation" in the Person of God, His Eternal Son, God the Holy Spirit testified, through the Apostle Paul, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is **Jesus Christ**" (1 Cor. iii. 11). On this infinitely perfect and secure "**Foundation**," "the house of God" (1 Tim. iii. 15) has been building for nearly two thousand years. "To Whom coming, a Living Stone, cast away indeed as worthless by men—but with God chosen, precious—yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up a *spiritual house*." (1 Pet. ii. 4, 5, N.T.).

"Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of *the household of God*; and are *built upon the foundation* of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Corner Stone; in Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in Whom ye also are *builded together for an habitation of God* through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 19-22).

What more becomes "the household of God" than thanksgiving and **praise**! "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift" (2 Cor. ix. 15) "To Him Who loves us, and has washed us from our sins in His BLOOD, and made us a Kingdom, priests to His God and Father: to **Him** be the glory and the might to the ages of ages. Amen" (Rev. i. 5, 6).

"Glory, glory everlasting
Be to Him Who bore the cross,
Who redeemed our souls by tasting
Death—the death deserved by us!
Spread His glory
Who redeemed His people thus."

PARDONED.

The sins of a life-time all, all are forgiven!

And all are forgotten as well!

The knowledge of this, what is it but Heaven?

Gone for aye are the terrors of Hell.

How changed are my thoughts since to me was made known

This wonderful pardoning love!

Now, of sorrows the greatest on earth I can know

Is to sin 'gainst my Father above.

Oh Lord, may each action, each thought and each word

Evermore be beneath Thy control;

May the sword of the Spirit, the life-giving word,

Cleanse the inmost recess of my soul.

Consume every sin ere it enter my heart,

Let Thy temple, Lord, ne'er be defiled;

Yes, Lord, though it humble, and cause me to smart,

"Keep me pure" is the prayer of Thy child.

M.E.R.

A LETTER ON MILLENNIAL DAWNISM.

IN your last letter to me, dated July 23rd, you say "instead of being shaken" you were "rather strengthened" in your convictions by what I had to say. And you affirm this without even attempting to answer my objections to your theories, which objections were based entirely upon scripture. What does this mean but that *scripture has no weight with you whatever!* You brush it all aside, and treat it with less consideration than if it were the word of man. Allow me to say that a person who treats the word of God with such contempt is in danger of becoming a mere dupe of Satan, and this is what I fear for you. You say the Lord has come. I give you quotations from the scriptures which show that certain things mark His coming. These things have not happened, yet you still assert He is here, and have the effrontery to say you are rather strengthened in your conviction that it is so. Let me ask you, what must be your state of heart when you pay so little heed to the words of the living God?

The address you now send on "Where are the dead?" is as full of error as what you have previously set forth. Is it any use to try and show you this from scripture? or are you altogether given over to the lies of the Wicked One?

"It is the scriptures," says your teacher, "that tells us where the dead are and their condition; that they are experiencing neither joy nor sorrow, etc." What, then, says the sixteenth chapter of Luke? "I am *tormented* in this flame." It is our Lord Himself who gives this description of one in hell. Dare you tell me that He did not know, or that your teacher knows better?

He asks "could they perish in heaven, or in purgatory, or in a hell of torment?" Certainly in the last. The word *perish* is not used in the sense of utter extinction. We speak of people perishing in the waters. Does that mean that their bodies could not be found?

Then notice how he speaks of believers who have died (for he classes believers and unbelievers together): "They are already in a perished condition in the tomb." Where does scripture say this of a saint of God? It says just the opposite. "Absent from the body present with the Lord." "To depart and to be with Christ,

which is far better." Is it "far better" to perish in the tomb, "and know not anything," than to enjoy communion with Christ in this life?

Again, he says, "St. Paul says not a word about torment." Indeed. Read Romans ii. and see. "Indignation and wrath, *tribulation* and *anguish* upon every soul of man that doeth evil." What is this but torment? Now, Mr. R—— is a man who at all events has read his Bible. Why then does he declare so positively that the Apostle Paul has not a word to say about torment, except that he wishes to deceive?

Then notice how falsely he reasons. He says, "If the penalty against us had been eternal torment, our redemption from it would have cost our Lord that price." It does not follow at all. If someone is fined, and in default of payment must go to prison, does the friend who pays the fine have to go to prison as well? Christ paid our debt, "the chastisement of our peace was upon Him," and, consequently, although, apart from this, eternal punishment would have been our due, no punishment now remains for the believer, for sin has been put away.

Further, notice how these arguments do away with the work of Christ. "Thus the more mean and more wicked a man or woman may be, the greater will be his or her disadvantage in the resurrection time, and the more he will then have to overcome, to get back to all that was lost in Adam and *redeemed* by Christ." Every statement in this sentence is devoid of truth. Scripture teaches that all who are *out* of Christ are *equally* lost, all *in* Christ *equally* righteous before God. The sinner is not told to *overcome*. That is for the saint. The sinner is invited to "take of the water of life freely." Nor do we get back to what was lost in Adam. Scripture says, "Old things have passed away, behold all things have become new." "If any man be in Christ there is a new creation." Christians are "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." When was this ever true of Adam? *The whole system is false*. Could anything be more so than the following? "On their being awakened (to resurrection) the privilege will be theirs of *rising*, up, up, up out of present degradation, mental, moral, physical, to the glorious perfection which father Adam enjoyed in the image and likeness of his Creator." There is nothing about this in the Bible. There it says we shall be "conformed to the image of God's son." "As we have

borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Whereas the system of teaching you are under, puts Adam in place of Christ. All this stamps it as being a delusion of the Devil. May God in His mercy save you from it.

Do let me in closing ask you, nay beseech you, to take to the careful study of your Bible. Anyone versed in the teaching of scripture would detect at once how far removed from truth is the teaching in question.

RUTH.

J. W. A.

PERHAPS every Christian has been charmed again and again by the simple beauty of this short book, and many sweet writers have added their testimony to the grace which shines out here in every chapter, for every chapter has its special scene, expressive of grace—the grace of God Himself.

But it is more particularly faith's standpoint, the faith begotten in Ruth, that is on my mind to write a few words about, for where grace leads and faith follows is very refreshing to our God, and to us also.

In the first chapter we have what may be called, *the attraction of faith*, for whatever Naomi may have been (and doubtless there was failure), she spoke about her country, her people, and her God so much, and in such terms, that Ruth was attracted to her country, and better still to her God, and her faith was so steadfast that there was no turning her back. Orpah might return, but neither the country, people, nor gods of Moab could turn Ruth from Naomi and Naomi's God (Chapter i. 16, 17).

The second chapter speaks to us of *the humility of faith*. Ruth has reached the country of Naomi, how is she to fare? she a Moabitess, shut out as far as Israel's law is concerned for ten generations. Ah, she takes a lowly place, a place of nothingness, a place our God delights in, and He will surely meet the soul which takes this low place, His grace *must* meet and lead such an one. Ruth becomes a gleaner, and her hap is to light on a part of the field belonging to Boaz; surely God took care of this hap, and led Ruth to Boaz. We have only to read the verses to see what a meeting that was, so full of grace on his part and so full of humility on hers; her faith led her where grace drew her, to the feet of Boaz, where her welcome is so gracious and full, just like the Lord Jesus in the gospels, for

Boaz is a true type of Him. This welcome to the stranger is matched by the Lord's words to the poor woman who touches His garment, "Daughter, be of good cheer" (Chap. ii. 8-17; Luke viii. 48).

The third chapter brings us to *the assurance of faith*. Instructed by Naomi, Ruth seeks Boaz, and claims him as a near kinsman. Now the office of kinsman in Israel was a most important one (Lev. xxv. 25). If he was an able kinsman he had the power and right to redeem; now we know that redemption is one of God's choice things, and by Jesus Christ He has brought in redemption in the fullest way. Here to Ruth, who places her case unreservedly in his hands, Boaz promises to do a kinsman's part, and so sends her back (not empty handed) to Naomi, whose confidence in Boaz is unlimited, and so Ruth's assurance is fully answered; she sits still until she knows how the matter will fall, Naomi saying, "The man will not be in rest until he have finished the thing this day" (Chap. iii. 18). And so our Redeemer will not rest until our redemption is completed by having us with Himself in the Father's house; the work is already finished, the price already paid—we wait only for Himself to come to take us home.

The fourth chapter tells us of *the triumph of faith*, for, as Naomi said, Boaz did not rest until he finished the matter. There was one, however, who had a prior right to redeem, but is found unable to do so, hence Boaz shows himself an able, willing and gracious redeemer. God having brought by His grace this stranger so far, answers her faith to the very full, for Boaz not only redeems the possession, but also purchases Ruth to be his wife; so the Moabitess stranger is placed by grace in such a position as grace alone could give her. Might we not exclaim, what a leading of grace! what a path for faith! and may we not see our own case told out in these few chapters? for God has brought us Gentile sinners so near to Himself in His Beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, that the words of the Holy Ghost respecting us are, "Accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. i. 6).

One word more may be added. In Ruth's case faith does not even end with her union with Boaz, but God carries it on in her case to the coming Christ, for the stranger becomes a mother in Israel (Ruth iv. 21, 22; Matt. i. 5 6). So it fulfilled the blessing of Boaz in the second chapter, twelfth verse, "The Lord recompense thy work and a *full* reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."

THE FAITH AND THE FLOCK

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EDITORIALS.

COME ye **Go** ye. (Mark vi. 31 ; and xvi. 15).

It is in Mark's gospel alone that the words, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile," are found. And likewise the words, "Go ye into all the world" are found nowhere else but in Mark. Both are in striking keeping with the character of this gospel. It is Christ as the unwearied Servant that is there presented, and He knew as well when it was imperative to rest as He did when it was a necessity to work. And more. He goes aside with them in the rest as much as He goes with them in the work. We are reminded, too, that it is Mark who alone of all the evangelists records the words, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath."

* * *

Many of our readers will have returned from their periods of rest, and we trust with fresh energy and appetite for work. With renewed ardour may they throw themselves into whatever service the Lord has given them to do. It is necessary to look to our equipment, for He Who said, "Go ye" also said "Tarry ye," and that "until ye be endued with power from on high."

* * *

Sinning Wilfully.—Several communications have reached us with reference to the article on this subject which appeared in our August number. We think the misunderstanding has arisen because

the true standpoint of the article has been overlooked. We were not writing pages for the anxious, but seeking to interpret scripture, and our remarks were therefore limited to the passage in hand, which dealt, not with the truth of assurance, but, with a solemn warning to professors. It was pointed out that we are all professors from one point of view, and *as such*, we all need these warnings; it would be a dangerous thing to assume that we did not. On the other hand we are sometimes looked at, not as professors, but, as in Christ, and here there is no condemnation, and nothing can separate us from the divine love.

AN OUTLINE OF "THE REVELATION."

(See Chart issued with February number).

EIGHTH SECTION. CHAPTERS XV.—XVI.

By WALTER SCOTT

THE VIALS OF GOD'S WRATH.

IN the Vials we witness the outpouring of God's righteous and holy vengeance upon the guilty world, to be followed by the wrath of the Lamb—*personally*-executed judgment at His Coming.

Will the careful reader and student of these prophecies notice that in the Seventh Vial or bowl (xvi. 19), Babylon, the corruptress of the earth, is singled out for special judgment. We connect, therefore, the last vial with the fall of Babylon—the third of the series of events noticed in the fourteenth chapter. This is important as it enables us to fit into the Apocalyptic history the place, character and doom of Babylon. Chapters xiv. 8, xvi. 19, xvii., xviii., xix. 1-3, give in full the Story of Babylon, and should be read as one connected whole.

After the fall of Babylon, the solemn events recorded in Chap. xiv. 9-20, have each their successive fulfilment, that is after the pouring out of the seventh vial.

It is a common mistake to regard the seventh vial as bringing us down to the end of the age. The closing acts of judgment upon Christendom are the Harvest and the Vintage, and these with other events have their place *after* the pouring out of the seventh vial upon Babylon. That iniquitous system is destroyed by the Beast (xvii. 16), a short time before the advent of the Lord in power.

The Beast is itself destroyed by the Lord in Person, and the ten kingdoms forming the territorial strength of the Empire, crushed to atoms (Rev. xix. 20, 21 ; Dan. ii. 35, vii., 11, 26).

The first verse of this section intimates that the series and sum of providential judgments are to be closed up in the pouring out of God's wrath. By *providential* judgments we mean those inflicted prior to the Lord's return, which have all more or less this character. But the Wrath of God concentrated in the Vials, gives place to the yet more awful chastisements *openly* inflicted, and spoken of as "the wrath of the Lamb."

The "sea of glass" (ver. 2) is not, of course, an actual sea of that material, for the Seer writes, "I saw *as it were* a sea of glass mingled with fire," nor is the "sea of glass like unto crystal" (iv. 6) and spread out before the throne of the Eternal, a veritable sea. It is what they represent which concerns us. In the earlier vision is intimated a fixed state of purity, the solid calm of a scene of unsullied light (chap. iv.). But in our chapter the crystal is omitted, and "the glass is mingled *with fire*." In the former scene, the saints above had not emerged out of the fiery tribulation under the Beast. In fact, the saints in heaven seen in chap. iv. had not been in the Coming Tribulation at all, being expressly exempted from it (iii. 10). But those of a later day—a large company of Martyred Saints—under the Beast—are here witnessed standing on the sea of glass. "Mingled with fire" refers to the cruel persecutions endured in that awful period yet future. Pagan persecutions and the more refined torments under the Papacy are to be surpassed in the horrors of "The Great Tribulation" (Mark xiii. 19, 20).

Did the Beast really triumph (xiii. 7) over the Martyrs of the Lamb? He is doomed to the lake of fire, while the victims of his cruelty are here witnessed in harp and song celebrating the works and ways of the Lord God Almighty (v. 2-4).

Next, the Temple comes into view (v. 5-8), not the Temple on earth which at the very time contemplated in this vision will be occupied by the man of sin (2 Thess. ii. 4), impiously claiming Divine Worship ; nor is the Temple here seen in heaven a material one, for, says the Seer in a later vision, "I saw no Temple therein," *i.e.*, in the heavenly City. The Temple opened in heaven is a scenic representation of the Righteousness and Holiness befitting the presence of the God of Light. God is about to judge the earth,

not from the *Throne* as in the Seal and Trumpets judgment, but from the Temple.* In this respect, the Vial chastisements stand alone. These latter are necessarily more severe than either those under Seal or Trumpet. God's Holy Nature is here seen roused to judicial action. The thought is God judging evil according to His nature. Both Throne and Temple are seen united in the execution of judgment in chap. xvi. 17

FIRST BOWL OF WRATH, Chapter XVI., Verse 2.

God is angry with the wicked, and He is about to express His just indignation in a series of rapid strokes, much more severe than any yet inflicted. The Holy Nature of God is roused to action. The very Holiness of God demands stern and inflexible judgment.

"The earth" is the scene of these plagues. Need it be said, that the term "the earth" is not to be understood in its wide geographical sense, but prophetically viewed as the whole of the guilty scene coming within the range and scope of prophetic vision. The first four Trumpets are in their operation restricted to the Roman world, Western Europe, but the Vials sweep in their range a much wider area, and of greatly increased severity.

What a solemn reflection that the vials or bowls sacred to the use of Temple service and worship are here seen devoted to purposes of judgment!

The judgment here inflicted is spoken of as a "noisome and grievous sore," or ulcer, causing intense mental anguish. The sixth Egyptian plague (Exod. ix. 10, 11) was of a similar character, only there it was an actual bodily infliction, here in keeping with the symbolic character of those plagues, the judgment is of a moral kind, not that physical suffering is absent. Torment in the soul and conscience is the prominent thought. The adherents and worshippers of the Beast are the specific objects of this God-inflicted judgment.

This terrible chastisement *precedes* the fall of Babylon (ver. 19), whereas the everlasting torment of the Beast-worshippers (xiv. 9, 10) *succeeds* that mighty event. All who bow to the Beast are thus tormented in time and eternity.

* The reference to the Temple and the Ark in Chap. xi. 19, shews God's interest in His people; this, God's judgment upon His and their enemies. Verse 4 explains why the Temple is referred to. The effect of the judgment will be that all nations will come and worship before God. The judgment will accomplish what the gospel has failed to do.

SECOND BOWL OF WRATH, Verse 3.

The "Sea"—*i.e.*, those nations and peoples in revolutionary disorder, outside the Roman world—becomes as the blood of a dead man." The Egyptian plague of the waters turned to blood (Ex. vii. 17) was, of course, literally accomplished, but here moral death is signified. The apostasy from God, from truth, from Christianity, is complete. All religious profession and even external relation to God is abandoned. The masses are regarded as "twice dead" (Jude 12)—dead in sins, and dead in apostasy, and this even when physically alive. "Every living soul died in the sea." Individual shipwreck of faith, conscience, and truth is here intimated. We have had the *pagan* world, later the *papal* world, now the *apostate* world—worst of all.

THIRD BOWL OF WRATH, Verses 4 to 7.

God's wrath is poured on the "rivers and fountains of waters, and they became blood." The third Trumpet (viii. 11) corresponds to the third vial. In both the waters and fountains are similar in judgment. But in the earlier reference they became *wormwood*, here they are turned into *blood*. In the former national life and character are morally poisoned—both in their sources (*fountains*), and ordinary course (*rivers*) of political and social government. Here the corruption is deeper. It is moral death (*blood*), complete alienation from God. Utter apostasy from every principle of right, and the open and distinct avowal of Atheism. Nations and peoples without God, without any principle of right, truth non-existent.

Verse 5. The Universe, men, nations, and the elements and forces of nature are all under Angelic control. "The Angel of the Waters," *i.e.*, the peoples (xvii. 15), justifies God in this awful and retributive judgment (ver. 6). The peoples had "shed the blood of saints and prophets," hence in righteous retribution they are doomed to drink blood, that is to realise the awfulness of death in the soul and conscience. The brazen altar of judgment vindicates God in these holy and righteous dealings (ver. 7).

FOURTH BOWL OF WRATH, Verses 8, 9.

The first four vials correspond to the first four Trumpets. In both the order is the same, namely, earth, sea, rivers, and sun. But as has been already observed, the judgments under the vials

are more severe and searching in character, and also embrace in their operation a wider area than those under the Trumpets.

The sun, the governing authority on earth, becomes the instrument of intolerable anguish to men. There is no necessity for understanding literal fire, either here or in Matt. xxv. 41. What is signified is intense mental anguish, an agony endured, far exceeding that caused by literal fire. What is the effect of this and previous Divine chastisements upon men? Do they glorify God in these visitations of wrath? Are they humbled and crushed under the hand of God? No. These judgments harden men. They "blasphemed the God of heaven, which hath power over these plagues." Unlike the Ninevites of old, who repented under the threat of judgment, *these* "repented not to give Him glory." Alas! alas! what is man! Had repentance instead of increased hardness of will, been produced, no doubt the advancing torrent of Divine wrath would have been rolled back, for God "had authority over these plagues." The control of the Universe, down to the tiny insect and least atom, is under the governing hand of God. He is the source and author of all the Apocalyptic judgments.

FIFTH BOWL OF WRATH, Verses 10, 11.

The throne of the Beast is next smitten by judgment, not its personal head, *that* is reserved for the Lord to deal with at His Coming (xix. 20). It is important to notice that the executive of the Empire is here the subject of judgment. Neither the last emperor, nor his subjects and worshippers are specially contemplated, although all suffer from the highest down to the lowest. The throne, the source and stability of the Empire is reached by this all-searching judgment. The Devil had established the Kingdom (xiii. 4). God smites it in judgment, in its very centre and strength too. It is here that the persecution of the Beast against the Saints of God ceases. How can the Beast further persecute the saints when itself is being dealt with by the heavy hand of judgment? The Kingdom of the Beast was "full of darkness," not *physical*, but what is infinitely worse, *moral*. Such is the horror, the intolerable anguish created thereby, that "they gnawed their tongues for pain"—such the excruciating agony. But the proud and suffering spirit refuses to bow in repentance. Under the previous vial men blasphemed the *Name* of God—here they blaspheme *God* Himself.

SIXTH BOWL OF WRATH, Verses 12 to 16.

We have had judgment poured out on the West, now the East is to be reached. *"The sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up that the way of the Kings from the East might be prepared."*

Rome never pushed her conquests beyond that famous river, the Euphrates. It bounded and secured their conquests on the East. The Euphrates is also the prophetic limit of enlarged Palestine in millennial days. Bearing this in mind, we can see the force of that great Asian river being literally dried up, so that the powers on its eastern side may come to Armageddon—God's appointed rendezvous for the Kings and nations of the whole world. Not only will the East mingle with the West in deadly strife in the vicinity of Jerusalem, but God Himself will pour out upon the assembled nations the fury of His wrath. The most guilty of all—the West—is first visited in dire judgment. But how and by what means could the Kings and peoples of earth be gathered to one common camping ground? Satanic agency accredited by miracle is employed to gather the vast assemblage (vers. 13, 14). God controls the vast movement. *"He gathered them together"* (ver. 16).

SEVENTH BOWL OF WRATH, Verses 17 to 21.

"The seventh angel poured out his vial into the air." This is the most penetrating and universal judgment yet disclosed; that under the sixth seal is universal in its effects (vi. 12-17), but the earthquake under the seventh vial exceeds in horror anything hitherto witnessed or felt on earth (ver. 18), which, with other attendant circumstances constitutes this judgment the most appalling of all which has yet come before us. *"The great city was divided into three parts."* That is the empire is broken up into a tripartite division; its utter ruin to follow in due course. *"The cities of the nations fell,"* signifying the smashing up of the seats and centres of commerce outside the Roman world. Next, great Babylon is specially singled out for judgment. Her history and causes of her downfall are written in the two following chapters. Islands and mountains are next the objects of God's unsparing wrath. By the former is meant independent interests apart from and outside any human confederation. Mountains are seats and sources of authority deemed stable and lasting. Both islands and

mountains completely disappear in the general wreck. Under the sixth Seal these "were moved out of their places," here they "were not found." In addition to all this, the climax is reached, "there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven," such a hurricane of heaven-sent judgment in its weight and disastrous effects is beyond anything that history records. "Every stone about the weight of a talent," *i.e.*, 125 lbs. How crushing! How overwhelming the judgment! Men suffering under the mighty hand of God again blaspheme that Blessed One How patient is God! How perverse is the creature!

TEMPTATION.

BY STUART E. McNAIR.

HOWEVER limited our Christian experience may be; however little personal acquaintance we may have with many things that are spoken of in Scripture; it is very certain that *temptation* is to each of us something more than a doctrine or a dogma; it is a very real and present evil which we have encountered times without number—a subtle foe before whom, perhaps, we have often fallen.

One feels, therefore, that in referring to such a subject, no merely academic discussion is called for. If something yet remains to be said beyond all that has been spoken or written about temptation, it must be a message of present, practical value in showing how the trial may be faced without fear, with full assurance of victory in the power of Him through Whom we are more than conquerors.

To meet temptation victoriously we must meet it as Christ did, and surely the account of His wilderness trial is meant to be a lesson-book for ourselves when we find the powers of evil around us. Very especially should we remember that He was prepared for the testing by the *Father's word* and the *Spirit's filling*.

Times without number Christians have discussed whether temptation meant to the Lord all that it means to us; whether He became so really like us that the onslaught of evil meant to His soul all that it means to our own.

In the keenness of controversy it would seem that the obvious and practical lesson of our Lord's temptation has too often been lost sight of. Instead of insisting that He must have become so like us as to feel the enticement of evil just as we do, should we not rather learn that *just in proportion as we become like Him, we shall feel that enticement no more than He did.*

Perhaps all will agree that temptation, even when it comes with the same force, does not always find the same response in the soul. Very notably the companionship of a godly friend is a valuable safeguard. The enjoyed company, in spiritual communion, of the Saviour Himself, may quite truly be looked on as a complete protection. And that we *may* know always, and so find our case parallel with our great Exemplar's, not by dragging His experience down to the base level of our own, but by rising in the Spirit's power to the blessedness of His, who ever dwelt in the bosom of the Father, and found there a complete immunity from the Satanic suggestion of sin.

A common and regrettable mistake is for the young believer to become *occupied with evil* in his endeavour to resist temptation. He studies and analyses his moods and motives, and finds he becomes worse instead of better. It may seem a mere truism, but it is a truth of fundamental importance, that the best way to avoid doing wrong is to do right. The saint who throws his whole soul into one continuous endeavour to please his Saviour in all things, will be proof against temptation's allurements. Instead of studying and classifying the evil that has intruded upon us, we need to judge the spiritual slothfulness that left an empty place in our lives, into which evil could intrude. Rather than search for the weeds of wickedness and seeds of sorrow which Satan may sow in the heart, let us look to it that the goodly fruits of the Spirit have opportunity for growth and development. Self-control is not a mere repression of evil. It mostly means a strenuous endeavour to follow that which is good.

There is one thing which we may rest assured the Saviour never undertakes to do, and that is, to save us at a distance. He who is David's greater Son, would say as David did, "*With Me thou shalt be in safeguard.*" We have, perhaps, almost reproached God that He did not keep us from falling, and have forgotten that *there* (in the place of distance), so far from His protecting care,

He never proposed to maintain us. The flesh has seemed a giant foe, and its power has overwhelmed us, but was that not because we neglected to feed and strengthen our spiritual man ?

No one yet yielded to sin without dallying with it, or dallied with it without secretly liking it. The saint has been saved from all his fears, except one, which is indeed part of his present salvation : the fear of the Lord, which is to *hate* evil.

To despise evil is dangerous, to contemplate it is disastrous, but to fear and hate it is the way of safety. And when we find that fear and that hatred warring in our souls, we may well get away alone and look back to Calvary, that our hearts may be again brought into accord with God's own love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity.

As the Christian reviews the secret history of his soul's conflict with temptation, perhaps his saddest reflection is that the battle need never have been fought if he had really set himself to walk with God, along that flower-carpeted pathway of communion, where the deadly assault of sin is never known. Yet the total outcome of all the fighting and failure is not wholly loss. He has gained in humility and dependence ; he has a deeper sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin ; he has a more tender sympathy with his fallen or struggling fellows. Out of the eater still comes forth meat, and out of the strong, sweetness.

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation : for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." (James i. 12).

"Covenant in scripture is different from covenant as understood by us in common language. It is the form of dealing God takes with man, not an agreement between God and man or man and God. It is the ground of God's dealing at any time."

* * * *

"I have known Christ, more or less, between 30 and 40 years and I can say that I have ten thousand times more joy now than I had at first. It is a deeper, calmer joy. The water rushing down from a hill is beautiful to look at, and makes most noise ; but you will find the water that runs in the plain is deeper, calmer, more fructifying."

"YOUR JOY NO MAN TAKETH FROM YOU."

The secret of a happy life is "Jesus,"
He, He alone, can make us truly glad,
Since, through His love, my eyes were fixed upon Him,
Nothing but sin has power to make me sad.

Long years, although I trusted Him to save me,
My happiness was clouded oft and marred
By winds of circumstances, or by sighing
For joys from which *I thought* myself debarred.

'Twas then the Saviour drew me to His bosom
By loosing me from *shapes* of lovely things ;
I thank Him now for every wind that drove me
To seek a refuge 'neath His sheltering wings.

The "sons of Levi" have no earthly portion,
My soul, engrave this deeply on thy heart ;
Seek not thy pleasure where Christ was a stranger,
Look not for happiness from Him apart.

He is thy portion, let this ever cheer thee,
No circumstance or power can it destroy.
"Thou art His own," if thou in Him abidest
Thou carriest in thy bosom "peace and joy."

This is the secret, lonely ones possess it,
Their portion, little while they're here below ;
But in God's love abiding and rejoicing
With happy hearts onward through life they go.

No loss, no cross, no earthly tribulation
Can take away the joy they now possess,
It is their own "Love gift," by Jesus given,
No man may rob them of their happiness.

M.E.R.

OH! TO BE RIPE AND READY.

Oh! to be ripe and ready
For the change so soon at hand,
Oh! to be calm and steady
When on Jordan's brink I stand.

Oh! to have no regrettings
When sinks my life's day's sun,
No sad remorseful frettings
Of work I've left undone.

Oh! to be bold and fearless
When death bursts on my view ;
Oh! to be calm and tearless
When Earth I bid adieu.

And oh! when Heaven I enter,
May the first sight I see,
Be Jesus in the centre
Of myriads saved like me.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS:—

A Simple Exposition.

CHAP. XI., 1-6.

FAITH IN CONNECTION WITH CREATION, SACRIFICE AND
TRANSLATION.

IT is evident from what has already been said that faith is a continuous thing. "The just shall *live* by faith." This is something very much more than one solitary act. Too many are content with knowing that they committed a supreme act of faith once in their lives. So far, all well and good, but it is not enough. It is true in that way we become justified, but "The *just* shall live by faith."

It is this life of faith we have depicted in the chapter that now opens before us. A chapter as fascinating and full of interest as any in the Bible. As we read it we are led to see that it is only faith that counts with God. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." The great worthies of Old Testament time pass before us; but we must not think that these only are called to tread a path of faith, or that such a path belongs alone to some specially called to it, it is in reality the path of all the justified—"The just shall live by *faith*." It is to be faith all along. They must live, day by day, on the principle on which they received their justification.

V. 1: "*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*" (Other translations are: "Now faith is the assurance (or the giving substance to) of things hoped for, the proving (or test) of things not seen."—R.V. "Now faith is the substantiating of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."—N.T., J.N.D.)

We have given these different renderings in the hope that they may throw light upon the true nature of faith. For ourselves, excellent as the authorised version is, and fond as we are of it, we think that in this instance the phrase "Faith is the substance," is far too subjective. It seems to make something of faith, whereas faith in itself is as intangible and undiscoverable as sight. Faith always looks without, never at itself. It must always have an object; there must always be something previous. Thus "Faith cometh by hearing; and hearing by the word of God." Persons are so apt to try and *discover* their faith. They might just as well seek to discover

their sight. I know that I have sight, because I see. I know that I have faith, because I believe. For these reasons we much prefer the Revised marginal rendering—faith is “the giving substance to” or as the other rendering gives it, “Faith is the substantiating of things hoped for.” To use a simple illustration. Someone comes home from Australia and tells you that he has ten pounds for you, given him by a friend of yours. He goes on to say that he hasn’t the gold with him, but if you will oblige him with the name of your banker he will pay a cheque in to your account for the amount. What takes place? If you rely upon the truth of the message you at once comply, and you reckon yourself ten pounds richer than you were the day before, and this in spite of not having seen a single coin. But your faith has given substance to the ten pounds, and it is just as real to you and just as much yours, in every real sense, as if the ten sovereigns were filling your hand.

But faith is also said to be the “proving” (or test, R.V.), or the “conviction” (N.T.); and this again is preferable to “evidence” in the A.V. For, if you really had faith, you would prove it by attending at your bankers and inspecting your pass book with the absolute conviction that the ten pounds would be there.

V. 2: “*For by it the elders obtained a good report.*” This we understand to refer to what follows, and not to some separate company specially known as the elders and not referred to again in this chapter.

V. 3: “*Through faith 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.*” Thus the New Testament confirms the account given of creation in Genesis. The worlds came into being by the word of God. “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” In the first instance it was an act of creation, whatever processes may have gone on while the earth was in a state of chaos, into which from some cause or other it appears to have lapsed. The account given in Genesis evidently refers to its preparation for man, for as far as is known man has been but a comparatively short time on this earth. As another has said, “The beginning of Genesis does not give a history of the details of creation itself, nor the history of the universe. It gives the fact that in the beginning God created; and afterwards, the things that regard man on the

earth." The force of the Greek word translated "framed," is, according to Strong's Concordance, "to complete thoroughly, *i.e.*, repair or adjust—fit, frame, mend, &c., prepare, restore."

A leading scientific man has recently said that science has nothing to do with origins. But faith has, and it is by faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God. As to this it was also said at the recent meetings of the British Association by one of the most popular of the scientists of the day, "Nor could we get beyond the Old Testament explanation of existence, the fiat of God." This is what the Bible contends for all along the line—"He spake and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast." A learned theologian said on the same occasion, "A sound theology no longer claims for that noble foreword of the Bible that it is a scientific treatise miraculously anticipating in every word and detail the discoveries of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries." So far as the term "scientific treatise" is concerned this may be admitted. We do not believe the Bible was ever intended to *teach* science, any more than it teaches medicine or surgery, or any of the arts. It does not even tell us how to make a suit of clothes. Neither do we believe it contradicts science, except that "falsely so called." It reveals God, and God as calling everything into being; for this men could not discover for themselves. Men by searching can find out most things, but they cannot find out God. If then, as Sir Oliver Lodge says, as quoted above, "We cannot get beyond the Old Testament explanation of existence, the fiat of God," it would seem as if science were gradually coming into line with the Bible. Especially as the same authority added, "In his opinion, the whole story of the Creation, was quite compatible with evolutionary science." Too much might easily be built upon a statement of this kind. Yet the same speaker went on to say: "In Genesis we had a beautifully poetic and inspired account of the Creation." We believe the account in Genesis is given for specific purposes, and designed and intended to be of far more use to man than all the elaborate developments in nature he claims to have discovered, *viz.*, to teach him the very object God had in view in reforming this earth for his habitation. Why the earth was allowed to become without form and void we are not precisely told, but, in separating the light from the darkness, God would seem to indicate that He intended to solve the problem of good and evil, while this earth was to become the scene, and man the agent

in the solution. In any case, what we learn from our verse is that things did not originate of themselves, or proceed from other things, but were framed by the word of God.

Here we are face to face with God, and faith delights in it. How cold and pale upon the cliffs and crags, the rocks and ravines, are the fingers of nature seen to be. She may speak, but it is only in signs and with a God ever receding. It is by faith we understand, the pursuit of knowledge is like some *ignis-fatuus*. We are told now that there is a truce between Genesis and scientists, because theologians are recognising that the account of the Creation is not intended to be scientific, but was written for a different object. Well, we who trust Genesis as the sure Word of God, can afford to leave the field to scientists within certain limits.* But we are not going to relinquish the divine account of Creation which has been handed down to us. An objection sometimes raised to this is, that the account in Genesis is only one of several accounts extant. "The mythology of Persia describes six creative periods of a thousand years; the cosmogony of the Chaldeans is similar, while that of the Etruscans agrees still more closely with the order of Genesis." This, however, disproves nothing. God did not leave man without knowledge, and there is every reason for thinking that He would impart to an intelligent creature like man, some information as to the origin of the world in which he had been placed. It is very likely, therefore, that at one time in the world's history there was common knowledge as to the Creation, but as men departed from God, this became obscured, yet was handed down through the Chosen Seed and reproduced by Moses.

Whether the above is so or not, there the account remains, confirmed by the statement from Sinai that "in *six days* the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day" (Ex. xxii) †. How can we account for the seventh day apart from this? That relic of antiquity is with us still, so that we cannot treat it as poetry, or matter only fit for children. How is it to be explained? Man has never devised anything of the sort. The Bible always connects it with Creation (see also Ex.

* But how shifting are their views—as sand moved by the sea or driven by the wind; while the Bible holds the field to-day as much as ever. We are told that leading scientists are now discarding some of Darwin's theories of evolution.

† It is perhaps important to notice that in the Genesis account we get two words—"created" and "made"; while, in addition, there is the direct statement, "which God created and made."

xxxi. 17). If man is in the dark as to Creation, it is because he seeks the explanation by knowledge instead of by faith. It is "by faith we understand the worlds were framed by the word of God."

V. 4: "*By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh.*" First, we have faith in connection with creation—we understand how all things came into being. Then the next thing faith apprehends is the need of an appropriate sacrifice. Why? Because, sin having come in, it is the only ground on which, as sinners, we can be in relation with God.

It is of all importance to notice that the contrast is not between Abel and Cain, but between the sacrifice that each brought. There was no contrast between Abel and Cain, for they were both sinners. On the ground of what they were in themselves God could not accept either.

Here, then, we learn the simple yet profound lesson which pursues its course through the whole of the Bible. It is the place and meaning of sacrifice. All are alike shut out from God. All are alike guilty. All equally need peace, pardon and acceptance. This has been true ever since our first parents were driven from the garden. It was through sacrifice that Abel obtained witness that he was righteous. He was not a more excellent man than Cain—that it does not say—but he "offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain."

The all important question is, How is this excellent sacrifice to be obtained? Without it we are lost. No works, no amendments, no religious observances can take its place. All these may be works of the flesh. Abel's act was a work of faith. He yet speaks though dead. A more excellent sacrifice than he ever offered, and one of which his was only a type, is within the reach of everyone of us. Blood has been shed which speaketh better things than that of Abel. It is the Blood of Christ. Just as Abel speaks though dead, so God speaks to all of the One Whose death is the sacrifice for the whole world. That sacrifice is available to us; all that is needed is faith to appropriate it. God has provided Himself a Lamb, and that Lamb is the propitiation for the whole world. Faith accepts it. And where this is so God accounts that one

righteous, as He did Abel. Man needs a sacrifice for he is a sinner, and he cannot propitiate God. The sacrifice he needs is within his reach. All he requires is appropriating faith. God's word tells him of his need, and how it is to be met. The question is, Does man believe God? Abel apparently did; Cain did not. Insensible to God's claims and his own need he provided a sacrifice to suit himself. We read of those—referring to a much later time, and indeed embracing our own—who have “gone in the way of Cain.” He has a large following to-day. Man does not like to feel himself a lost sinner, and in need of one to die for him. Strange to say he is ready to substitute anything for the one thing which alone can meet his need. He will make the Church his saviour, sacraments, prayer, almsgiving, anything. Observe, Cain brought an offering. He was not irreligious, he kept up the outward form, but he followed his own thoughts instead of God's, and he perished. How many have gone in that way since!

Yet how simple is salvation. It depends upon something entirely outside ourselves. If it were our works, our observances, or our goodness, we might well despair. We should never know when we had done enough. But these can never blot out a single sin. All depended upon the victim Abel brought, and consequently there could be no room for doubt. “Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice.” There is nothing as to his own excellence; one thing and one thing alone secured his pardon—the One who died in his stead. It is the same to-day. Over and over again we read such sentences as, “Christ died for the ungodly”; “He was delivered for our offences”; “Who His Own Self bare our sins”; and faith accepts it, knowing that Christ was excellent enough for God, for He has been raised from the dead. **It is One outside ourselves and what He did that saves us.**

And when there is this simple childlike faith God bears testimony. God bears witness first of all that Christ's offering is sufficient—that His blood “cleanses from all sin”; and then that the one, whoever he or she may be, who comes to Him on that ground is righteous.

V. 5: “*By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.*”

Abel dies, and Enoch is translated that he should not see death; the two representing the saints that will be raised and those that

will be changed at Christ's coming.* There is an appropriate order in these verses. First, an intelligent understanding of how all things came into being. Second, the ground of acceptance with God, Who made all things. Third, the walk that pleases God. God testified of Abel's gifts and Enoch's walk.

The translation of Enoch, following upon the "excellent sacrifice" offered by Abel, "by which he obtained witness that he was righteous," is surely to remind us that the offering up of Christ is so excellent that death is completely annulled. Abel, as far as we know, was the first to die, and all the terrors of death seem to gather round his murdered body. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." Death was gone for him, and he from the scene where it reigned. So completely were all the claims of justice met; so perfectly had sin been atoned for, that the believer could pass straight into the presence of God without dying. We who believe, to-day, are waiting for this same translation. He Who has already gone up into heaven is our life. He has borne sin's penalty. And at any moment we are ready to pass into the light where our Saviour has gone before. May we have the faith of Enoch. He had intelligence as to what God would do. It came as no surprise. He knew the value of the sacrifice of Abel, and God's presence was his home. He walked, as it were, straight there. God claimed him. Mortality was swallowed up in life and death in victory. So Christ will claim us when He descends into the air. Without dying we pass to the Father's house.

But there was another thing. "*Before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God.*" Do not let us lose sight of this. It is a very one-sided Christianity which accepts the benefits of Christ's death, and never troubles about what may please Him. Abel and Enoch together represent the whole of the Christian course, which may be summed up in two words, *acceptance* and *acceptability*. These two things are brought together in St. Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians, Chapter v. "Absent from the body . . . present with the Lord": this is proof of our acceptance. On the other hand the Apostle adds: "Wherefore we endeavour, that, whether present or absent, we may be acceptable to Him" (or "please Him perfectly," or "be agreeable," vv. 6 and 9). Is this our ambition? Do we require any other epitaph or encomium than this: "He pleased God"? The one thing the apostle seemed

* See "Letter to Young People" on this topic in present issue.

to desire for those converts of his in Thessalonica in view of the Lord's coming was expressed in almost identical words. He says "That as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more."

In what way, may we not enquire, did Enoch please God? He walked with Him. It is all summed up in these few words. There was communion, intercourse, attachment. The world was evil in that day, and Enoch had to predict coming judgment (see Jude 14, 15), but he himself kept close to God. We cannot please Him if we are arm in arm with the world. The sacrifice that has brought us to *Him* has separated us from *it*. The blood on the lintel that sheltered Israel from the judgment upon Egypt also made them strangers in it. With shoes on their feet and staff in their hand they were to eat the lamb roast with fire. It is the same to-day, if we are to know how to "walk and to please God," it must be a walk of separation. The separation will be manifest some day when God takes us; let it be real now. There are of course other ways of pleasing God. Enoch was no recluse. He had sons and daughters, and he had no doubt many an opportunity of doing a good turn and evidencing his practical godliness.

V. 6: "*But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.*"

Why is it impossible to please God without faith? Because faith trusts Him; faith listens to His voice; faith interprets His wishes; faith expects Him to act; faith looks to Him and is saved: whereas, without faith, man trusts to his own resources. To faith the worlds were framed by the word of God; to faith the sacrifice God has provided is all sufficient; faith seeks God's company and asks only to know His will. Therefore "without faith it is impossible to please Him." In order to take the first step with God I must exercise faith; I must *believe* that He is." The Bible never argues about the existence of God; it never attempts to prove it; it reveals Him, and faith accepts it. Man naturally always begins at the other end—he tries to *know*. He fell at the tree of knowledge, and he can never of himself get beyond it. He is always climbing, climbing, climbing; always trying to raise himself, but never finding God. The moment I believe that He is I discover Him. And then the blessed experience follows that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

“WITHOUT ME YE CAN DO NOTHING.”

“Without Me ye can nothing do,”
 No word of Thine, Lord, e'er more true ;
 So impotent, so frail are we,
 So nothing worth apart from Thee.

We cannot for a moment stand
 Unaided by Thy mighty hand ;
 Our best resolves are sure to fail,
 For flesh is weak and nature frail.

And oh, how constantly we find
 The workings of a perverse mind,
 With strong temptation from within,
 To turn aside and yield to sin.

How slowly we the lesson learn,
 That we away from self must turn ;
 And view, with eyes of faith, the One
 Who all the work for us hath done.

Nor yet the future need we fear,
 God's promise shineth bright and clear ;
 Like rainbow spanning earth and sky,
 In time of need He draweth nigh.

And knowing that we are but dust,
 He bids us place in Him our trust ;
 For He has power to save and keep
 The weakest of His blood-bought sheep.

For ages, cleft has been the rock,
 Which still upholds the little flock ;
 What rest to realise each hour
 The fulness of His saving power

Oh Saviour, may each faint desire
 Be fanned into an ardent fire !
 And when we're trusting only Thee,
 We shall from sin's control be free.

J.M.F.G.

“If ever man was God, or God was man, Jesus Christ was both.”

“HE BROUGHT ME.”

S. S. 2, 4.

Salvation :	“ I will bring you <i>up</i> ”	..	..	..	Ex. iii. 17
Separation :	“ I will bring you <i>out</i> ”	..	..	..	Ez. xx. 34
Humiliation :	“ I will bring you <i>down</i> ”	..	..	..	Jer. xlix. 16
Habitation :	“ I will bring you <i>in</i> ”	..	..	..	Ex. vi. 8.

W. T. R.

LETTERS TO YOUNG PEOPLE.

THE LORD'S COMING.

(1 Thess., iv., 13-18; v., 1-11).

“ WE ” AND “ THEY.”

Dear Young Friends,

This morning I was reading to some young people St. Paul's account of the **Coming of the Lord** as recorded in the above passage. What specially struck me was the use he makes of two pronouns, “ we ” and “ they.” When he is speaking of that aspect of the Lord's Coming which refers only to Christians, he says “ we.” But when, at the beginning of the fifth chapter, he is alluding to the day of the Lord, which affects the world, he says “ they.”

I will dwell upon this distinction later, but, first of all, let me ask, Do you attach much importance to the Second Coming of Christ? There is a prior question I might almost ask, Do you *believe* it? If you believe in His first coming, and you have accepted the wonderful story of His birth, life and death, it ought not to be difficult to make you believe in His Second Coming. The proofs of the one are the proofs of the other. The proof that He came at all lies in the fact that certain things predicted of Him were fulfilled when He came. The proof that He must come the second time is that certain other things predicted of Him still remain to be fulfilled. Refer to Isaiah lxi. as an instance of this. Down to the middle of verse 2—the word Lord marks the break—has been fulfilled (see Luke iv. 16-19). The remainder of the verse, and indeed the whole chapter, is still unfulfilled. Another instance is found in Zech. ix. 9-10. Verse 9 has been fulfilled, See Matt. xxi., 4, 5. But verse 10 still remains to be fulfilled. Can we believe that God is going to leave any of His word unaccomplished? Has it not been said not one jot or tittle shall fail? Then, if so, Christ *must* come the second time.

But to return to my original question. *Do you attach much importance to the return of Christ?* Well, you will not deny that His first coming was important. It was so important that the

event was spoken of four thousand years before it took place. And during all that time there were saintly men and women who were looking forward to it. Must not the Second Coming be equally important? The happiness of millions depended upon His First Coming. The happiness of millions depends upon His Second Coming.

You may think, "But He has been away so long." Yes, two thousand years, nearly. But this is not so long as between Gen. iii. and Matt. i. That was 4,000 years. Do I hear you saying, "But His coming would be so strange. It would be such an interruption to the ordinary course of things, the mass of people don't seem to expect Him, and the world never seems to think that His coming is near." All this is only too true. But, then, it was the same the first time He came. When the wise men arrived at Jerusalem enquiring "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" we read, "When Herod, the King, had heard these things, he was troubled, *and all Jerusalem with him.*" It will be so again. Nevertheless, He must come, because it is written "*He must reign.*"

How will He come? Let us turn back to our passage and see. There is a double action with respect to it. His Coming has, first of all, reference to His own, and then to the world. In other words, we are to meet Him in the air before He shews Himself to the world generally. The first stage is all a matter of pure grace; the next, all a matter of pure judgment. And I would say to you, dear young friends, beware of those who teach otherwise. There are some over-zealous men who bring judgment into Christ's Coming for His own, and would tell you that unless you reach a certain degree of faithfulness, you will be left behind when others are caught up. These people know more than the Bible tells us. But there is one thing they never tell us, and for want of which their system is valueless, they never can tell you what degree of faithfulness will ensure your meeting the Lord in the air, or what degree of unfaithfulness will necessitate your being left behind for trial and suffering. How different are the exhortations of the apostle. He affirms of all believers ye "are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief." "Ye are *all* the children of the light." And for that reason he exhorts them to "watch and be sober." But no threat is added about being left behind. God does not try to frighten His children into good behaviour, like some foolish nurses, who are always telling refractory children about an imaginary bogey.

But let us look at the "we" and the "they," and it will help us to understand this better and see clearly the double aspect of Christ's Second Coming.

In chapter iv. vers. 13-18, there is no mention of the world or of Christ appearing to it. It is "concerning them which are asleep," that the apostle writes (ver. 13), which can only refer to believers. Then he adds: "*For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.*" This makes it perfectly clear to whom he is addressing his remarks, and about whom. And may I ask you to notice that the words "*even so*" indicate what I have already emphasised earlier in this letter, that the *Second Coming* is as certain as the *first*, and the first a guarantee of the second. Please think this out for yourself.

Will you notice further, that in order to shew the certainty of what is going to happen, the apostle tells the Thessalonians that what he is going to say to them is "by the Word of the Lord." It was indeed a fresh communication which had never been made before. Prophets of old had spoken of the Day of the Lord, but no one had breathed a word of a company being caught up right away from this world to meet the Lord in the air. We are to be "caught away," therefore this aspect of the Second Coming is termed the Rapture.

Only believers have part in the Rapture. The dead will be raised, but only "the dead in Christ." But all believers will not have died. And so the Apostle speaks of another company, "We which are alive and remain." Twice over he refers to these. There are some who are to go from this earth without dying. But it is together with the dead who have been raised, and as one company, we shall meet the Lord.

This need not, dear young friends, seem too wonderful to be true. It is true, first of all, because God says it. But let us remember that even men to-day can make machines to enable them to fly. Cannot God, then, cause us to pass through space without the aid of these? He Who has poised this solid globe in space upon which our feet rest, and which He causes to move through space at an enormous speed by the power of attraction, cannot He do the same for His people? Think of what an attraction there will be in the heavens at that moment drawing us upward. He Who gives to the earth its attraction, and to the sun and the planets

their attraction, He surely has power to attract His own irresistibly to Himself when He descends into the air. All the love that brought Him down to the manger and to Calvary, all the love that will cause Him to leave His throne to fetch those He gave Himself for, and all the power He possesses will be there to draw us upward.

He will attract His own, but no one else. You know that in nature different materials attract different substances. A magnet will attract a needle, but if you rub a piece of amber on cloth that will attract things to which it is more akin. The believers' life is hid with Christ in God. Is it any wonder that the One Who is our life should attract us? Is there not an affinity which will surmount every obstacle, so that when Christ Who is our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with Him in glory? The meeting in the air must precede this.

Why does the Apostle say, "*we* which are alive"? Did he really think that he would certainly be here alive on earth when our Lord returned? And was he mistaken? Some would have us believe so. And they use this to try and throw discredit upon the doctrine of the pre-millennial return of Christ. But the language of the Apostle does not necessarily mean that he as an individual would be "alive and remain." Indeed, he nowhere says this. He is speaking of the true hope of the Church, and, as forming part of it, he necessarily includes himself, being then alive, and says "we." Just as when a new Parliament is elected, an individual member might say, "We are all going to meet the King at the opening of Parliament," because speaking of himself as part of it; but he, himself, as an individual, might die in the interval, and so might many others, but, nevertheless, Parliament, as such, would meet the King. This is how the Apostle thought of the Lord's Coming, but he never affirms that he as an individual would be alive. So that all the cavilling and criticism of men on this head falls to the ground.

There is then this blessed hope—this *immediate hope*—for us as believers. The Lord Himself shall descend, and we shall be caught up to meet Him, and "so shall we ever be with the Lord." Could any prospect satisfy our hearts more? And not only ours, but His. And this one fact alone goes a long way to prove its truth. It is just what we should expect Him to do, and, we may surely add, just what we want Him to do, come Himself and fetch

us—leave His throne to gather His own together, and enter His Father's House with myriads of His redeemed. Is there a grander spectacle anywhere unfolded in scripture? The Lord Himself in all His power and glory moving down from His throne; that movement announced by the trump of God, and accompanied by the archangels' voice, and believers whether dead or living, summoned by irresistible might to enter the presence of Him Who loved them, and Who had washed them from their sins in His own blood. Let us look for it and long for it more.

But what will follow this? The times and seasons spoken of in the prophetic scriptures, which will usher in the Day of the Lord, but have no reference to the Church. These are the very things the Apostle proceeds to speak of. "*But of the times and the seasons brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.*" (Would there not have been a need had they referred to the Church?) "*For yourselves know perfectly that the Day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them.*" Notice the change indicated in these words. No longer is it the Rapture, which may happen at any moment, but "times and seasons"; and the "Day of the Lord"; no longer is it the Lord coming with the shout of command to call His own up to be with Him, and accompanied by the sound of the trump, but coming stealthily as the thief without sound and without being announced; and consequently—and this we beg you to note—no longer is it "we," but "they." "When *they* shall say peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them." How different to the portion of the believer.

"*For God hath not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ Who died for us, that, whether we watch or sleep, we should live together with Him.*" All believers on earth to-day, whether young or old, are to be amongst the watching ones. (The word should be *watch* in ver. 10, not *wake*). But I ask you to observe that we are not told to watch in order to become children of light, but because we are children of light. It is the realisation of that that will keep us watching, and nothing else. "*Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober.*" The apostle both positively and negatively assures us of what we are; and it is grace and grace alone

which has made us this ; and his exhortation to watch is grounded upon this consideration, and this consideration only. Can any of the children of the light and of the day be left behind for the night and the darkness? To ask this question is surely to answer it. God does not mix up law and grace, standing and state in this way, even if men do.

Let us hold fast then, dear young friends, to the "we" and the "they," and keep the distinction ever clear in our minds. The apostle makes no other distinction. He knows nothing of "two translations." All who are included in the "we" will respond to the Lord's shout, and none of them will be included in the "sudden destruction" when He returns to earth. How can they be when they are said to come with Him? Will He come with a mutilated Body and only a fraction of His Bride? Nay, for all share the same glory and on the same ground—His finished work, and the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost.

If we can, with all the desire of our hearts, class ourselves amongst the "we," what reasons we have for watching ; more than Rebecca had for desiring to see the face of Isaac, or they that wait for the morning. Where can you place yourself? Is it amongst the "we" or the "they"?

Your Friend,

THE EDITOR.

PREACH.

- P Persuasively.
 - R Reasonably.
 - E Earnestly.
 - A Acceptably.
 - C Confidently.
 - H Humbly.
-

"STONES"

- A *Powerful Stone* 1 Sam. xvii. 49
 - A *Protective Stone* Dan. vi. 17
 - A *Precious Stone* Matt. xxi. 42
 - A *Powerless Stone* Matt. xxvii. 66
- W. T. R.

FOUNDATION TRUTHS.—REGENERATION.

By GEORGE HUCKLESBY.

HAVING considered Man's Ruin in Adam, and his Redemption by Christ, we now pass on to another important truth, viz., Regeneration by the Holy Spirit. There are few subjects which have given rise to more difficulty and perplexity than that of Regeneration, or the New Birth.* It is not merely changing our opinion, or altering our course of life, but the imparting of a new life—the implanting of a new nature. This Foundation Truth is sadly obscured by Ritualism and by Romanism, and seriously frittered away, if not set aside entirely, by the Rationalism of Modern Theology. It therefore behoves us to take our bearings from Heaven's Unerring Compass as we cross the sea of life to the Shores of Eternity, and to test the Foundations of our hope for another world by the Light of Eternal Truth.

To err here is to make a fatal mistake, and to be eternally ruined. To be born but once means to die twice, but to be born twice means to die but once. God has given us His Holy Word to guide our feet into the Way of Peace, and to set us on the King's Highway for the Father's House on high.

The Scriptures make Regeneration to be a *sine qua non* with regard to Salvation. Morality says, "Reform man"; Science says, "Enlighten him"; Civilisation says, "Elevate him"; but God's Word says, "Ye must be born again." Man's plan is to improve the flesh by resolution, or force of will, by individual determination to overcome the evil and develop the good; to shield and help by environment, but the Fall of Man has shattered that to pieces six thousand years ago. If Adam could not stand in such environment as Paradise, how can any man stand to-day, shield and educate him as you will? Nay, it is not reformation, but regeneration he needs; not evolution or resolution, but revolution he must experience; not the restraint of law, but the constraint of Love.

Regeneration is one of the great Foundation Truths of the Gospel. In John iii. 3, we learn its necessity; and in 1 Pet. i. 23,

* The word *regeneration* is used only twice in the N.T., and in both cases has a wider significance than new birth, and as commonly understood. The common usage of the word—which is simply an interchange for new birth—must not be confounded with the Scripture use of the word.—(Ed.).

we see the means whereby it is brought about. The necessity for Regeneration is clearly taught in our Lord's words, "Ye must be born again." The New Birth is the initial step in true Christian life, apart from it there can be no vital Christianity according to God. Thus the Lord again and again uttered the solemn fact to Nicodemus. The speaker was the Omniscient One, as stated in the previous chapter, "Who knew all men, and knew what was in men"; He was "the Faithful and True Witness" whose heart was filled with tenderest pity, and whose eyes often overflowed with tears of tenderest love. The one to whom He thus spoke was "a Master in Israel."

It was not to the poor lonely outcast at Sychar's well these searching words were addressed, but to one of the fairest specimens of the human race. Nicodemus was a wealthy man, as seen in John xix. 39, and yet he must experience this radical change. He was an educated man, one who stood high in social rank and in intellectual ability, for he was a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim, the highest Civil and Ecclesiastical Court among the Jews. He was a moral man, for we do not read of any flaw in his character, nothing is recorded against him as to his life, if it had been so, he could not have been a Jewish Rabbi. Moreover, he was a religious man, belonging to the strictest sect of the religious world, a Pharisee, one who prayed often and fasted frequently, and who gave tithes of all he possessed, and yet, to this fine specimen of humanity, our Blessed Lord said, "Ye must be born again."

Man is not only a sinner by practice, but also by nature. He is "born as a wild ass's colt," away from God, and having no desire to return to God, and if saved at all, he must be sought and saved by grace alone. If it were possible for God to take such an one without this mighty change, and place him before the throne, as we see in Isaiah vi., he could not be happy there. The defiled sinner must be cleansed, and the rebellious sinner must be born again, otherwise he cannot enjoy the presence of Him who dwells in unsullied light, and inhabits uncreated brightness. Man's religion may reform, but it cannot regenerate; morality may cleanse the life, but it cannot change the heart, God only can do this.

Regeneration is not nature improved. You may educate the flesh as you will, but it is flesh still. It is like renovating a house

with rotten timbers and a crumbling foundation, it does not make the building safe. This mighty change is not mere religiousness—a change of our religious opinions, or creed, or Church. A man may be a member of the most evangelical Church, or most orthodox Chapel and yet not be born again. He may go through all the rites and ceremonies of Christendom, and yet never go to heaven. He may occupy the most exalted ecclesiastical position in the land, and yet be a stranger to saving grace. Saul of Tarsus was a Pharisee of the Pharisees, the Athenians were most religious, having 30,000 idols in their city, the Mohammedan is most zealous in his prayers, and would die for his cause, and yet apart from Regeneration, not one of them could be saved. It is so with the Hindu and his Buddhism, the Chinaman with his Confucianism, they, too, must be born again, or never see the Kingdom of God. The same thing is true in Christendom, as seen in Matt. vii. 22; Luke xiii. 26. A man may be associated with God's people as Judas was, and be baptised as a Christian, as Simon Magus, and yet still be a stranger to grace and to God.

Regeneration is a thorough radical change, a momentous work wrought in the soul which only the Holy Spirit can accomplish. It imparts a new life with new desires, new tastes, new emotions, and aspirations. The regenerated one is said to be "born of God," "born of the Spirit," "born from above." He is Heaven-born and Heaven-bound.

But what are the means employed to bring about this mighty change? The Spirit and the Word. The Holy Spirit is the mighty Worker, and the Word of God is the instrument He employs to accomplish this glorious work. As in the first creation, the Spirit of God "moved upon the face of the waters," and then came the Word of God, "Let there be light," even so is it in New Birth. As the Word of God is preached, the Spirit of God applies it with Sin-convicting, Soul-converting power, and by His Almighty operation the Believer is regenerated and becomes a Child of God by faith in Christ Jesus. The Spirit is invisible, but His influence can be both felt and seen, even as the wind and its effects (John iii. 8). Hence we read in 1 Thess. i. the preached Word came to those believers "in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance," and the practical results were soon made manifest in turning to God from idols to serve the Living God, and to wait for His Son from

Heaven. Thus we have the Manifest Proof that this wondrous, God-wrought change has taken place. God works from within, man works from without. The regenerated one no longer practises sin, because He is born of God, and indwelt by the Spirit. By this power working in him he overcomes sin, self and Satan. His heart flows out in real love to Him Who has thus begotten him, and embraces all those who belong to the same heavenly family. By vital union with the Lord Jesus Christ, he is enabled to bear fruit to God's praise and glory day by day until caught up to be in the Father's House for ever and ever.

THE TABLE.

Partakers of the table—
 The table of our Lord ;
 We wait upon His Spirit,
 According to His Word.
 By faith we see the Altar
 On which the Victim bled,
 The sacrifice once offered,
 For us, and in our stead.

We own for our transgressions
 Oh Lord ! that Thou hast died ;
 We've made our sad confessions—
 For Thou wast crucified.
 Now for a full redémption,
 So gloriously complete,
 We bring our poor oblations
 And lay them at Thy feet.

The bread which we have broken
 Obedient to Thy word,
 We take it as the token
 Of deepest love outpoured.
 The cup which Thou desiredst
 We likewise should partake,
 We drink in deep devotion,
 And for Thy dear Name's sake.—F. J. J. and D. G.

“ Do not speak of past, present, and future sins ; it is a foolish confusion of the *time* when my heart thinks of it, and of the *work* that put them away. As to future sins, I ought never to think of sinning again. As to past sins, how many were past when Christ died ? The work was done when they were all future. It is confounding the work done, with the effect in me.”

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

J. A. Ques. : *I would like you to give an explanation of John viii. 37-44 in the light of verse 31.*

Ans. : Your difficulty is, I suppose, How could Jesus address such words to those who believed on Him. This can only be understood, we believe, as the intensity of the situation is apprehended. It is a question, throughout the chapter, not merely of belief, but of actual state. We are so apt to judge every statement of Scripture from the standpoint of Believe and be saved. Those who believed had to continue in Christ's word—to be made free by the truth (vv. 31, 32). His *word*, mark, not, His words, here, *i.e.*, they must be the thing He is speaking about. The sequel reveals the fact that they have never yet realised their bondage. Christ says, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." And then adds, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." When challenged as to who He was, He could reply "Altogether that which I say unto you" (v. 25, N.T.). He was the very thing He was speaking about—a living exemplification of all His teaching. Only in this way can we be free, only in this way can He make us free, and only in this way can we truly be His disciples, when the final test comes, by becoming what He is, the very thing that He says—the thing itself.

The whole chapter is little understood, and is worthy of the most profound study.

R.C. Ques. : *Is it right for a Christian to join a Union (Trade), and if not, what should his position be in the event of a strike?*

Ans. : These questions are most difficult to answer, because they largely have to do with one's own individual conscience. In matters of this kind each must act before the Lord for himself. It is only possible, therefore, to deal with the matter in a very general way. Unions stand in a very different position to what they did. Even the masters sometimes require a man to belong to one. While it would be decidedly wrong for a Christian to form a Union, it is not quite the same to join one when formed. We suppose they exist ostensibly to look after the interests of the men, and for no bad purpose, though wrong, no doubt, is often done. If anyone

has a conscience about it, the best plan would be to seek employment in a sphere where these questions do not arise.

In the case of a strike a Christian man would seek to determine whether it was justifiable, apart altogether from the opinion of his fellow workmen, and if not, would as far as he was able seek to stand by his employers. If, on the other hand, there was cause, though he might not have been one to strike, yet a strike having commenced he could not very well uphold the masters in an unjustifiable course.

“Law-keepers for righteousness cannot afford to be quite honest. It would spoil their stock-in-trade if they looked too narrowly at what their hands are manufacturing for God. It is inseparable from their business that they cannot afford to keep a scrupulous conscience ; and here they bring in the thought of God’s mercy, and hope that God will take their shoddy for good cloth.”

* * * *

“The righteousness of God. In Romans . . . it is God’s consistency with what is due to Christ’s work in redemption. God therefore justifies him that believes in Jesus, according to the value of His atoning death in His sight ; and so we are made (or become) that righteousness in Him risen and ascended.”

* * * *

“Lost and guilty are different ; one my state ; the other my responsibility, because of my failure.”

* * * *

“It is better to learn the character of the flesh by a ray of light from God’s word—to believe from His report, that from the first shoot it puts forth to the last fruit it bears, it is the old tree, and will never bring forth anything but wild grapes. A hard lesson this, but a true one.”

“TOGETHER.”

Past : *His Declaration* .. “Gathered together” .. Matt. xviii. 20.
 Present : *Our Occupation*.. “Striving together” .. Phil. i. 27.
 Future : *The Consummation* “Caught up together” .. 1 Thes. iv. 17.
 W.T.R.

THE FAITH AND THE FLOCK

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EDITORIALS.

IN connection with the exposition of Hebrews xi. 3, last month, we stated in a footnote, "that leading scientists are now discarding some of Darwin's theories of evolution." This revolt is far more widespread than we were then aware, and we believe our readers will be interested in some quotations from an address given by Prof. L. T. Townsend, Ph.D., D.D., of Brookline, Mass., before the Boston Convention of 1905, which will demonstrate how completely the faith of the scientific world has been shaken. The title of the address is "The Collapse of Evolution."

* * * *

After stating that there was a good deal of hesitation at first, "in adopting the theory, but later it was so generally accepted . . . that for one to have questioned it would have been regarded as a certain indication of an unphilosophic, unscientific and unscholarly mind," the Professor adds, "The collapse of evolution implies that at the present stage of scientific enquiry, the attractive and stately edifice . . . is found to be a poorly constructed affair, supported by not one single well established fact in the whole domain of science, philosophy or religion." He then quotes from Prof. G. D. Cope, a pronounced evolutionist, the following: "Retrogradation in nature is as well established as evolution," and makes this comment, "When, therefore, the evolutionist in support of his theory says

there is in the kingdom of living things a universal law of constant development and improvement, he most certainly is not telling the truth; and for one to build theories upon such false assumptions is clearly a gross violation of the scientific spirit and method."

He proceeds: "But what tells even more fatally against the assertion of evolutionists that man has worked his way up from a savage state in which he is said to have originated, are the almost innumerable and certainly unmistakable proofs of decadence rather than progress. Prof. Schlegel reached this conclusion, '. . . The more I investigate ancient history, the more I am convinced that the nations set out from a true worship of the Supreme Being.'" The speaker again quotes from another authority, as to the antiquity of man, "'The evidence for the antiquity of man on the hypothesis of evolution is purely speculative, no human remains having as yet been found in either the miocene or pliocene strata.'" Again, "The entire drift of reputable scientific opinion is in favour of bringing the origin of the human race within easy hailing distance." One more, "'There is nothing whatever to show that man has been in America longer than four or five thousand years at the utmost.'" "

* * * *

He then quotes from St. George Mivart: "With regard to the conception as put forward by Mr. Darwin, I can not truly characterise it except by an epithet I employ with great reluctance. I weigh my words, and have present to my mind the many distinguished naturalists who have accepted the notion, and yet I cannot call it anything but a puerile hypothesis."

More of the same kind could be added, but we must stop. We only ask one question: Who can estimate the responsibility of those who have used the doctrine of evolution to discredit the Bible?

"Throughout the book of Genesis it may be remarked, there is no mention of blood in connection with sacrifice to God. It was not till the redemption of the people of Israel was to be consummated, and the law to be given, 'added because of transgressions,' that its efficacy is brought out, or the blood mentioned at all. 'Without shedding of blood is no remission,' is a truth never to be forgotten; but in that day the question raised was about the acceptance of a sinner, not about the remission of sins."

AN OUTLINE OF "THE REVELATION."

(See Chart issued with February Number.)

NINTH SECTION. CHAPTERS XVII. ; XVIII.

By WALTER SCOTT.

THE relation of Babylon to the Beast (see Chap. xiii.) and to the political powers of Christendom, along with details of her judgment, are, in the main, the subject matter of the Chapters now under consideration. Babylon is the concentration of all antagonistic to God *religiously*. The first Beast of Rev. xiii., her partner in crime, is the embodiment of the powers hostile to God *politically*. The former is the more wicked of the two. The seductive influence of Babylon is to the ruin of souls. The brute force of the Beast is exercised in connection with the temporal interests of men. As systems they co-exist and co-operate in the coming crisis. Babylon, however, is destroyed before the Beast. It is the Beast which effects the political ruin of Babylon, whereas the Lord at His coming destroys the Beast.

Chapter xvii. is a deeply interesting one, and naturally divides into two main parts: (1) Babylon described, verses 1-6; (2) the Beast in its relation to Babylon and to the Lamb, verses 7-18.

BABYLON; OR THE GREAT WHORE, Verses 1 to 6.

The name Babylon, *confusion*, which had its historic rise in Shinar (Gen. xi. 1-9), points to the professing Church in moral ruin and disorder. The Whore, in contrast to the Bride, represents the professing body as utterly loathsome and corrupt. She sits upon "many waters" (verse 1). These waters signify "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" (verse 15). She rules over vast populations. Her sway over the nations is nigh universal. The severance of Church from State may be witnessed in our days, but prophecy points to a union of the two more general than history records. The Church—corrupt and loathsome—will yet again be in the ascendant and ride the Beast. The great whore will be Satan's counterfeit of the true church. The pretensions and wickedness of the vast consolidated systems of Christendom—fused into one—is justly and rightly termed the Whore and harlot and mother

of all religiously apostate and vile—not the papacy only, *that*, with the 1,300 sects now in existence, shall then be the display of the Devil's unity. It will be a gigantic system of spiritual whoredom—the vilest thing beneath the sun. “The kings of the earth, and the inhabitants of the earth,” that is, Christendom in its widest extent, is brought within the sphere of the harlot's awful influence (verse 2). Then the woman, that is the system, sits upon a scarlet coloured beast, the civil power (verse 3).

The Beast is the revived power of Rome presented first in a ten kingdom form, then as one great and mighty empire under its renowned head “the little horn” (Dan. vii.), who unifies the Empire. The greatness and glory of the Empire is intimated in the *scarlet* colour of the Beast. The first mention of the Beast in the Apocalypse is in Chap. xi. 7, where it is witnessed in its last and worst character, not “out of the sea” (xiii. 1), its historical rise, but “out of the bottomless pit,” its Satanic revival in the last three years and a half of its existence. But the Beast is further described as “full of names of blasphemy,” that is open, daring blasphemy will characterise the Empire in all its parts, throughout its whole extent. The “seven heads” represent successive forms of government, and its “ten horns” signify so many kings or individual rulers (verses 10, 12; compare with xiii. 1).

We have had a passing glance at the Beast (verse 3). Now the Seer, amazed, turns once again to view the harlot—the vilest thing on God's earth. Her grandeur, her pomp, her pride, her idolatry, and her bloody character, are all found in the so-called Christian church in the last days. The woman made the inhabitants *drunk* with her fornications (verse 2), now she is herself *drunk* with the blood of God's saints (verse 6).

THE BEAST AND THE HARLOT, Verses 7 to 18.

The mystery of the woman and the Beast is next disclosed by the angel. The history of the Beast is summed up in four brief crisp sentences (verse 8). “The Beast that thou sawest.” The imperialism of the Empire and as it existed in John's day. “And is not.” The mighty Empire of Rome is, politically, non-existent. The Empire as such has ceased to exist for nearly 15 centuries. “Shall ascend out of the bottomless pit,” or abyss. The Empire in the last phase of its existence shall be Satanic in its source and

character. "And go into perdition," its eternal doom. The resurrection of the Empire, amidst, and out of, universal civil and political chaos, is a wonder to the Christian apostates of that day. Both the woman and the Beast have their seat in Rome (verses 9, 18). The Antichrist makes Jerusalem the seat of his government (Dan. xi. 36-39 ; 2 Thess. ii.). The Beast is of the seven, yet an eighth (verse 11). The meaning is that the historical rise and course of the Empire (xiii. 1) will present certain features characterising it to its close, but the last emperor is a distinct monarch unlike his predecessors, *the only one Satanically inspired*—an eighth, he stands alone.

The ten kingdoms forming the territorial extent of the Empire are first presented as separate kingdoms (verse 12). Then the "ten" wearied, we suppose, with mutual jealousies, and unable longer to preserve the balance of power, combine, and with one consent place themselves—kings, kingdoms, and armies—under the rule of the Beast. We have had alliances of certain kingdoms, but the one contemplated in the prophecy before us, is undoubtedly the most gigantic confederation of powers the world has ever witnessed. Will this mighty alliance of kingdoms in Western Europe work for blessing? *No*. There are two objects which the Beast, towering in his strength and arrogant in his pretensions, seeks to accomplish. (1) To make war with the Lamb. (2) To destroy the woman—the Great Whore. The Beast does both. The order, however, in the text is not the order in historical sequence. Babylon is first destroyed, then the war against the Lamb is undertaken, the issue of which is the irremediable destruction of the Beast.

The ten kings (horns) and the Beast (verse 16) very quickly throw off the authority of the Whore, and become openly profane. Brute force characterises the Beast and the royal heads of the various kingdoms. Every semblance of religion goes in the destruction of the whore. God and Christ are openly defied (Ps. ii.). All this, and more, is simply the accomplishment of the Divine Will (verse 17). The Whore is now out of the prophetic circle of events. The Beast in its after brief history is simply an exhibition of brute force. It knows no law human or divine. Its own will is its sole authority. It marches in its pride, its arrogance, its strength, and, we may add, in its madness to do battle with God Almighty and the

heavenly army. And this is Europe! All the powers great and small are gathered in the last decisive conflict. The powers of Christendom, and not merely the ten kingdoms of the western part of Europe, hurl themselves against the Rock of Ages (xix. 19), only to suffer a destruction eternal in result.

It will be observed that in the last verse of our chapter the **Woman** is named, not the Whore. This last is her title and character in the closing hours of the crisis, nigh at hand. The Woman represents the papacy located in Rome—the seven hilled city.

Chapter xviii. must not be regarded as a continuation of the subjects of the previous chapter, *i.e.*, Babylon and the Beast. Our Chapter opens with the well known biblical formula, "After these things," which intimates a subject by itself, and really forms a vision distinct from what has gone before or from what follows. Babylon is the prophetic subject of the Chapter. Here we have no mention of the human instruments in her destruction. Neither the ten kings nor the Beast come into view. The material forces and political ascendancy of the Whore are noted in Chapter xvii. But here God is regarded as the Source of the utter judgment of that iniquitous system so abhorrent to Him. Here, too, her destruction is complete. The burning referred to in verses 8, 18, is *subsequent* to that of the previous chapter, verse 16. After her destruction by the ten kings and the Beast she exists, but as the representative of hell on earth (verse 2).

If the kings of the last great confederacy destroy the Whore (xviii. 16), other kings mourn her destruction (xviii. 9). Her political dethronement has been accomplished by the Beast and ten kings (xviii. 1), to be followed by her complete and final downfall (xviii. 18). All outside the Roman world who had been enriched by her mourn and lament. Her ruin is thorough (verse 8) and sudden (verse 10). Heaven and all who have ever suffered at her hands rejoice (verse 18; xix. 1-3). What a strange scene! The utter extinction of the religious corruption of the earth mourned and lamented in the great religious circle of Christendom, while all heaven and the redeemed rejoice and sing. In the Church the Holy Ghost now dwells, but in the corrupt church of the future Satan will take up his abode. The contrasts between the Whore and the Bride are numerous and suggestive.

INCIDENTS OF THE RESURRECTION.

BY W. H. DORMAN.

ON the Friday afternoon Joseph the Arimathean and Nicodemus had claimed the dead body of Jesus and had taken it down from the cross and carried it into Joseph's garden. There they laid it, anointed all over with masses of odoriferous and preservative ointment and swathed in folds of linen, temporarily, as time was pressing, in the tomb Joseph had had cut out of the living rock for himself. To show how liberally these ointments were bestowed John tells us that Nicodemus brought one hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes.

The women accompanied the body to the tomb and, having seen it carefully and reverently laid on the stone shelf provided for the purpose, went away to their sorrow stricken lodgings; the entrance having been closed with a massive heavy circular stone. They spent the last hour or so remaining of secular time in getting ready a further supply of aromatic drugs and sweet scented ointments, the last poor labour of love that remained for them. After they had gone, the tramp of armed men was heard approaching. The priests came up and sealed the stone in such a manner that it could not be removed without tearing away the sacred Hieratic seal, and not content with this, they left a guard to keep a watch night and day until three days had elapsed.

The body of the Lord lay in peace, unvisited through the long Sabbath day, the quietude being unbroken except by the heavy tramp of the sentinels, and the words of command when guard was relieved.

Early on the Sunday morning the pious women began to bestir themselves. The restless, loving heart of Mary of Magdala brought her first upon the scene while it was still dark. On approaching the tomb she saw to her astonishment and dismay that the stone was gone from the entrance. Not doubting for a moment that the treasure house was rifled and the precious deposit carried off, she flew to her Lord's dearest friends, Peter and John, to tell the dreadful news. Soon after she had gone, still in the grey of the morning, a little party of women came up and saw, as Mary of Magdala had done, the stone which was like a great millstone thrown down flat.

But upon it a celestial visitor was seated. He hailed them with kindly words, and assured them that Jesus was living, and delivered to them a gracious message for His mourning friends. They left the garden in hot haste, and as they sped along into the hardly wakened city, true enough, Jesus Himself met them. They fell at His feet, and held Him fast. He reinforced the Angel's message, and sent them off, fear and great joy ruling in their souls.

The two disciples to whom Mary of Magdala had communicated her message now arrive at the sepulchre, John first, and Peter behind. John looked in, no corpse was there for certain ; Peter, assured that his denied Master was not there, went straight into the tomb and found strange order reigning ; the grave clothes all wrapped up, and even the napkin, with which the head had been bound, laid neatly folded by itself. He reported to his companion, and then John, reverent John, went in and saw, and was convinced that the hand of God had been there. Jesus was gone, doubtless to heaven, from whence He had come, and there was an end of it all. The wonderful thread of the purpose of God was as yet unknown to him.

Peter and he went thoughtfully home ; Mary stayed. What was home to her ? Her dear Master was dead, and she could not have the sad pleasure of affectionately caring for the honour of the poor body. Some ruffians had doubtless carried it off for the sake of the precious drugs and costly linen, or else from spite, that could not leave Him alone even dead.

Once more she looked into the little sacred cave ; there at either end of the *loculus* sat angels. What were angels ? They were not the dear Master. They spake in sympathy, asking the cause of her sorrow. She tells them as if they were men. But what could they do for her ? She turned away again from the fruitless search. Ah ! this is more to the purpose, there stands the gardener, no doubt he will know. She implores him to aid her in her distress, and again turns her eyes to the sad empty tomb. One word behind her, " Mary," and she turns round. One word from her, " Master," and she was for ever satisfied. She flies off on the gracious errand with which He sent her to His friends.

The poor heart-broken, utterly disappointed men, some in one obscure lodgment, and some in another, heard the strange reports brought by one party or another, but they were but idle tales to

them; there was no heart or faith left to believe them. Their honoured Master had fallen into the hands of His enemies and they had wreaked their hatred on Him to His death, and what had become of His body they hardly knew, for, with the exception of John, it appears none of the Apostles were at the cross; they were all in hiding.

So the day wore on. Towards afternoon Cleopas and another started to walk over to Emmaus, a village about eight miles from Jerusalem. Heart broken, dispirited, and with the fairest hopes a human soul could entertain rudely and suddenly blasted, they could do no other than go over and over again the bitter, hopeless tale which with each repetition seemed more disastrous. Their faces bore witness to their grief. As they walked slowly and sadly along, a stranger, of gracious and dignified mien, travelling in the same direction, came up with them, and, struck with their woe-begone countenances, accosted them in sympathetic tones, asking the cause of the sorrow that so deeply afflicted them. They could not understand that events that filled to them the entire horizon of their thoughts could be unknown even to the newest arrival in Jerusalem. They explain, and end with the expression of the core of their regret, "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel."

The friendly stranger at once took up the conversation, and manifested the most extraordinary knowledge, not only of all that had taken place, but of the entire body of their sacred writings, and culling passage after passage from all parts of the scriptures threw an entirely new and unexpected light over all the melancholy transactions they had been so deeply deploring. In such interesting company the miles disappeared, and all too soon they found themselves at their journey's end, where their new friend courteously bade them farewell.

But the afternoon hours had slipped away as unnoticed as the miles, and the shades of evening were drawing on. This gave them an excuse, only too welcome, to beg Him to stay the night with them, as it was quite too late to go on with comfort or even safety. He gracefully yielded to their earnest entreaties, and accepted their (so thankfully tendered) hospitality, and went in to stay the night, and sat down with them, their strangely moving talk continuing. By and by the evening meal was served, and they drew to the table.

There, singularly enough, taking up the loaf, He gave thanks to God, and broke it to His entertainers as His guests. In a moment, like lightning, their thoughts flashed back to the upper room and His last meal with them. There the Master Himself sat confessed. He remained long enough to be fully recognised, and then ceased to be seen.

Up they sprang and out into the night. No more supper for them. Perils of the road, perils of robbers, perils of wild beasts, were nothing to them. They carried the greatest, the blessedest news that ever man could hear. As their hasty feet devoured the road they could only revert to that wonderful walk and its effect upon their souls, now no longer a mystery. In double quick time they reached a friendly house. When admitted, within the doors barred and bolted against possible hostile visitors, they found all their companions brought together by some wonderful attraction. What it was was soon apparent, for they were welcomed with an exultant shout, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." They had their joyful tale to tell, and as they brought it to an end, there stood among them the Lord Himself. The sweet and gracious tones of the well known voice of Jesus fell comfortingly on their ears, "Why are you troubled? see that it is *I Myself*," and He showed them the nail wounds in His hands and His feet, and while astonished joy choked back faith He asked them to give Him food. They surely would not refuse Him the sacred rites of hospitality. They gladly brought Him what they had, a broiled fish and a honey comb. The One that on Friday afternoon died amid hatred, contumely and derision, now, on Sunday evening, sat among them a happy guest, victor over death itself.

So this day, the most wonderful that ever dawned upon the earth, ended. It broke in clouds of the deepest woe, and closed in a sunset of unutterable joy. Christ's parting words were made good to the letter, "Ye now therefore have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

We sympathise with their joy, for we ourselves plod on over endless weary miles, and through protracted years of hope deferred; still we know *that He will see us* (not "again," but for the first time), and *our* joy no one shall take from us forever.

ABRAM AND MELCHIZEDEK.

GENESIS xiv. 17-24.

BY W. W. FEREDAY.

THE believer in Jesus is walking in the steps of the faith of Abraham. So the apostle lays down in Rom. iv. 12. This being true, the story of Abraham's life is full of practical instruction for us all. In his exercises and conflicts we find that which appeals powerfully to our own souls. Gen. xiv. is a chapter full of moral profit. In it we find Abram (for he was not yet Abraham) gaining two great victories: one over the confederate Kings, and one over the King of Sodom (and the natural cupidity of his own heart). Of the two, the moral victory achieved in the neighbourhood of Sodom was incomparably greater than the physical triumph gained in the neighbourhood of Dan.

Let us note that in this chapter the patriarch is expressly called "Abram the Hebrew" (v. 13). "Hebrew" means "passer-over," and it has reference to the fact that Abram came originally into Canaan from across the Euphrates. In taking that great step, he left country and kindred behind him at the call of God. The Christian is also a "passer-over" according to the divine thought. In God's account, Christ's death was his own. That precious death has not only made an end of our sins, it has made an end of ourselves also as men in the flesh. Of this, baptism is the appointed sign (Rom. vi.). We are thus "passers-over." Death has been crossed, behind us lie all our former associations; before us is Christ and heavenly glory. To what extent have our souls realised this wonderful position? Mark, it was "Abram, the Hebrew" who triumphed over all his foes. The reason why saints so frequently experience defeat is because their souls so feebly apprehend where the death of Christ has set them. David said of the sword of Goliath: "there is none like that; give it me" (1 Sam. xxi. 9); and in like manner there is no weapon like death when rightly wielded in faith.

On his return from the slaughter of the kings, Abram was met by two monarchs—Bera, King of Sodom, and Melchizedek, King of Salem. In the wisdom of God, Melchizedek was suffered to speak first. By his ministry the soul of the victor was fortified for what

he had to meet next. We are probably never in greater danger than immediately after a triumph. Our spirits are elated, and we are apt to get off our guard. This too often results in Satan gaining a return triumph over us. After conflict we need to renew our strength. Accordingly, before the King of Sodom was permitted to speak, Melchizedek came forward, as priest of the Most High God, with bread and wine, and words of blessing. Remarkable type this. Here we have graphically shewn to us what will happen to Israel at the close of the age, when all conflicts are ended. Christ, the predicted King-Priest, will come forth from the glory where now He remains hidden, and will shew Himself to His people for their eternal good. Worn by the last dread struggle, how gratefully will restored Israel welcome the tender ministrations of love. He will abundantly satisfy Zion's provision; He will satisfy her poor with bread (Ps. cxxxii. 15). So delighted were the people (after a carnal fashion) with His ministration of bread long ago that they desired to take Him by force, and make Him King forthwith (John vi. 15). On the basis of accomplished redemption, of which bread and wine are the familiar symbols (as witnessed in the Lord's Supper), He will once more link up Israel with God as the Possessor of heaven and earth. The divine supremacy will then be established for ever.

But, meanwhile, while Israel's eyes are "holden," "we see Jesus." Faith beholds Him as the enthroned Priest in heaven. By His generous ministry of love from day to day He maintains our hearts in the enjoyment of heavenly things. Also, faith owns God, spite of all appearances, as the Most High Possessor of heaven and earth, and is thus assured that the usurper will not hold sway for ever. We are thus strengthened to refuse the world. Heavenly things delight us to-day, and we wait for the whole universal inheritance to fall into Christ's hands and ours to-morrow.

Nothing is said of altar and sacrifice in connection with Melchizedek. His was emphatically a ministry of blessing; on God's part towards Abram, and on Abram's part towards God. Our Lord Jesus fulfils the Aaron type as regards sacrifice and the sanctuary, and the Melchizedek type as regards the blessing and refreshment of His people.

Melchizedek having spoken, Bera came forward. To his benighted mind all that he had heard sounded strange indeed. If the King of Salem had somewhat to give Abram, so likewise had

the King of Sodom, if Abram was willing to receive it. "Give me the persons and take the goods to thyself." Marvellous generosity, seeing that everything was already Abram's by the undoubted right of conquest. But even though this was indeed true, the man of faith, in the loftiness of his soul, refused it all (that is, as regards himself; he remembered his confederates). Abram said to the King of Sodom: "I have lift up mine hand unto Jehovah, the Most High God, the possessor of Heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich." The piled-up wealth of a whole city was no mean recompense for his labour. But faith discerned in the offer the voice of the tempter. We may be assured that Satan is more to be feared when he comes smiling than when he comes scowling. Conscious of the reality of his portion in God, Abram absolutely refused the world.

Lot was apparently present at this interview (v. 16), but silent. To Abram the world was nothing; to Lot it was much—very much. Yet he was a born-again soul. The one overcame the world, while the other was overcome by the world. These things have their analogy at this hour. Where do our souls stand? Let us search and enquire diligently. Are we so under the gracious influence of the heavenly King-Priest that, in the power of what He ministers, we are able to let the world go by? Then is our name Abram, not Lot; and God is not ashamed to be called our God (Heb. xi. 16).

HABAKKUK III.

VERSES 17, 18, 19.

Though fig tree shall not blossom,
Nor fruit be in the vine;
Though olives still be failing,
My God remaineth mine.

No meat, the field though yielding,
No herd within the stall;
The flock cut off from folding,
Yet God can still be all.

In Him my full salvation,
My heart can yet rejoice;
For joy in God abideth,
Though silent every voice.

He is my strength in weakness,
He lifts my weary feet;
And on high places walking
My steps are sure and fleet.—J. M. F.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS:— A Simple Exposition.

CHAP. XI., 7.

NOAH AND THE SAVING OF HIS HOUSE.

“ By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house ; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith ” (v. 7).

Three things came before us in our meditation upon the first six verses of this chapter. (1) By faith we gain intelligence as to how the existing order of things in creation originated ; (2) Faith realises that the only way to be righteous before the God Who called everything into being is through sacrifice ; it must be on the ground of another's merits and death ; (3) The realisation by faith that the judgment on sin is so completely remitted that death is annulled, and this leads to a walk with God, and produces a life that is agreeable to Him. Enoch is translated that he should not see death ; and had this testimony that he pleased God.

We now come to faith in connection with Noah, and this carries us, in type, beyond Enoch, and brings us down to the time of the restitution of all things. Enoch is taken away from judgment to come ; Noah passes through it into a new world cleansed by it. The first represents the saints of this dispensation ; the other those of a future one. Notwithstanding this, there are many lessons to be learned ; and Noah's faith has its application to us now.

1. *“ By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet.”* Here is another trait of faith, it can receive and credit communications respecting things still future. Abel's sacrifice settled the *past*, so that he received witness that he was righteous ; Enoch walked with God in the *present*, and one day he was translated ; Noah was “ divinely taught ” as to the *future*.

Few things are more remarkable about that most wonderful of all books—the Bible—than the absolute certainty with which it speaks of future events. This is one feature that differentiates it from all other religious books, though by no means the only one. It not only predicts what is to come ; it does so without the slightest

hesitation, and with an exactness which leaves no room for doubt. Yet, strange to say, many Christians almost entirely neglect this portion of the word of God, and certainly few give it the prominence it deserves. God has told us beforehand, as surely as he told Noah, the judgments that are coming upon this earth. "As it was in the days of Noe," said our Lord, "so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." And although we, if believers, shall not be here when these judgments come, yet unless by faith we have an intelligent apprehension of them, we are not likely to walk in that separation from the world which become those who have been redeemed from it, and are looking to be taken out of it.

It is specially necessary to-day to have faith as to the warnings contained in God's word. There are many, and amongst them some who should know better, who paint a glowing future. There is to be advance on every side, and mankind is to work out a millennium. The Bible depicts just the opposite. "Reserved for fire" is what it writes upon everything. This is no more seen or expected by man than the flood in Noah's day; but it is as certain; for if what was said to him came true, shall not the words already quoted, spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, be equally verified.

What was the effect of this divine communication upon Noah? He was "**moved with fear**," or, as another translation has it, he "*reverently gave heed*." This is ever the action of faith. Would that we always, whenever God speaks to us, "*reverently gave heed*." This is ever the way of blessing. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant" (Ps. xxv. 14). This is precisely what God did for Noah. He first of all preserved him amidst the Deluge, and then revealed that bow of promise spanning the heavens. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and it is the first commencement of a divine work in any soul. "There is no fear of God before their eyes," is one of the leading marks of an unregenerate state. It is fearfully prevalent to-day. It must have been so in Noah's day; for after being a Preacher of Righteousness for many, many years, no one took warning—no one "*reverently gave heed*"—except his

own family. What irreverence there is to-day. What making light of God's truth.

2. The effect of the warning and of his fear was, he "**prepared an ark to the saving of his house.**" This is very striking, and presents a distinct landmark in the ways of God. *The house of the believer becomes a sphere of blessing, and is distinct from the world.* It was not merely a coincidence that Noah's family alone was saved, there was an intention in it. "Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for **thee** I have seen righteous before me in this generation," are the words which make that intention clear. God does not say He saw the sons or their wives righteous; the point is he saw Noah, as the head of the family, righteous. This principle re-appears in God's dealing with Abraham (Gen. xvii. 23-27); in Exodus xii., "a lamb for an house"; throughout all His ways with Israel; and is carried over into Christianity; for on its first introduction into Europe we find the Apostle Paul declaring to the Philippian jailor, "Thou shalt be saved *and thy house*"; and this, before any mention is made of the faith of his household, entirely on the ground of his own faith. This views Christianity, for the moment, as a sphere of salvation *down here*, without raising the question of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory, participation in which of course depends upon "sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

All we wish to call attention to is the fact that for the first time God connects the household with the man of faith. Abel *alone* obtained witness that he was righteous; Enoch *alone* was translated; but Noah "prepared an ark to the saving of his **house.**" The household of the believer becomes, henceforth, a sphere of blessing, on the ground of the faith of its head; and, in addition, has been throughout all subsequent periods one of the most potent preservatives against general corruption. However degenerate the times, however great the general declension, a man has his household where order can be maintained and blessing realised. He can, like Abraham, "command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord." Wherever family relationships are weakened, there can be found corresponding degeneration.

3. "**By the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.**" It seemed a foolish thing

to prepare an ark. There were no indications of impending storm ; it would be utterly useless when finished. No doubt the world condemned Noah for an action so evidently absurd. But the one who had been divinely taught knew differently, and when, at last, the windows of heaven were opened, and the waters began to rise and to bear the ark far out of the reach of judgment with Noah safely secured inside, the man of faith condemned the world.

Few things are more imposing than the sight of this one man and his family with all the world opposed to them. It may well encourage the few to-day who accept the Bible's estimate of the world—and there are comparatively few who do so—and who allow nothing to blind them either to its evil character or the end determined. “As it was in the days of Noah, so *shall* it be” are the words of Him Whom we call Master and Lord ; and we cannot go back from them. With all its improvements in arts and sciences ; with all its discoveries and inventions, the world is hastening to its doom, and a God-forsaken Church, bereft of all true believers, will at last bear it company. Noah condemned the world by his act ; every stroke of the hammer told that the world was not right with God. It was not that he spoke in harsh and unfeeling language ; nor must we ; but by keeping ourselves unspotted from it, and not pursuing its ambitions, we are to make manifest its true character.

But there was a positive side. He *became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*” This is sometimes treated as if it merely meant that he became righteous. But this interpretation is but a repetition of what we have already seen in the case of Abel, and we can hardly believe that the Spirit of God had no intention of carrying us beyond. It means, we think, something more. Not only was Noah righteous before God, this he is distinctly told, but here it declares he became heir of that righteousness. In other words, heir to what righteousness entitled him to. And this is seen in the fact that he inherited a new world. Gen. ix. 1-7 makes this perfectly clear, for there God delivers everything into the hands of Noah and his sons. What wonderful things God has in store for those who trust him and walk in His ways.

It is the way of God to constitute us righteous, and then make us His heirs. This is further exemplified in the history of Abraham. In Gen. xv. 6 we read, “And he (Abram) believed in the Lord ; and He counted it to him for righteousness.” In the very next

verse we read, "I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee their land to *inherit* it." But there needs a preparation for the inheritance, and so when Abraham asks, "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" he has to pass through the horror of great darkness (v. 12), and be told that his seed will suffer affliction (v. 13). And so in the Epistle to the Romans with regard to ourselves. The first few chapters are occupied with justification before God, and this is instrumentally by faith, as in the case of Abraham; but in chap. viii. we are not only spoken of as children, we are heirs, "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ"; and then immediately, as with Abraham, suffering is introduced; "If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." No doubt Noah suffered. It must have been no pleasant task to build an ark, every fresh beam of which stood as an additional witness against his friends and acquaintances. The wits of that day would have found plenty of food for fun in what was going on. But ridiculed, despised, and sometimes forgotten, Noah went on; and when at last the Ark became of some use, his recompense began; and when, still further on, he stood once more on dry ground with his sacrifice accepted and the bow of promise bending over him, his triumph was complete—the earth, purified and renewed, was his. He was "*heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*"

What a lesson these things contain for us in the present day. The ways of God are not yet complete; there are "things not seen as yet" shortly to happen. In view of what is here recorded of Noah, shall we not do well to remember the words of another inspired Apostle? "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless." (2 Pet. iii. 11-14).

"Worship is the being lost in wonder at what we find in God and in Christ."

THE USE OF MEANS.

By R. E.

IT is of great importance to maintain a well-balanced view of truth. We are naturally creatures of extremes, and are apt to carry this propensity into things spiritual. For instance, we take a text and dwell upon it as if the truth it contained were the only truth in the Bible. We press it beyond its proper limits, and consequently fail to find room for other truths equally important. What we need is a sense of proportion. If we give any truth too large a place, it ceases to be truth, and actually becomes error. Supposing we draw a picture of a human being, and make it nearly all head, with very little room for feet or body ; instead of a man we have a monster. Could we but discern it, we should see that the fair form of truth is often distorted in a similar way.

Nearly every heresy under the sun is truth out of place, the pressing of one view to the exclusion of all else. Some have given the divinity of Christ such a place that they have lost His true humanity ; others say that He was a real man, but cannot see that He was God. The High Calvinist sees election, predestination and sovereignty, and exclusively dwells upon these until man has no place at all, but becomes a mere machine. The Arminian starts from the opposite point, and does not stop until he has nearly pushed God off His throne. The truth is found on both sides of these arguments, and not on one only. Someone has said that there is not an extreme Arminian or Calvinist who, if he had been sitting by the Apostle Paul when he wrote some of his epistles, would not have requested him to alter some one or other of his statements. Let us grasp truth on every side. God has given us a hand on each side of our body, surely that we may reach out, not on one side only, but on both sides. Let us do this on the higher plane of moral and spiritual truth.

The foregoing reflections equally apply in regard to the use of means. The question often arises, How far are we to trust God, and to what extent is this compatible with the use of means ? As one studies the Bible with this question in view, few things seem more clearly stamped upon its pages than this, that God always employs means where they are available, and would have us make use of them. Even when working miracles, this principle seems ever kept in view. Christ could have created loaves and fishes on

the spot just as easily as He multiplied them, but He chose to use what was at hand. He raised Lazarus from the dead ; but He told others to take away the stone, and afterwards, " Loose him and let him go." What can be clearer than that God having endowed man with intelligence and power He will not do for Him what he is perfectly able to accomplish for himself.

From time to time devout and earnest people tell us that we are not to use means in the case of sickness. Our only resource is to be God. This is called by various names—" Faith healing," " Divine healing," " Trusting God in sickness," &c., &c. But by whatever name this belief is designated, all agree here, that means are not to be employed. They will admit the truth as to the use of means in general, but they insist that medicine is an exception. Thus a recent writer of this school says : " God has repeatedly and emphatically forbidden His people to put their trust in man or to seek help from him. They are commanded not to put their trust in man, because in him is ' no help ' (Ps. cxlvi. 3) ; not to go to Egypt for help (Isa. xxx. 1), and not to make flesh their arm. Whenever a child of God seeks the aid of Medical Science he does the very thing forbidden by these Scriptures."

The statement just quoted is certainly sweeping enough. If true, then every child of God ought at once to abandon means in the shape of medicines. But, before doing so, let us examine this doctrine, and what underlies it, a little more closely.

In the first place, will it surprise the reader to learn that neither of the Scriptures quoted above has any reference whatever to sickness? Nothing is more dangerous or calculated to lead astray than taking general statements, such as, " not seeking help from man," and applying them to particular cases. There are a hundred ways in which a Christian may seek help from man without distrust-
 . trusting God.

An additional fallacy connected with the system under consideration is that the use of means is incompatible with trust in God. Let us give two instances, one from St. Paul's life, and the other from his writings, which prove that it is not so. In the account of the shipwreck, recorded in Acts xxvii., we read that Paul said, " there shall be no loss of any man's life among you " ; and then he quotes what the angel had said to him, " Lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee " (vv. 22 and 24). Yet in spite of this, when " the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship," Paul said

to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." No one can doubt that Paul trusted God, no one ever did so more; yet he is sane enough to insist upon the sailors remaining at their post, in spite of the divine declaration that all on board would be saved. Was not this using means, and yet trusting; and, moreover, "was it not seeking help from man while still depending upon God?"

In 1 Timothy vi. 17 we read, "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." Here we have rich men exhorted to trust in the living God. But it is to be particularly noted it is not said that, in order to do this, they must cast away their wealth. Not a word to this effect. The only possible conclusion is that since money is a means, having it and using it is perfectly consistent with trusting in the living God. Of course it is. Are there not many benefits and blessings—aye, the best of them—which money cannot buy, and that after all it is God Who *giveth* us richly all things to enjoy. It is precisely the same with medicine. Medicine is a means, and may be used, yet not apart from God, but trusting in Him. How many a life God has spared to the astonishment of doctors, who could not account for the recovery, yet this is absolutely no warrant for dispensing with or despising means.

But it is insisted by the writer of "Trusting God in Sickness," that, while all other means are legitimate, the use of medicines in case of sickness is an exception. Well, the burden of proof lies with him. Let him quote the scriptures where it says so. If this can be done it will settle the question. That the Bible does not contain a pharmacopœia is quite true. But this proves nothing. The Bible does not tell us how to make clothes or tell us what clothes we are to wear. Is that an argument for not wearing any? Certainly the clothes Christian people wear to-day are not after the pattern of the coats of skins God made for Adam. The fact is, as already intimated, God having given men brains leaves them to develop the resources divine wisdom has placed at his disposal. It is the same with remedies for disease. Man has discovered healing virtue in many a plant and herb, thus lending a new meaning to the scripture, "Herb for the service of man." Why should it be right to eat the herb to satisfy hunger, and wrong to distil from it that which will meet another need of the body? It is said sickness is

an attack of the Devil. If so, it is strange the Devil should place remedies within the reach of man to foil his own attack. Who has placed these remedies there, so subtle and far reaching in their effects upon disease, but the very God Who made the body upon which they operate with such beneficial result?

Are physicians or their remedies directly condemned in Scripture? Nowhere that we are aware. Rather the contrary. Our Lord once made the statement "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick." This is an emphatic recognition of the place and purpose of the healing art. Nor did our Lord add, "I am come to set them aside; henceforth the sick need have no recourse to such agencies, but only look to Me." It is noticeable that instead of saying this He passes at once to the spiritual needs of man, and adds "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."*

Again, why did St. Paul tell Timothy to take a little wine for his often infirmities? The Apostle seems to have been ignorant of this doctrine which is advanced with so much assurance. Surely he ought to have said, in accordance with these modern notions, "Trust God about your infirmities, and take no wine." We might also ask, if physicians are such an undesirable set of people, as far as Christians are concerned, why the same Apostle should choose to put on record that Luke was a "Beloved Physician." Certainly no one holding the doctrine of the author of "*Trusting God in sickness*" would have thought of doing so.

But someone will ask, What about the text in James v. 14? "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." There is no medicine here, it will be said. No. Neither is medicine forbidden. If it is such a sin to take it, as some would have us believe, we should have thought this would have been the opportunity to tell us so. But there is absolute silence on the point.

If we examine the passage we find, (1) the sick person has to call for *somebody*, if not for the doctor; and (2) it is not his own

* 2 Chron. xvi. 12 is often relied on to prove that it is wrong to call in a doctor. What is really condemned here is, not seeking the Lord. The passage proves that physicians existed in Israel, and they are never held up to condemnation. In Luke x. our Lord relates how the Samaritan poured in oil and wine. What is this but using means and doing the work of a physician?

prayer of faith, but that of the elders, which brings deliverance. Now, in the first place, can these elders be found to-day? Are there such persons available? Have they the faith here spoken of? And, lastly, are there everywhere assured results in the exercise of it? We believe none of these questions can be answered in the affirmative. That, here and there, there may be individuals who claim to possess this faith, we do not doubt. Whether they are always successful we are not so sure. We read and hear of abortive attempts at healing on the lines indicated by the Apostle James. But in his day there was no question as to the result: "The prayer of faith *shall save* the sick." Why the difference?

The difference is accounted for by the change that has come over the Church itself. It is the not taking this into account which leads to so much misunderstanding and disappointment. When St. James wrote his epistle there was a power in the Church which is not possessed to-day. This power the Church will never possess again. Its failure and unfaithfulness make it impossible. Is it not, therefore, quite unreasonable to interpret James v. 14 apart from these altered conditions? Now we should have to ask, Are they to be Presbyterian Elders, or Baptist Elders, or Bishops of the Established Church? No such question had to be asked in the year 60. We do not doubt God answers the prayer of faith, we do not question his power to raise up the sick in response thereto; what we do question is whether the absolutely changed conditions makes no difference to the present application of our text.

God wrought miracles in Israel, but He did not always work them, and their operation largely depended upon the general state of the nation. Gideon had to lament "Where be all His miracles which our fathers told us of?" Of John the Baptist it is written, "John did no miracle." Why? It was because of the altered condition of the times, and the state of the people. It is not otherwise to-day. God is not going to accredit a corrupt and semi-apostate Church by giving tokens of His power working in the midst of it. To lose sight of this, and attempt to act as if He would, is to court disaster.

Apart from all the foregoing considerations there must come a time in the *ordinary* course of things when a doctor must be summoned, and if it is not wrong to summon him at the end, why

should it be to have him in attendance at the beginning? Those who seek to evade these responsibilities, on the assumption of possessing superior faith, only bring upon themselves the lash of public criticism, as witnessed in the newspapers again and again.

Just one word on the other side. It may be not only quite possible, but more than probable, that God's people trust too much in means, and too little in Him. If the extreme and unscriptural and irrational views we are seeking to combat, lead us to place more reliance upon Him while not forsaking the remedies He, in His goodness, places at our disposal, they will have done us no harm, but some good. Blessed be His Name, the use of all lawful means is perfectly in harmony with His mind, and not in the least inconsistent with the most confiding trust in His overruling providence and power.

THE TABERNACLE *(continued)*.

SOME OF ITS TEACHINGS AND LESSONS.

THE HOLY PLACE AND ITS VESSELS.

By WALTER SCOTT.

THE Brazen Altar in the Court was the foundation of the Levitical system. The Cross of Christ is the basis of Christianity. Forgiveness of sin and acceptance by God are taught us by the Brazen Altar, while practical cleansing for Tabernacle-worship and service is the voice of the Brazen Laver.

Before entering the Holy Place and marking the disposition of the sacred vessels therein, let us take a glance at the door, and note its typical instruction (Ex. xxvi. 36, 37). The door stretched across the whole of the east side of God's dwelling-place. The hanging for the door was of the same material, "fine twined linen," as the veil, the gate, and embroidered curtains seen within, and in the hangings of the Court.

Thus is signified the personal purity of Christ—the moral basis of His work and glory. The whole workmanship was exquisite, being the production of the finest needlework by the wise hearted women of Israel. Then five pillars of shittim-wood, overlaid with purest gold, formed the firm supports of the beautiful door-hanging. The beauties of the Tabernacle could alone be witnessed within,

thus the *five* pillars point to the five-fold ministry of Eph. iv. 11 as also to the testimony of the *five* writers of the Epistolary part of the New Testament, all of which have but one object in view, namely, to introduce us to Christ—His moral beauties and excellencies—as well as His place and service in Heaven. But why do the gold-covered *boards* of the Tabernacle rest in sockets of *silver*, while the gold-covered *pillars* of the door are supported in sockets of *brass*? Within, it is gold and silver. Without, it is silver and brass. But the door of the Tabernacle is the link between the two, *i.e.*, the *without* and the *within*.

We enter the Holy Place as priests, and as we step over the threshold, we must carry in our souls the deep, deep sense of the cost to Him who for us bore to the utmost extent the dire judgment of God. The silver told of God's grace in providing Atonement. The brass Christ's endurance of God's wrath—wrath proportioned to our guilt.

The Tabernacle was divided into two apartments, separated by the beautiful veil. The innermost room was the most sacred spot on God's earth—a square apartment of ten cubits, or fifteen feet, length, breadth, and height. Moses, the Mediator, and Aaron the High Priest were alone permitted to enter the Holiest. The first apartment, or the Holy Place, was thirty feet in length, and half that in breadth and height. Here the priests entered daily, morning, evening and on other occasions. Their constant service for about 500 years told of imperfection. The priests of old ever stood and served. Their work was never done. No seat for rest in or about the Tabernacle was provided. The Holy Place and its ceaseless service was a figure of Judaism (Heb. ix. 9). The whole system with its ritualism and sacrifice could not purge the conscience or perfect the worshipper. But this very thing Christianity *has done*, and further, it has brought us as Worshippers into the immediate presence of God Himself. Hallelujah!

There were three vessels in the Holy Place.* The Incense, or Golden Altar, was placed right in front of the veil and exactly opposite the door. On the south or left hand, stood the seven-branched Golden Candlestick, while on the north, or right-hand, stood the Table of Shew-bread. The floor was the sand of the

* As a matter of fact, neither the Sanctuary nor the Holiest of all was ever called a *place*. The word is repeatedly used, but always in italics (Ed.).

desert, the sides pure gold, and the beautiful curtained roof above, with its colours and figures of cherubim, made it a sight of rare beauty. The materials, colours, curtains, gold, and vessels proclaimed to the worshipper within the diversified glories of Christ, God's Beloved Son and our Beloved One. Every whit around and within uttered His glory.

The description of the Golden Altar and its use is the subject of the first ten verses of Ex. xxx. Its materials were wood and gold, pointing to the dual nature of our Lord: His **Incorruptible Humanity** and **Deity**. God manifest in flesh. God in holy humanity. The Altar had a crown of gold round about. The explanation of this is supplied in Heb. ii. 9: "We see Jesus crowned with glory and honour." Its rings and staves remind us of Christ moving through this scene in the days of His flesh. It was four-square, like the Brazen Altar in the Court. The Altar within was for worship. The Altar without was for sacrifice. The service at and on the *Golden Altar* was based on the work at and on the *Brazen Altar*. It was the fire of judgment taken from the Brazen Altar which brought out the fragrance of the incense burned on the Golden Altar. The connection between the two Altars may be briefly stated in one sentence, **Acceptable Worship is based upon an Accepted Sacrifice**. The horns of the Brazen Altar form the strength and protection of the *sinner* laying hold of them. The horns of the Golden Altar constitute the strength of the *weakest saint*. The Brazen Altar is for the *World*. The Golden Altar is for the *Church*. Incense was burned upon the Golden Altar morning and evening, at the same time the lamps were trimmed and lit. The incense was composed of four precious ingredients (Ex. xxx. 34), put upon a pan, or censer, of burning coals from the Altar of Judgment, the fragrance of which filled the Holy Place. The moral beauties of Christ thus went up to God as a savour of rest, and in all that *He* is to God, our worship is accepted and gladdens the heart of God. Sacrifice for Israel was in the Court, worship of Israel was in the Holy Place. The two Altars set forth these respective truths.

The Golden Lampstand next demands attention (Ex. xxv. 31-40). In the construction of the candelabrium no wood was used. It was wholly of gold. Christ in His Divine nature is represented. There are no measurements. Those vessels only are measured in

which the shittim wood is found, *i.e.*, Christ's holy humanity. Christ when here as man was the Light of the World. But that is not the teaching in this instance. In the Holy Place all natural light was excluded. Now Christ is the Golden Lamp-stand, while the beaten oil for the lamps figures the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit's testimony to Christ on earth and in Heaven. The tongs and snuff dishes were required when the High Priest lit the lamps in the evening and trimmed them in the morning. The tongs, or snuffers, are needed for our imperfection as God's light bearers here. But *He* needs them not. He—the Light of Heaven—shines in undimmed perfection, no flicker or waste requiring trimming in the morning, or re-lighting in the evening. He makes one perpetual day, the light of which never goes down for "there is no night there."

The Candlestick was not only of priceless value, but of exquisite workmanship. The seven lights were so adjusted as to throw their combined light on the face of the candlestick itself, discovering the massive proportions of the central shafts, its marvellous and artistic beauties. It was indeed "a thing of beauty" (xxv. 37). Thus in every way the glories of Christ are God's object lesson to angels, and to the whole company of redeemed worshippers in the heavenly Sanctuary.

The Lampstand, with its lights, served a three-fold purpose: (1) It lit up the Holy Place—type of the heavens; (2) It discovered to the worshippers the marvellous beauty of the Candlestick itself; (3) It threw its light on the Table of Shew-Bread, which stood exactly opposite. During the night, the twelve exhibition loaves had the seven-fold light of the Sanctuary thrown upon them.

The third vessel of the Holy Place was the Table (Ex. xxv. 23-30; Lev. xxiv. 5-9). It was made of Shittim wood. Here again we are reminded of the holy humanity of our blessed Lord. The wood sets forth the incorruptible nature of the Lord's humanity. the pure gold His Divine nature, the crown His exalted place on high. On the Table were placed twelve loaves of fine flour. These loaves were set in two rows on the pure Table, being held in position by a border, and its crown or ornament (Ex. xxv. 25). These loaves remained on the Table for seven days, or a week—a complete cycle of time. On the Sabbath day, the priests removed the loaves (replacing them with others) and eat them outside in the Court (Lev. vi. 16). The unity of the twelve loaves may be gathered

from verse 9 of Lev. xxiv. Now, what is the typical import of all this to us? What its teaching to our hearts and consciences? Christ is both Table, and loaves laid thereon. But we do not contemplate Christ as the manna in these twelve loaves. The manna is bread *from* Heaven. Christ in humiliation the food of a ransomed people on earth. Christ in Heaven is our food and refreshment. But why *twelve* loaves on the Table? This numeral expresses *administrative rule* on earth. Israel is represented in these twelve loaves. In the only miracle common to the four evangelists, the feeding of five thousand, there were twelve baskets of fragments. Israel, not Judah only, but the whole nation, is here seen in type both in the miracle and in the Tabernacle—Table reserved for blessing in a coming day. She is represented in the “twelve loaves” over which frankincense was spread—the moral beauties of Christ’s Person and life. On these the light of the Sanctuary was cast. During the long dark night of Israel’s dispersion amongst the Gentiles, that wonderful people is ever before God—preserved before Him and covered in His presence with the beauty of His Son. We joy in Him now. He is our light (the Candlestick) and food (the loaves). But He is all this to us and more in the heavenly places. Christ is the substance of these typical foreshadowings. Ritualism is a dumb, dead, meaningless show. “Behold, I am alive for evermore” is His own triumphant declaration, thus the reign of shadow is past. Christ *alive* in the presence of God is the death-blow to the whole ritualistic system.

LETTERS TO YOUNG PEOPLE.

THE WORLD AND WORLDLINESS.

No. 1.

Dear Young Friends,

It has been my intention for a long time to address to you some letters on practical subjects. Probably many of them could be ranged under the above heading. The world is around us on every side, and we touch it in some form or other every day. It is that vast system of business, politics and pleasure, where man,

as far as sight and sense go, lives and moves and has his being. One of the first and most pressing considerations with every young person must be, What is to be our relation to this vast, complicated, and engrossing system? One thing is clear, you have to be in it; you are compelled to touch it on some side or other, perhaps on many sides; you must engage in its affairs to some extent, and mingle in its mad rush to a greater or less degree. It would not be right to attempt to escape.

The Bible nowhere tells us we are to go out of the world. Indeed, our Lord, in His prayer to the Father, as recorded in John xvii., made, amongst others, this special request, "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." The mistake of the Middle Ages was that men attempted to go out of the world by escaping to some retreat within walls, or some lonely place. Why was all this worse than useless? Simply because they carried the biggest half of the world with them. If we have no world within us, the world outside of us is a very small one. And if I am not living for the one within, the world outside cannot do me much harm.

Let me warn you against attaching too much importance to externals. We all fall more or less into this error. The reason is, it is so easy to deal with what is without; what we can touch and see and taste. It is so hard to alter what is within. This is a slow process, and can only be accomplished by the grace of God. Even an unconverted person can deal with worldliness on the external side; for we need not think that everyone within the walls of a convent is converted. And it is as easy to be externally religious as it is to be externally unworldly. The reason why so many are religious in this way is simply because it is so easy. Christ always dealt with what was within. There was plenty of external religion, and external unworldliness in His day, any amount of it, but He despised it and rebuked it. "Now do ye Pharisees," He said, "make clean the *outside* of the cup and the platter, but your *inward* part is full of ravening and wickedness." And, again, He said, "That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from *within*, out of the heart of man, proceed evil thoughts," etc. Yet, in spite of these plain warnings, we are constantly falling into the same error as the Pharisees, and our worldliness or unworldliness is largely a question of externals. If a person abstains

from going here or going there, we say he or she is unworldly ; or we judge of the matter by their dress. All this may be perfectly just, but it *may be* largely untrue ; and a person who *seems* to live more in the world and for the world than another may not *necessarily* be the really worldly person.

But, in order to understand the true nature of worldliness, let me try and show you what the world is, and then, though probably in a future letter, what worldliness is, and what it is not.

What then, dear young friends, is the world ? There are several words used for it in the Bible ; one, meaning the literal earth ; another, signifying the world and its inhabitants as an ordered state of things ; and a third, referring to time, and having a moral bearing, which though commonly translated “ world,” should more properly be rendered “ age.” It is this last which represents what I am now speaking of as the world. Not the earth, nor the people in it, as such, but what characterises these people—their thoughts, ways and purposes. It is this Christ gave Himself to deliver us from, and it is spoken of as an “ *evil age* ” (see Gal. i. 4).

Now, when and where do you think this evil age commenced ? It really commenced with our first parents in the garden of Eden. If you look carefully at the third chapter of Genesis, you will find all the features of the world—all the underlying principles—which have ever marked it from then till now.

Look at verse 6. Satan has come to Eve in the form of a serpent. It is put in this way to make us aware, so that we shall never forget it, that we have a great enemy who is as subtle, and wily, and deceitful as a serpent. Well, he presents to Eve the advantages that will be hers if she only takes of the forbidden fruit. God had given this one test of their willing obedience. He had commanded them not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now what do we read in ver. 6 ? “ When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat.” She left God out, she acted independently, she was actuated by the “ lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life,” and these things have characterised the world ever since.

There are several things to be noticed in connection with Eve's act. First, she added to the Word of God. In replying to the serpent she said, "God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Now in the record we do not find anything respecting not touching it. It is as dangerous, my young friends, to add to the words of God, as it is to take away from them; and it is a little remarkable that the very last warning in the Bible is about this very thing (see Rev. xxii. 18-19). There are those who are disposed to add to God's word to-day, and forbid what he has not forbidden. This is what the Pharisees did, they were always saying, This is not lawful, and the other is not lawful (cf. 1 Tim. iv. 1-8, and Col. ii. 20-23). This over-strictness often leads in the end to greater excess. Next, Eve allowed God's word to be questioned. She allowed its authority over her to be weakened. The insinuations of the deceiver found an entrance. What God had said ought to have been enough. It ought to have taken her eyes off the tree at once. But Satan appeared as her friend—he came as an angel of light only seeking her good. How fair he can make the world appear—a scene where you can become your own master and do as you please. It is not necessary to do anything thoroughly bad in order to be thoroughly worldly. All that Satan here presented to Eve *seemed* to be for her good. Her eyes should be opened. This is one aspect of the world to-day. Men getting their eyes opened; and the more they are opened the greater conception they have of their own dignity and importance, and the less do they see of God. Truly they become as gods.

Lastly, the woman abandoned all thought of God and His word, and trusted herself and the devil's lie completely. When she "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a desire of the eyes (see margin), and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof." Here we have the essence of worldliness. Do we want to know wherein all worldliness consists? *Worldliness*, then, is in the desires. The *world* is the place where those desires find their satisfaction. But remember the world is *in* us first. Remember Eve had no dress to make her worldly, no shops, no theatre—in fact no world to make her worldly. Her world was within her. Does not this prove that worldliness is not in this thing or that, not in this diversion or the other, but in the desires. The moment Eve acted for her own advantage, the moment

she put herself in the place of God, she was as much a worldling as the greatest pleasure lover of the twentieth century. She began that vast system which has existed ever since, and was never more flourishing than to-day, where every lust of man can find its gratification. It has its worship as well as its revelry and dance.

What has been its course? It was founded on murder. Cain, a religious man, "brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord," and then slew his brother. And what next? "Cain went out **from the presence of the Lord** . . . and he builded a city." Cain was a man of the world, and so he called the city after the name of his son. Years and centuries roll on. God has His people on earth, but there is the world still. Enoch is suddenly taken out of it. The world waxes worse and worse and is filled with violence and corruption. God has to pour out His judgment upon it, and He cleanses it by pouring in a flood upon the ungodly. Another epoch commences, but the world is the world still. Abram is called out from idolatry, and God gives promises to him and his seed. At length this promise is fulfilled in the coming of Christ. Now once in the end of the **age** hath He appeared. It is the end of the age. There is no hope for men but in Christ. But what did the world do? It crucified the Son of God. Abel's great antitype was murdered as foully as was he himself, so that the world began with murder and it closes with murder. For we are really at the close of the world's history now, every day it is allowed to continue is only an extension of the long-suffering of God.

Such, dear young friends, is the world. It may seem a dark picture, but it is a true one. I know it often wears a fair exterior, and it not infrequently holds out a friendly hand, but I am depicting it here in its essential character, and it is founded upon rebellion and murder, and built up upon a tremendous lie. Trust it not. Love it not. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God."

I must now close. I have not by any means said all that is to be said. I shall hope next time to deal with some practical aspects of the question, and with what the Bible says as to our attitude towards it. For the time being, I must bid you farewell, and remain, with best wishes,

Your Friend,

THE EDITOR.

THE FAITH AND THE FLOCK

Vol. II.—No. 12.

DECEMBER, 1910. PRICE—ONE PENNY.

EDITORIALS.

WITH this issue we reach the close of another year, and we cannot send it forth without recording our thanksgiving to God for the encouragement granted to us during the twelve months that are past. Good has been done; many of God's people have been strengthened and helped, and for this we are profoundly grateful. We owe much to the prayers that have gone up to the throne of grace, as well as to the letters of appreciation which have reached us. We wish, also, to tender our hearty thanks to all who have assisted in this work, either by written contributions or by making the magazine known.

* * * *

Our sister, Anna Woodcock, passed away on October 4th. She was known to many through the spiritual songs which continually issued from her sick chamber. For twenty years she had been a confirmed invalid, and the last thirteen she was completely bedridden. Nevertheless, her trust and confidence in God never failed, and in the furnace of affliction she was able to sing of Him and His ways. People who went to see her to impart comfort, often came away comforted and helped. She is now at home with the One Whose praise she loved to sing. Her pieces have appeared in these pages on several occasions, and below we are able to give the last she ever wrote :

WHAT I KNOW.

Song of Sol. ii. 16—vi. 3.

I know not when the call may come
 To summon me away,
 To enter the Eternal Home
 I've longed for many a day ;
 I know not when my Lord will stoop
 My every earthly bond to sever ;
*But this I know, that He is mine,
 And I am His for ever !*

I know not why He set His love
 Upon a thing so vile ;
 Nor why He drew my heart above,
 And cheered me with His smile.
 I wonder at His tender care,
 For I deserve it never, never.
*But oh, I know that He is mine,
 And I am His for ever !*

I know not why that wounded hand
 Should often press me down ;
 His ways I cannot understand,—
 And life's unfading Crown
 Is hidden from my feeble sight,
 To win it be my firm endeavour ;
*Oh, joy to know that He is mine,
 And I am His for ever !*

I know not why He keeps me here
 In suffering deep and long ;
 Why oft the clouds hang dark and drear,
 And I can sing no song.
 No song in words ; yet, my poor heart
 Would, silent, praise Him doubting never.
*For well I know that He is mine,
 And I am His for ever !*

I know not how His blessings come,
 And come so unexpected ;
 'Mid all the needs, while travelling Home,
 We never are neglected.
 Nor why so many of His friends
 To bless my life should all endeavour,
*Unless it be that He is mine,
 And I am His for ever !*

I know not yet the mystery
 How He has made me His,
 Nor how He gave Himself to me—
 I only know the bliss
 Of hearing from His gracious lips
 That He will leave me never, never ;
*And so I know that He is mine,
 And I am His for ever !*

I know not anything at all
 As some day I shall know ;
 What darksome shadows yet may fall
 Across the way I go.
 I am not wise to understand,
 At questions deep I am not clever,
 But, praise the Lord ! I KNOW I'M HIS,
 AND HE IS MINE FOR EVER !

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS.

May we make a suggestion? If any think the Magazine deserves to be more widely known there is a comparatively easy way of increasing the circulation. Order a few extra copies and send them to preachers and well-known Christians in your town and district. This has been tried and found to be appreciated. You can obtain printed circulars, suitable for placing inside, by application to the publishers. Also interview booksellers and induce them to circulate a few back numbers, which can also be obtained from the same source.

* * * *

With the new year we are proposing to make some alteration in the cover, but otherwise the Magazine remains the same.

* * * *

Volumes for 1910 can now be obtained through the publishers, or any local bookseller. These have been tastefully bound in art covers, and the price is 3/-, less discount. Please order early.

Those who wish to bind their own numbers can obtain the above covers for that purpose at 1/- each.

CONSIDER HIM.

BY W. BOUSFIELD.

When the storm is raging high,
When the tempest rends the sky,
When my eyes with tears are dim,
Then, my soul, "consider Him."

When my plans are in the dust,
When my dearest hopes are crushed,
When is pass'd each foolish whim,
Then, my soul, "consider Him."

When with dearest friends I part,
When deep sorrow fills my heart,
When pain racks each weary limb,
Then, my soul, "consider Him."

When I track my weary way,
When fresh trials come each day,
When my faith and hope are dim,
Then, my soul, "consider Him."

Cloud or sunshine, dark or bright,
Evening shades or morning light,
When my cup flows o'er the brim,
Then, my soul, "consider Him."

AN OUTLINE OF "THE REVELATION."

(See Chart issued with the February number).

TENTH SECTION. CHAPTERS XIX.-XXI.-8.

By WALTER SCOTT.

[N this interesting section of the Apocalypse, which covers the ground from the destruction of Babylon till the eternal state—some of the most stirring and solemn events are found. We shall briefly note these.

REJOICINGS IN HEAVEN, xix., 1-9.

Four times the beautiful Hebrew "Hallelujah" (found nowhere else in the New Testament) is triumphantly rung out in the heavenly courts (vers. 1, 3, 4, 6). In the last five Psalms it is the opening and closing word of each. "Praise ye Jehovah" shall yet resound throughout heaven and earth, thus bringing them into blessed unison. The first recorded song was led by Moses, accompanied with timbrel and dance by Miriam (Exod. xv.), but the songs and triumphs of the heavenly hosts are personally conducted by the Saviour and Lord—risen and glorified (Heb. ii. 12).

There are three grounds for the songs of triumph in heaven. The *first* ground of heaven's joy is the utter destruction of the Apostate religious system—a confederated system of satanic wickedness. Babylon is no more. Her downfall and utter ruin fill heaven, in all its vastness, with joy. The destruction of the whore is a more important matter, and creates more interest in heaven than even that of the Beast, *i.e.*, the confederated nations of Western Europe.

The *second* reason of Heaven's joy is the reign of the Lord God Omnipotent. He takes the reins of Universal Authority and the Kingdom into His mighty hands. But who is He who sways the sceptre? It is Jesus Christ who assumes the government of the world. The *world* is His Kingdom (xi. 15). The *Universe* is His Dominion (Ps. viii.). All things are put into His hands for *administration* (John iii. 35), and all things are put under His feet in *subjection* (1 Cor. xv. 27). Wherever man is found on earth, limits the extent of the Kingdom. Wherever a created thing is, that His Inheritance covers. The Inheritance is of larger extent than the Kingdom, which He takes in His favourite character and title as Son of Man.

The *third* cause of rejoicing in the Heavens is the marriage of the Lamb. Had a mere human pen written ver. 7, it would have been, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to *her* : for the marriage of the *bride* is come." But no, it is not her joy that is in question, but *His*. *He* now sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied. Heaven breaks out in song. The Lamb is married in heaven amidst the rejoicings of the heavenly hosts. It is the Church—not Israel nor a remnant thereof—which is the cherished bride and wife of the Lamb (Eph. v. 25-32). The harlot put aside, God is now free to introduce the Lamb and His Bride into the scene.

It will be observed that between the destruction of the harlot and the marriage of the Lamb, the Kingdom-reign is celebrated, but that is in vision only. The Kingdom is not set up till after the marriage. We may further remark that the harlot is destroyed *before* the marriage. The Beast or political confederacy, *after* the marriage. There is a moral necessity for the destruction of the whore ere the marriage of the Lamb could take place, and God display the bride in her beauty. Then the consolidated powers in opposition to the Lamb must necessarily be crushed before the Kingdom could be established.

THE BEAST AND CHRISTENDOM AT WAR WITH THE LAMB, xix., 11-21.

The section opens with the Apocalyptic formula, "After these things," which refers to the fall and destruction of Babylon (xvii. and xviii.). That momentous event is viewed with lamentation on earth and rejoicing in heaven. The whore and the bride cannot co-exist. When the former is destroyed, the latter is displayed in her beauty, and God-given glory. The bride is the Church of the New Testament—the Complement of saints from Pentecost till the Rapture. The guests of whom John the Baptist is the most distinguished, are Old Testament saints—the friends of the Bridegroom (John iii. 29 ; Rev. xix. 9). The martyred saints of the Apocalypse are not raised till after the marriage, so they are as a class distinct from either the bride or guests. But the bride, guests, and martyred saints are all partakers of the heavenly calling. The earthly calling must be distinguished from the heavenly calling. The millennial earth is the destined home of those embraced in the former. The millennial heavens become the abode of those included in the latter.

“ I saw,” writes the seer, “ heaven opened.” In an earlier vision, “ a door was opened in heaven ” (iv. 1), this latter was for the prophet to pass in. But heaven opened is for the warrior King and His invincible hosts to come forth out of their royal home in heaven. We here witness a spectacle absolutely unlike anything ever beheld. The scene is one of surpassing interest. The triumphal procession out of heaven of Christ in victorious power, while saints and angels follow in His train, will be a sight grand beyond all telling. The white horses on which sat the Conqueror and His militant hosts denote *victorious power*. The most of the description refers to personal and official attributes borne by him Who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords—the King of all who reign, and Lord of all who exercise authority. The war itself is a righteous one (ver. 11). He alone bears a sword, *i.e.*, the *Divine Authority of His Word*, which in itself executes judgment (ver. 15).

Before the conflict commences with the contending hosts on earth, the ravenous birds of prey are summoned to supper (ver. 17). The might, the greatness, the chivalry, the civilisation of Europe as embodied in its kings, captains, mighty men, etc., are gathered together in the vicinity of Jerusalem.

“ *He* was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood,” not so the heavenly and triumphant hosts of saints who follow the Lord. Their robes of spotless white—not stained by blood—proclaim the purity and integrity of each one of the redeemed army. Christ alone executes judgment (John v. 27). We, with Him, rule the rebellious peoples with a rod of iron. But the sword is alone used by Christ.

What an assemblage of forces ! “ And I saw the beast,” the ten confederated kingdoms of Western Europe ; “ and the kings of the earth,” the kingdoms outside the Roman World—of Christendom, “ and their armies gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse and against His army.” So Great Britain, France, Spain, Germany, etc., shall bury in one common grave their mutual political and social dislikes, and gather together for one fell purpose. Hatred to the Lamb of God and to the heavenly saints overpowers national and political animosities, and, lured on by Satan, they dare attack the Lord of glory. Their aerial fleet and land forces are crushed to atoms. The two leaders—the Beast and the False Prophet—are consigned without trial

to the lake of fire, while their less guilty followers are judicially slain. These thousands or millions are raised a thousand years afterwards to stand their trial before the Great White Throne set up when time is no more.

THE BINDING AND IMPRISONMENT OF SATAN, xx., 1-3.

The unseen, yet real, leader of the gigantic confederation of kings and armies, described in the previous chapter is now dealt with. An unnamed angel, having the authority of the abyss, and of sufficient power to cope with Satan (for all angels are not equally powerful—Dan. x. 13), proceeds to bind the ancient enemy of God and of His people. The “key” and the “great chain” in the angel’s hand are, of course, symbolic. It must be remembered that Satan is a spirit and that a literal chain is thus out of the question. The *key* implies authority over the abyss or bottomless pit, and the *chain*, that Satan is bound or restrained. His four titles (ver. 2), as in xii. 9, are each significant and worthy of attention. The history of Satan from his creation in beauty, power, and wisdom (Ezek. xxviii. 12-19), on through the course of the ages, till he is finally cast into the lake of fire—the most degraded of created beings and the greatest sufferer in the Universe (Rev. xx. 10)—is the most awful record conceivable. We may remark that both “Hades” and the “Abyss” are but temporary places of abode. The lake of fire is eternal. The location of the abyss is not revealed. Satan, then, is imprisoned, chained, and sealed up in the abyss for a thousand years. What a rest to the wearied sons of men! What a relief to the suffering part of creation! The great instigator of evil, the enemy of the human race, the tempter of men is now confined and the earth freed from his presence for a thousand years.

THE GLORIOUS REIGN WITH CHRIST, xx., 4-6.

Christ shall reign *over* the earth for a thousand years, and *on* it by His representative—a prince of the royal house of David (Ezek. xlv.-xlviii.). The duration of the reign is stated in express terms, they “reigned with Christ a thousand years.” The main character of the reign is *righteousness*. This character of rule, kings and governments have been striving to affect for nigh 6,000 years, but to the world it is yet an ideal state of things. Christ will display it in perfection, in governmental administration. The world will be *one* vast kingdom, its principle of rule, righteousness,

and its King, the Lord of Glory. The earthly features of the millennial reign are unfolded in the writings of the Hebrew Prophets ; the heavenly character of the kingdom is disclosed in the New Testament writings.

There are three groups of saints who are said to reign with Christ (ver. 4). " I saw thrones and they sat upon them and judgment was given unto them." These are evidently the saints of Old and New Testament times and are spoken of as " elders." " And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the Word of God." This class of martyred saints are seen under the fifth seal (vi. 9-11). " And *such* as worshipped not the beast, neither his image and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand" (R.V.). This second group of martyrs are slain at a period subsequent to those in the earlier scene and under totally different circumstances.

" The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished " (ver. 5). This refers to the wicked dead of all ages (compare with ver. 12).

SATAN'S LAST ACTIONS AND FINAL DOOM, xx., 7-10.

The glorious reign is over. The imprisonment of Satan is at an end. Christ has been on the throne and Satan in the Abyss. Has Satan profited by his long term of penal servitude ? Have the nations who have basked under the smile, and glory, and beneficent sway of God's Son bowed in heart and will to the king ? Alas ! no. Satan uses his freedom to go throughout the whole earth and deceive the nations once again—his last work on earth. The feigned obedience of the peoples is quickly thrown off, and they march under the leadership of Satan, covering the face of the earth for numbers. Jerusalem, the beloved city, and the camp of the saints gathered round it, are the objects of this—the largest confederacy ever witnessed. To crush and destroy the beautiful work of God on earth—a picture of governmental perfection—is the aim of the satanic hosts and their renowned leader. " Fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them " ; all lie in the silence of Death. Satan's doom is recorded in ver. 10. This is the last notice of Satan in the Holy Scriptures. First cast out of heaven (xii.), then into the abyss (xx.), and finally into the lake of fire to endure its agonies for ever—not to reign, but to suffer.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE DEAD, xx., 11-15.

The throne of judgment is set up in eternity. It is termed "a great white throne." Its vastness and intense purity, the greatness of the Judge, and the eternal issues at stake, invest the scene with unusual solemnity. This is the last assize. It is an individual judgment, unlike that of a thousand years earlier (Matt. xxv.). In the Matthew judgment we have *nations* before us. In the Apocalyptic judgment we witness *individuals* only. In the former there are three classes, in the latter but one. The judgments differ in time, in place, and in character. The Son of Man is the Judge (John v. 22). "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before *the throne*" (R.V.). Works, deeds, sins form the ground of judgment, not the nature which produced them. We are not responsible for the *existence* of the evil nature in each one—saint and sinner. We were born with it. But we are responsible for the *allowance* of the nature, and it is this latter which is in question in the final judgment. Condemnation—the irrevocable sentence of the Judge—is pronounced and executed, founded on the record of each one's life and actions. "The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works." The lake of fire becomes the eternal depository of all and everything contrary to God. The *last* notice of the lake of fire and of its miserable inhabitants is contained in the *last* notice of eternity (xxi. 8).

THE ETERNAL STATE, xxi., 1-8.

The last act in time is the raising of the wicked dead, the first recorded event in eternity is the judgment of the dead. That awful judgment has its place between the passing away of the millennial heavens and earth, and the introduction of the new heaven and earth. The judgment of the dead *must* be eternal, for all measures and limitations are connected with space and time, and these necessarily ceased with the disappearance of the then existing heavens and earth. The Judgment of the Dead is in the infinitude of eternity. What is eternity? It is the duration of God Almighty. His life measures eternity—that ocean without shore or bottom.

These precious verses open with a new vision beheld by the seer—a new heaven and a new earth, but in the latter "no sea." The size, configuration, and beauty of these eternal abodes of

heavenly and earthly saints are not given. Then in a separate vision, we have the bride, after a thousand years of bliss and glory, still as a bride adorned for her husband. She enters the eternal state in the joy and purity of her marriage nuptials. Her affections are unchanged; she is a joy for ever. Then follow certain characteristic features of the unchanging condition which is fashioned after the nature of God who is *light* and who is *love*. What a scene of no sickness, no tears, no sorrow, no death, no pain. The sun shall never go down, the gold shall be undimmed, the flower shall never fade; no bursting heart shall be there. God, all and in all, shall uphold these worlds of perfection for endless ages. But the horrors of the lake of fire are equally real and true (ver. 8).

GOD'S TREASURES.

Deut. xxviii. 1-14.

How can I, a poor and worthless being, Find goodly treasures while on earth I dwell? Listen! This is what God's Word assures me, Only obey Him, then all else is well!	Rev. iii. 17; Is. i. 6. Rev. iii. 18. Deut. xi. 27; Matt. vi. 33.
This key alone will open all the doors Into His treasure house of Love Divine, None other will unlock His wond'rous stores, Or give me right to call such riches mine!	John vii. 17.
Obedience better is than sacrifice! 'Twas disobedience brought about the fall! Ye are my friends, said Jesus, if ye do Whatever I in love command you all.	1 Sam. xv. 22. Gen. iii. 17. John xv. 14.
And so in Deuteronomy I see, In chapter twenty-eight to verse fourteen, How God, "The Lord shall open unto me <i>His treasure good,</i> " while on His Word I lean!	ver. 12.
With <i>diligence</i> must I hearken to Him, Or otherwise His voice I may not heed, Losing thus what He so longs to give me, The untold riches for the one in need.	ver. 1.
The Lord my God will <i>set me then on high!</i> The very highest place that He can give: Delivered from the fearful pit and clay, Hidden in Christ and in His life to live.	ver. 1. Eph. ii. 6. Ps. xl. 2. Col. iii. 3, 4.
How vastly different will the world then seem, As I enjoy the <i>treasures</i> of my Lord, All earthly gain I lightly shall esteem, Nor seek to heap down here an earthly hoard.	Phil. iii. 7, 8. Col. iii. 2. Matt. vi. 19.

- The greatest treasure I can have below,
Is full assurance of the work that's done
By Jesus Christ, Who died and rose for me—
And I may call this, *Treasure number one!* Rom. viii. 38, 39.
Rom. iv. 25.
- No golden casket could such *treasure* hold,
It needs a far more precious dwelling-place—
By living, loving hearts must it be held,
And time its beauty never can erase! Acts vii. 48.
1 Cor. iii. 16; 2 Cor. vi. 16.
Ps. xxvii. 4; 2 Cor. iii. 18
- Have you this *treasure*, fellow-traveller here,
Or have you still this best of gifts to find?
Why, just you think, it's offered *now* to you,
Only to take 'tis free to all mankind! John iii. 16.
- Then comes to me another *treasure* great,
He knew how fearful I should often be,
So right away he says *He will defeat*
All foes, who would attempt to conquer me! ver. 7.
- I must not worry when they do appear,
I've but to take my Captain at His word,
And watch to see how He will cause them all
To flee away, as doth some frightened bird! Ps. iii. 6 and 7.
Heb. xiii. 6.
2 Chron. xx. 17.
Ps. xxvii. 1, 2, 3.
- No foe so strong but He can overcome!
Temptations from within or from without,
Shall all be subject to His power, and mine,
If I but trust in Him without a doubt! Ps. xviii. 17.
Heb. ii. 18.
1 John v. 4.
Ps. lvi. 11.
- Nothing on earth this blessing could secure,
Union with Christ alone will prove 'tis true,
Our Victor over death and all its powers!
And I may call this, *Treasure number two!* Heb. ii. 14.
- Such gifts as these should make me sing for joy,
Enough indeed to make my cup run o'er—
And yet, as if not satisfied with these,
He freely gives to me still more and more! Ps. lxviii. 3; Ex. xv. 1.
Ps. xxiii. 5.
Luke xix. 26.
- And now it is a promise, oh! so sweet,
A further gift that I shall richly prize,
It is no less than this, that He will then
Command a blessing on me from the skies! ver. 8.
- My little storehouse shall be filled indeed,
With all the fulness that can come from Him—
And I shall then possess the strength I need,
To keep His wealth from ever growing dim! Matt. v. 6.
John i. 16.
Eph. iii. 16.
2 Cor. iv. 7.
- For 'tis the Holy Spirit's constant joy—
That gift to me from God and Jesus sent—
To feed me, lead me, and my powers employ,
That I may grow in grace, and be content! John xiv. 16; xvi. 7.
John xvi. 13; Luke xxiv. 49.
2 Pet. iii. 18; 1 Tim. vi. 6.
- This gift to make me prosper in my way,
That so my life may always happy be,
Shall be to me my comfort and my stay,
And I may call this, *Treasure number three.* Ps. i. 3.
Phil. iv. 4.
John xiv. 26.

- When thus by grace these *treasures* I possess,
 He tells me 'tis His plan and purpose to
Establish me as holy to himself!
 No longer now the old man, but the new. ver. 9.
2 Cor. v. 17.
- How could I ever wish to live apart
 From Him Who loves me with the truest love?
 Nay, I surrender all my worthless heart
 To Him, with whom I soon shall dwell above! Jer. xxxi. 3.
Prov. xxiii. 26.
John xiv. 3.
- But what a *treasure* 'tis to know e'en now
 That I am His by ties He ne'er will break!
 And all His ways with me I will allow
 Are but to perfect me for His own sake! John x. 28; xiii. 1.
James i. 4.
- His *will* be mine, His *way* be my way too,
 Thus leading me to worship and adore,
 Established here on earth, entirely His—
 Then I may call this, *Treasure number four!* Luke xi. 2; Ps. lxxxvi. 11.
Ps. xc. 17; 1 Pet. ii. 5.
- Life and liberty, light and love bestowed,
 Remains there yet a *Treasure* mine to call?
 Yes, this, to make these riches seem more fair,
 Another addeth He to crown them all!
- For He shall *make me plenteous for good!*
 Distributing His wealth I then shall see,
 That thus by scatt'ring I am richer still!
 And others will be blest as well as me! ver. 11.
Prov. xi. 24.
Prov. xi. 25.
Matt. v. 16.
- He gave His all for me to make me rich!
 May I His *treasures* always use aright
 In gratitude to Him, and for His sake,
 And in His fulness ever take delight. 2 Cor. viii. 9.
2 Tim. ii. 15.
2 Cor. i. 7, 8.
Eph. i. 23.
- Constant in service may I serve Him well,
 Till in His home above I do arrive:
 So He shall make me plenteous for good!
 And I may call this, *Treasure number five!* Titus ii. 14.
1 Cor. xv. 58.
- Could five such pearls by mortal man be given?
 No! worth of worlds will not with them compare!
 The millionaires of earth are poor indeed
 If in their lives they lack these *treasures* fair. Matt. xvi. 26.
Luke xviii. 22, 23.
Luke xvi. 20, 21.
- 'Tis all because He loves me, loves me so
 With love beyond all measure of the mind,
 That I would never tire of loving too,
 This Friend of friends, Who is to me so kind. Eph. iii. 19.
1 John iv. 19.
Prov. xviii. 24.
- So now I'm rich, yea, rich beyond all dreams,
 And naught this wealth can ever from me take;
 It's mine through time to all eternity,
 For He Who gives it never will forsake! 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.
Rom. viii. 35.
1 Pet. i. 4.
Matt. xxviii. 20; Heb. xiii. 5.
- Thus do I, a poor and worthless being,
 Secure the wealth that God and heaven afford!
 All His *goodly treasure* mine, through simply
 Believing and obeying Christ, my Lord!—C. W. C. James ii. 5.
Phil. iv. 19.

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PREPARATION FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER.

LUKE xxii. 7-20.

BY WM. BOUSFIELD.

THE Passover was to be partaken of for the last time, and the Lord's Supper was about to be introduced, one looking backward, the other looking forward. We may learn from the incidents recorded by St. Luke what is the true preparation for the Lord's Supper.

We too often associate the Lord's Supper with an ecclesiastical position rather than with a moral condition. The first important thing to notice is that the Lord makes known His mind and wish to them. They had the distinct word of the Lord, "Go and prepare us the Passover" (v. 8). So, to-day, we also have a distinct word, "This do in remembrance of me" (v. 19). Now the answer of these disciples to the Lord's expressed wish shews the needed moral condition of all those to-day who desire to carry out that wish. "Where wilt thou?" (v. 9). In Deuteronomy xxvi. v. 2, when the Israelite brought his basket of first-fruits to the Lord, it was to "the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place His Name there." Not *where* they pleased, but *where* He pleased. Any other centre than that is not of God, and cannot command His blessing. Verse 10 raises the question of divine guidance, and whether there is a willingness to follow where He directs. "There shall a man meet you bearing a pitcher of water, follow him." The Lord may lead in many ways. The great question for us is, are we willing to follow. Here, the Lord gives to a very ordinary circumstance a very extraordinary meaning, it was an everyday occurrence for pitchers of water to be carried through the streets, but very unusual for a *man* to do so, the *women* were the burden-bearers, and such an unusual circumstance the Lord could use as divine guidance for His disciples. "If any man *will* do His will, he shall know" (John vii. 17). Their safety lay in simply following where He points the way. The pitcher of water seems to suggest there must be moral cleansing by the word before partaking of the supper.

Verse 11 brings out the desire of the heart and their object in following. "Where is the guest chamber?" Surely, none but

God can give His own to express such a desire, this is not the desire for identification with a party or a position, but just the desire of the heart to be where He is, and to find the place "where *I* shall eat the Passover with *My* disciples" (v. 11). Who but "the goodman of the house," the Holy Spirit, can *shew* to us the wondrous three-fold character of that marvellous "guest chamber," so soon to be hallowed by the divine presence.

If we are willing and longing to say, "Where is the guest chamber?" "He will shew," will most certainly follow. And what will *He*, the goodman of the house, shew to us? "A **large upper room furnished.**" Large! Oh! how large. "Into a good land and a large" (Exod. iii. 8). The place where *He* is, is the place for enlargement of heart and vision, to understand the greatness of the "*We* being *many* are *one* bread and one body, for we are *all* partakers of that one bread" (1 Cor. 17). Have we risen to the greatness of this or lowered it to our thought and human limitations?

"Upper room." The place where *He* is, is where we get lifted high above all else, away from ourselves or *our* things, even from our own blessings, to *Himself*, and to a higher comprehension of His wondrous person and matchless love, right into Heaven itself, where He now sits in the transcendent glory of God. Truly "they that wait upon the Lord"—"Mount up with wings as eagles" (Isaiah xl. 31). "Furnished"—nothing lacking.

"Jesus Thou art enough,
The mind and heart to fill."

No need for outward, sensuous forms. *He, Himself*, is enough, he engages every heart.

"There make ready." This is extremely important. How much we miss, by not making ready. What a word for every Christian, "ready." "And his wife hath made herself *ready*" (Rev. xix. 7).

We would not enter the guest chamber of one of our earthly friends without preparation or readiness. What this making ready is we learn from the Apostle Paul when he "received from the Lord" divine revelation as to the order of the Lord's Supper. He is careful to add, "But let a man *examine* himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup" (1 Cor. xi. 28).

Self-judgment is the needed preparation of the heart, when we partake of the Lord's Supper, that we may not eat and drink "unworthily," nor "condemnation" to ourselves.

"They *found* as He had said unto them" (v. 13). There was no disappointment in this path. The path of obedience and a subject will is ever the path of safety and of supreme blessing. All this is preliminary, for later, "When the hour was come, *He sat down* and the twelve apostles *with* Him." What a wondrous moment it must have been, what a matchless guest chamber it is where *He*, the Son of the living God, is. What a divine hush must have entered their hearts as the Passover being ended, He instituted for them, and for us, in such graphic and simple language, the blessed feast of the Lord's Supper. So dear to His heart is the remembrance of Himself by His people, that when He had passed through death and gone into the glory, He made a special communication as to the order of it to His chosen Apostle Paul, as given to us in 1 Cor. xi.

We are in the very last stages of the history of the Church of God upon earth, and the blessed privilege of remembering the Lord and of announcing His death becomes increasingly precious to all those who love Him and desire His coming, for it is "Till He come" (1 Cor. xi. 26).

Let us see to it that we have a greater conception of what it all means, of how dear it is to His heart, and of the great need of that preparation of heart, that making "ready," which alone can make it to us individually a blessed feast instead of a mere ordinance and outward form.

STAFFORD,

November 7th, 1910.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,

My attention has been called to line 3, p. 330 of the current number of "The Faith and the Flock," pointing out that as the two disciples were not of the number of the twelve they could not have been present in the "upper room." I think he is right and I am wrong, though from what we know of Oriental manners, is it quite impossible that others were present, though not guests? Still, the text offers no warrant for this.

Yours, etc.,

W. H. DORMAN.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS:— A Simple Exposition.

CHAPTER XI., 8 TO 16.

“ By faith Abraham . . . went out.”

“ . . . Sara . . . received strength.”

“ By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

“ Through faith also, Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful Who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.”

“ These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims in the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city.”

ABEL, Enoch and Noah cover, in type, the whole of God's ways, and bring us, we may say, within sight of the eternal state. It is, indeed, a vast stretch from Creation down to the dispensation of the fulness of times; yet in the first seven verses of our chapter this expanse lies before us. Faith looks right back, and learns how the worlds came into being; and right on to the time when, judgment having cleared the scene of evil, righteousness shall reign.

We now come to various traits of faith exemplified in the path of the believer—the filling in, as it were, of the picture.

The first is in connection with Abraham. He was called to go out; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house,” is the word to the Father of the Faithful recorded in Gen. xiii.; and he obeyed. What a fine trait of faith we have here. Nature makes a strong appeal to us, and can put forth claims of the most imperative kind; but faith can look higher. It hears

a voice more commanding still. The Lord Jesus never slighted natural relationships ; he enforced them, rebuking those whose commandments conflicted with the honour due to father and mother, and equally upholding the sanctity and binding character of marriage, yet to one who said, in answer to the command, "Follow Me," "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father," He replied, "Let the dead bury their dead ; but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God."

Some may be called *literally* to forsake home and parents and country. But not all. Yet we are all called to have the faith that could do it ; for the *calling*, common to all of us as Christians, places us outside this present scene, for it is "the calling of God on high in Christ Jesus."

Abraham did not know *whither he went*. This enabled him to exhibit a fine faith. He not only had to leave everything, but he was left in ignorance of the place to which he was called. He went, well knowing that no one had "blundered" in this case. How thoroughly he was tested ; and how completely cast upon God. Are there not times when we are called to tread the same path ? Everything around us fails, perhaps, and we have to seek new surroundings, in another country and under a new sky. Or some great principle is at stake, and in order to be true to the call of God we must arise and depart—we have to go out hardly knowing whither. But if only we hear the voice, that must be sufficient for us ; all the rest is provided for if that is clear. Nature shrinks and holds back, wanting to know the consequences, and waiting to see all clear, and quite breaks down ; but faith—and hereby we may know whether we have it or not—faith can set out without raising questions or getting every difficulty removed, it only asks to be clear about one thing—the call of God.

And still it was a path of faith even when Abraham reached the Land of Promise. The time for full possession had not come. All he had were his tent and altar. But he was more than satisfied. When the crisis came with Lot, he could retire in his favour and give him the choice, though the younger man. He could not have done this unless his had been a path of faith all along ; but his tent told of strangership, and his altar of communion, and so he triumphed. It teaches us that faith must be a continuous thing. Many set out in faith, but they do not *sojourn*, they *settle*. How

hard it is to refuse present benefits ; how hard to put aside the advantages that seem to accrue to a deferring to flesh and sense. But faith is content with a tabernacle, though Lot will seek Sodom. Faith, however, obtains a present reward. It was after Lot had separated from Abraham that the Lord said unto him, " Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward ; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever."

We read also that "*he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*" Thus we have three characteristics of faith in these verses. Abraham "went out" ; he "sojourned" ; he "looked" for God's city. Faith always separates a man from the present age and fixes his hopes on the future. The man of the world lives for the present ; the man of faith looks for what God will eventually establish.

How varied are faith's operations. "*Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed.*" Under the guidance of faith Abraham becomes a stranger and looks for a city. By means of the same faith Sara receives strength. The achievements of faith are manifold. If God means to make use of us He will give strength for the task. We may seem helpless, strengthless ; our resources quite unequal to the call of duty ; our cry may be " Who is sufficient for these things ?" But through faith we shall receive strength as did Sara of old. " Thou strengthenest me with strength in my soul." This was the experience of the Psalmist. Has it not been the experience of many a one since ? To St. Paul, weary of his thorn in the flesh, the message came, " My grace is sufficient for thee ; for my strength is made perfect in weakness " And so precious to the Apostle became this strengthening process that he learned to say, " Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me." This is a lofty experience, and in some respects, perhaps, an unique one ; but, nevertheless, to some extent all Christ's servants may experience it.

Let us never forget how it was Sara received strength. It was "*through faith.*" For a long time she appeared to be an unbeliever. She asked, " How ? " just as Mary did long after. But with God nothing is impossible. Do not let us, then, measure

our strength by the task in hand. It may appear utterly inadequate ; but, "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus," let us go forward. God wants us to co-operate with Him, and to be in communion with Him about what He proposes to do, and it is faith only that can lead us into this.

It must be remembered, however, that God had made known His mind first, and given a distinct promise in connection therewith. This is a necessary condition for faith, and also for receiving the strength. The great thing, therefore, for us to find out is God's purpose concerning us. To look for strength merely to carry out our own will, or give effect to our own intentions, can only be fraught with disappointment ; but in the path of His appointment we may, through faith, receive strength.

How fruitful will the strength be that is thus received. "*Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.*" What is it accounts for the comparatively little result from all the efforts put forth in Christian service to day ? Think of the innumerable sermons week by week ; of the great army of Sunday School teachers, district visitors, and the like, and the many means employed to do good ! And then think how little fruit. Why is it ? Is it not largely because the strength employed is little more than natural energy, and is not strength received through faith ? Is it untrue to say that there is but a modicum of faith and divine energy throughout the whole ?

Now comes something that is within the reach of us all. "**These all died in faith.**" We have had some characteristics of the life of faith, but faith not only lives well, it dies well. It dies in full assurance of the future, and of its blessedness. To faith there is light around the bed of death, and all beyond lies in the sunshine of God. "He hath prepared for them a city." The pearly gates are in view, and the twelve foundations flash with jasper and emerald, and stones of every hue. It is God's answer to faith—"He hath prepared for them a city." The sojourners here are the inhabitants there ; the temporary dwellings are exchanged for a city that hath foundations ; and the pilgrim of earth reaches an abiding place which cannot be removed.

THE TABERNACLE (*continued*).
SOME OF ITS TEACHINGS AND LESSONS.

By WALTER SCOTT.

V.

THE Tabernacle was divided into two parts by the beautiful veil, which we are now about to consider ere, with unshod feet, we enter the most sacred apartment on earth. The first apartment, or Holy Place, was the scene of daily ministration of unceasing service—ever doing, never done. It is called “the first Tabernacle” (Heb. ix. 2, 6) and represented the whole system of Judaism which kept God hid, and man at a moral distance. God dwelt in the innermost apartment or “second” Tabernacle (Heb. ix. 3, 7, 8). So long as the veil, type of Christ’s humanity, (Heb. x. 20) was unrent, there could be no access into the presence of God. Not His Incarnation, but His Death opened the Way into the Divine Presence. In the Incarnation God came down to man, but in the Death of the Cross men can righteously draw nigh to God. Love brought God down, but in righteousness Christ has gone back to God. The infinite value of the Sacrifice has been owned by God. He rent the veil from top to bottom—sufficiently rent for the vilest sinner on earth cleansed by the blood of Christ to pass through and rejoice in God His Saviour.

THE BEAUTIFUL VEIL, Exodus xxvi., 31-33.

In the curtains the material “fine twined linen” is first specified; whereas in the construction of the veil, the colour “blue” is first named. Christ’s association with *earth*, but in absolute purity of life and nature, seems the thought in the first mention of the fine linen in the curtains. Christ’s association with *heaven*—the Son of Man in it even when here—is signified by the “blue” being first mentioned in connection with the beautiful and *separating* or *dividing* veil.*

The veil must have been an exquisite piece of skilled workmanship. Its basis was of fine twined linen—our Lord in His Holy and righteous life; the Lord Himself as Man on earth. Then the colours blue, purple, and scarlet told their story of *Who* He was. Heaven, His sufferings, and future glory are the profound teachings

* Veil in the New Testament: Vail in the Old Testament; literally *to separate*; God and His Throne within; priestly service without.

of the colours—the distinctive truths, the outstanding facts of His wondrous history. The veil was made with Cherubim (Exod. xxxvi. 35). This fact is highly significant. The veil in its diversified colours was the work of skilful weaving under Divine direction. It presented a mass of Cherubim delicately woven into the texture of the linen. We gather from this that the executive power of God is committed to Christ. The government is on His shoulders. All Judgment and its execution too is committed to the Son of Man (John v. 22, 27). He exercises the power of the Throne of the Eternal God.

The Veil was suspended on four pillars of Shittim-wood, overlaid with gold. The wood and gold direct us to the Human and Divine natures of our Lord. These pillars rested on silver sockets—massive and costly blocks embedded in the ground. Neither the sockets of brass—Christ's endurance of God's holy wrath; nor the sockets of silver—Christ in Atonement—could be seen. "His soul was made an offering for sin" and that God alone could witness and fathom truly and fully. The hooks of gold above on which the veil was suspended told of Divine Righteousness. Thus the silver of Atonement, beneath and unseen, supported the pillars and constituted them immovable. Atonement is the solitary, yet grand, basis on which Christianity reposes. The gold above and the silver beneath—righteousness based on accomplished Atonement is *the* fundamental truth of all God's dealings in grace.

We nowhere read of a rent veil in the Epistle to the Hebrews. In fact, the veil of the Tabernacle was not rent, this great fact is predicated of the veil of the Temple. The unrent veil was Christ in Holy flesh; the rent veil was Christ in Death. The three synoptical Gospels each record the rending of the veil of the Temple, not its removal. The veil unrent—Christ in Incarnation—was not sufficient, not enough to bring men righteously and holily into God's presence. The Cross was an absolute necessity for salvation, and to give us access as worshippers into the presence of God. The Apostle in his inspired commentary on the Jewish Ritualistic System—the Epistle to the Hebrews—refers exclusively to the veil of the *Tabernacle*, which was not rent. Matthew, Mark, and Luke refer to the rending of the veil of the *Temple*. The Temple veil is briefly described in 2 Chron. iii. 14, and differs in two or three particulars from the veil of the Tabernacle.

That which hid the glory of God and confined His presence is rent. The Holy and the Holiest are now one. The heavens are opened now. The veil is termed in Num. iv. 5, Exod. xxxix. 34 "the Covering Veil," being used to cover the Ark on its journeys, as also concealing it from the view of the priests and people. Only Moses the Mediator, and Aaron the high priest, were permitted to look upon the Ark and live. Two grand facts stand out in bold relief. So long as the veil stood in its silent glory unrent, and the mercy seat unstained by blood, there could be no access to God, nor could His glory be witnessed, but all is now changed. God's presence and God's glory are our souls' boast.

(To be continued.)

LETTERS TO YOUNG PEOPLE.



THE WORLD AND WORLDLINESS.

No. 2.

DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

In my last letter I endeavoured to give you a sketch of the world. You will remember we traced its origin back to the beginning of man's history—to the Garden of Eden—and to that first act of disobedience, when Eve saw that the tree was good for food, and pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, and she took and did eat. You know I said worldiness is in the desires. When we seek to minister to self in any way, that is worldiness. The tree was "good for food"—something that ministered to the taste; "pleasant to the eyes"—the pleasure of seeing and being seen, which makes up such a large proportion of the worldiness around us to day; "to make one wise"—that which shuts out God; "the world by wisdom knew not God."

The Apostle John says, "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." This is only another way of describing what is said about Eve in Gen. iii. Yet four thousand years separate the two. But that length of time had not changed the world or altered its character. Its essential principles, dear

young friends, were introduced when sin was introduced, and have remained the same ever since. The fact is, the world never changes.

We find that the Bible always refers to the world in practically the same terms. Its course is invariably opposed to God and to His people. Thus the Apostle John, speaking of our Lord, says, "The world knew Him not." Christ's own testimony was, "The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil." To the Jews He said, "Ye are of this world; I am not of this world." He referred to His death in these words, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." And before Pontius Pilate He witnessed the good confession, "My Kingdom is not of this world; if My Kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is My Kingdom not from hence."

St. Paul bears a similar testimony. He beseeches us, "Be not conformed to this world." He speaks of the princes of this world as opposed to God, and ignorant of His wisdom. "The wisdom of this world," he says, "is foolishness with God." In writing to the Galatians he speaks of it as "*this present evil world.*" And at the close of the same epistle says, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." In his epistle to the Ephesians he describes those who were dead in trespasses and sins as walking "according to the course of this world." He speaks of Satan as the god of it; and of Demas as forsaking him because he loved it.

The testimony of the Apostle James is not different to this. One element of pure religion is for a man "to keep himself unspotted from the world"; and he declares "The friendship of the world is enmity with God."

St. Peter speaks of "the corruption that is in the world through lust."

To the Apostle John's writings I have already referred, and given one quotation from his first epistle. The whole may be described as a contrast between that which is of the Father and what is of the world. And he sums all up by saying, "*We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the wicked one.*" Thus you see the character of the world is one and the same all through.

After such a description I can fancy some of you saying, "Let me have nothing to do with it. Let me escape from it." But this would be wrong. We have seen already how our Lord Jesus Christ prayed not that His own might be taken out of the world, but that they might be kept from the evil. To escape from it externally would be no use at all ; what we need is to escape from its spirit.

And here a very important distinction must be drawn. I want you to remember that the world and worldliness are not equivalents one of another. If they were, then either one must go out of the world by having nothing whatever to do with it, or we must all become worldly. Roughly speaking, it may be said that the world is outside of us, and worldliness inside. If we see this distinction we shall also see that it is possible to have a great deal to do with the world without necessarily being worldly. A fish may be in the water, surrounded on every side by it, and yet the water be no hindrance to it. Why? Because it possesses fins and scales. The one enables it to pass through the water, the other keeps the water out. You will recollect that in the Old Testament (Lev. xi.) we have a description of clean and unclean animals, fish, birds, etc., and we are told that fish with fins and scales were clean, and might be eaten. As long as the Christian possesses these fins and scales he is safe. The world may be on every side of him, he will not become worldly. The fins are the power to pass through it—running with patience the race set before us ; the scales, the power to keep the world from getting possession of the heart.

If, dear young friends, we keep the distinction between the world and worldliness before us, we shall be saved from the mistake of supposing that worldliness is a question merely of externals. It is not even determined by how much we have of the world. Now it is for want of making this simple distinction between the world and worldliness that many good people have an altogether false conception of what worldliness is. They adopt the rough and ready way of labelling certain things as worldly. This method goes too far, or it does not go far enough. It does not go far enough, for, as a matter of fact, *everything* in the world is worldly—"All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world"—and this includes business as much as pleasure. And it goes too

far because it makes a quite arbitrary distinction and connects worldliness too much with what is external. In certain cases, I admit, this method may come near to being right, nevertheless, it is not the true test.

If we keep before us the exact words of Scripture whenever it speaks of the world, it will help us to grasp the importance of the distinction I am dwelling upon. We are not to be *conformed* to this world, it says. That is, our motives and aims are to be different. Again, we are to look upon it as a crucified thing, and ourselves as crucified to it. In other words, we are to estimate the world at its true value, for Christ would have none of it, and He died to it ; and also have in mind its estimate of us as Christians ; it values us no more than it valued Christ, for it crucified Him. We are not to walk according to its course. That is, though mixing with it, and using it, we are not to be carried away by it. We are to use this world as not abusing it. The Apostle James does not tell us to keep altogether away from it, but *unspotted* from it. While the Apostle John says, "*Love not the world.*"

Thus we see that not being *conformed* to it ; *unspotted* from it ; and not *loving* it ; are the true criteria of unworldliness.

On the other hand, how many Christians, through not seeing the true character of the world, become attached to it and immersed in it, and are indifferent to the matter of worldliness altogether. It would be difficult to find a truer picture of the world than that depicted in Matt. xiv. It is Herod's birthday, and he has made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee. As a final fillip to the feast, the daughter of Herodias dances before them. Herod is pleased, and promises to give her whatsoever she would ask. The fearful request is : "Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger." And, in spite of its hideous nature, the petition is granted. This is the world. When it is pleased, it will do anything, but it cares nothing for God's servants or His testimony.

It may be said this is an extreme case. But it needs an extreme case in order to obtain a true picture. The world, as such, has ever been marked by violence and corruption. It was so before the flood ; it is so here ; it will be so again. Herod had married the divorced wife of his brother Philip. Here is corruption. He unlawfully imprisons and beheads John because of his protest against it. Here is violence. It is the world stripped of every

mask and painted to the life. You will say, It is not always like that ; it often holds out a friendly hand and wears a fair exterior. *It is always like that at the bottom.* When that ghastly festival was over, how many aching heads and tortured consciences there must have been !

Would you like to see another scene of a very different character ? In the very next verses we see Jesus departing into a desert place, and there He feeds the multitude. He was " moved with compassion " we read, and He ministers to their need. What a contrast to Herod, moved with insane pleasure at a dancing girl and wreaking his vengeance upon one who had been faithful enough to oppose his plans. The false King and the true King ! In whose company would you have preferred to be, and at which banquet ? At the one, life was destroyed, and happiness and peace along with it. At the other, life was sustained, and all went to their homes satisfied. The one is a picture of the world ; the other, what it is to be outside it with Christ.

In my next letter I hope to explain the meaning of certain passages of Scripture which refer to the world.

I remain,

Your Friend,

THE EDITOR.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

C.A.E. Ques. : *Would you explain 1 John i. 8 ? Does this mean we must always have " sin " in us ? I cannot think so myself, because in Chap. ii. 1, we are told to sin not.*

Ans. : We all have sin in us, though we may not necessarily be committing sin. Sin, the principle, is not absolutely taken away from the believer. It is only self-deception to think so. Rom. vi. makes this perfectly clear. We are told (ver. 11) to reckon ourselves dead to it ; and then (ver. 12) " Let not sin therefore *reign* in your mortal body," &c. It is there, but it is not to reign, or have the mastery. Further, were sin absolutely removed, as you suppose, there would be no need for the exhortation of ver. 1, Chap. ii. : " These things write I unto you, that ye sin not." Beside this, everyone knows practically that he has sin in him, but he is not obliged to obey its lusts.

E.B.B. Ques. : *Please give an explanation of the latter clause of ver. 10 of Rom. vi.*

Ans. : On the cross the Lord Jesus was made sin (2 Cor. v. 21), and He died to it. As made sin God forsook Him. In resurrection it is just the opposite. He is hid in God (Col. iii. 3), that is, God has "made Him exceeding glad with His countenance." We are alive unto God in Him, *i.e.*, God is the same to us as to Him.

E.G.S. Ques. : *Is the woman mentioned in Luke vii. Mary Magda'ene?*

Ans. We do not think so. There is certainly no authority for identifying the two. Out of Mary Magdalene the Lord had cast seven devils. Not a word is said of this in connection with the one in the above chapter. The occasion referred to in Matt. xxvi., Mark xiv., and John xii. is, of course, quite different to that of Luke vii. The account in John makes it tolerably certain that no such words were uttered as are recorded in Luke. We are told it was Mary of Bethany, and it was not a question so much of her love as a forgiven sinner, as a saint realising the truth of the situation, and acting with perfect intelligence. We must not be misled by the fact that in both cases the name of the host was Simon. This was a coincidence. In Luke vii. there is not a word about Christ's burial, but a sinner, who had had much forgiven, loving much. Whereas, in all three accounts of what took place at Bethany it is the burial that is in view. Luke vii. does not mention Bethany as you surmise. It says "a woman in the city" (ver. 37), whereas Bethany was a village.

"SHALL ROME RE-CONQUER ENGLAND?"

WE most earnestly recommend this book to all who have the welfare of souls at heart. It will convince any unprejudiced mind that wherever Rome holds sway, there Christianity becomes corrupt and the country degraded. It is the most powerful attack upon this evil system which has appeared for many a day; and we most heartily congratulate the authors, Dr. Horton and Mr. Joseph Hocking, upon the fearless and able way in which they have exposed its errors. The thanks of the Christian public are due to them, and, as far as we are concerned, are hereby heartily rendered.

One of the most striking features in the present day with regard to this matter is the apathy displayed towards this question by

almost all classes. A striking illustration of this is given in the above book. A well-known preacher was invited to lecture on the subject of Popery in a fashionable seaside resort. Application was made for the use of a chapel, but the office bearers refused permission, nor could such permission be obtained for any similar place. In the end, an outside and rather obscure hall had to be taken.

People in this country do not see Rome in its true character, and they are led to think it is not worth while to raise a protest. It ought to be remembered, however, that Rome's true character is what she is in other parts of the world. Her actions there really denote that her methods are unchanged, and she ought to be treated accordingly. Supposing a man had two business concerns, one in England and another in America. If he has been guilty of dishonest dealings in the one country, can he be looked upon as an honest man in the other? Assuredly not. Does not the same principle apply to Rome? She does not persecute in England, but she does persecute in other parts of the earth. Ought this to be forgotten or overlooked? She does not persecute here for the simple reason it would not pay; but she would if she could because she does so elsewhere.

We would like to refer to several points in this most fascinating and able book, but we must leave the reader to peruse it for himself. It can be obtained of all booksellers, price 1/-.

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“**Earth's Notable Events.**”—This book, by Mr. W. W. Fereday, will be found of a most interesting and instructive character, and can be obtained from the author, Uttoxeter, Staffs., or from Messrs. Pickering & Inglis, Glasgow. Price Sixpence.

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“**Sins Taken Away.**”—By Russell Elliott (a reprint from the “Faith and the Flock”), can now be obtained from Alfred Holness, Paternoster Row, E.C. Price One penny, post free; 50 for 2/-; 100 for 3/6.

“The love of Christ is perfect. I may love a little, then I shall give a little; I may love much, then I shall give much; but if I love perfectly, I shall keep nothing back. This is the way Christ gives.”