
THE FAITH
AND
THE FLOCK,
1913.

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The Faith and The Flock.

Vol. V.—No. 1.

JANUARY, 1913.

PRICE—ONE PENNY.

TO OUR READERS.

May grace, mercy and peace be with all our readers during the coming year. God is our refuge and strength. He is the God of "patience and consolation": the God of "hope." What a God is ours! "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." What is there He cannot do for us or be to us? "*He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*"

* * * *

It will be noticed the Magazine has been slightly reduced in size as regards the number of pages. Hitherto it has been larger than the price warranted. We trust by somewhat curtailing and condensing articles our readers will not suffer, but find the ministry as varied as it has been in the past. Our warm thanks are due to the many friends who have encouraged us by their words of appreciation during the year that has closed. Again and again such letters have caused thanksgiving to God for His abounding goodness. During the coming year, if grace be given, every effort will be put forth to make *The Faith and the Flock* increasingly useful to all classes of readers. Dr. Burton, we are glad to announce, hopes to be a frequent contributor, and *Notes and Comments*, similar to those published this month, we expect will appear regularly from his pen. The Editor hopes to write some plain papers on the Epistle to the Romans and other foundation truths, as well as to continue the articles on St. Paul's Autobiography. We are hoping also for valuable contributions from Mr. Walter Scott, Mr. W. W. Fereday and others. The prayers of our readers for divine guidance and blessing are earnestly invoked.

* * * *

The Volumes for 1912 will be ready (*D.V.*) when this number appears, and we trust our friends will order largely. May we also solicit their aid in making the magazine known to others. Testimony has reached us during the last twelve months as to people of various stations and pursuits in life who have been helped by it. We

therefore would earnestly ask that those who desire to assist others in their spiritual life—and what greater work can there be?—**will order extra copies of this January Number for distribution.** Where fifty or one hundred copies are required *for free distribution* please communicate with the Editor. **They can be supplied at the rate of 6/- per hundred, carriage paid.**

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

What of the Jewish Race?

THE end of 1912 has indeed brought startling thoughts into many minds. We have no doubt that the return of the Lord Jesus Christ should ever have been the proximate hope of the believer from the day that our blessed Lord, just before His departure, gave utterance to the memorable words, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself" (John xiv. 3). Long forgotten, this "blessed hope" was revived during last century, and has of late received fresh attention. The rapid development of events upon the earth during the last few months brings forcibly to the mind the closing words of the Book of God, "Behold, I come quickly" (Rev. xxii.).

The following sentences from the *Jewish Chronicle* will be of interest to the Christian reader:—

"History is being made at a breathless pace at this moment. Maps are being re-cast; a proud nation is being threatened with ruin; new and lusty Powers are challenging old conditions and formulæ; and everywhere the old order is changing, giving place to new. What of the Jewish race in all this great upheaval? . . . The absorption of a large part of Turkey by other Powers—not by any means excluding Palestine—if Turkey, shaken irremediably by present events, should fall utterly to pieces, would bring the Jews of those districts under new masters. What is to be their fate? . . . When the penalty of dismemberment is imposed upon Turkey for its partial destruction of the Treaty of Berlin, the Jewish people must be allowed to point to the violence inflicted upon it, first of all, by Roumania . . . and in Russia, one of the 'protecting' Powers. . . . At a time when all Europe, including Russia, is acclaiming the overthrow of Turkey on the ground of its oppression, we have the right to ask for an end to the atrocious campaign against the lives of six millions of our race in Russia. . . . We must plead

to-day for something that, if gained, will place us on a plane of true equality with other peoples—our right as Jews before the world to clear racial recognition.”

One cannot but feel that we are nearing the time of Israel's return to Palestine (see Ezekiel xxxvi.) ; nevertheless, it is sad to remember that they will return in unbelief and pass through the great tribulation before their final blessing.

* * * *

The Creed in the Pulpit.

IN commenting upon a book of sermons by a recently appointed Dean of Durham, a reviewer says:—“ In any case, we ought to be large hearted enough to acknowledge that it is possible for those to be loyal to the essence of Christianity who doubt or deny (!) the Virgin Birth, or reject (!) the idea of a bodily resurrection of Christ. It is while we walk in the Spirit of charity that we may hope to have a clearer vision of the truth.”

That there are traitors in the camp is beyond doubt, drawing large salaries to teach what they have long ceased to believe. Now they are growing bolder in their unbelief, and loudly proclaiming it. Have they forgotten 1 Cor. xv. ? The whole argument of the chapter is based upon the conclusively proved fact that Christ is risen. If Christ be not risen, then is Christianity the greatest delusion that ever was invented.

“ But now is Christ risen from the dead ” (1 Cor. xv. 20).

* * * *

Belief in the Bible.

A SAD evidence of the wide-spread unbelief prevalent amongst the Clergy of the Established Church is given by the recent discussion in the Lower House of Convocation of Canterbury. In order to meet the scruples of the young men presenting themselves for Orders, it was proposed to alter the question, “ Do you unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament ? ” and instead to ask, “ Do you unfeignedly believe that the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament contain all things necessary to eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ ? ” Happily it was overruled by 40 votes to 30, but the fact remains that “ perplexity, trouble and distress,” is experienced by many young men when they are asked the first question. Their theological professors have only too successfully filled their minds with unbelief in the inspiration of the Scriptures, and these are the rising generation of parish priests !

**Ashamed
of Christ.**

A HINDU of high rank was disturbed in his mind on the subject of a future state. He had heard of Christians, and longed to converse with them about their religion, and to gain information about Jesus Christ. So he visited England, the Christian's land, provided with introductions to some leading people. He was asked to a great dinner, and in the course of conversation he said to the gentleman who sat next to him, "Can you tell me something about Christ?" "Hush," replied his new acquaintance, "we do not speak of such things as that at dinner parties." Subsequently he was invited to a fashionable ball, and he took an opportunity of asking his partner for information about Jesus Christ. Again he was told that a ball was no place to introduce such a subject. "How strange the Christians in England are," thought the Hindu; "they seem ashamed to speak of their religion, and of Christ, its Founder."

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words . . . of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He cometh, &c."—

Mark viii. 38.

A. H. B.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

"My Presence shall go with thee."

Again we are reminded of the rapid flight of time
As the New Year comes and brings us greetings kind,
But while entering its portal, oh, let us ne'er forget
"We shall tread no more the path we've left behind."

Nor e'er return to gather what we missed when on the way,
Another's hand will reap what we passed by.
The "Word of Cheer" is fruitless when the "time to speak" is gone,
The "thought" unpenned may with the "thinker" die.

This earthly upward pathway grows shorter every year,
And who can tell how soon the end may come,
For we know at any moment the trumpet we may hear
Which shall summon us to our Eternal Home.

Till then, we'd journey forward, watching, praying as we go,
Our feet well shod, and all our armour bright,
The "Cloud by day" above us (a safe unerring guide),
And all around, the "Wall of fire by night."

"My Presence shall go with thee": as we these words repeat,
Lord, grant that our desire may ever be
To walk more closely with Thee, "receive the reaper's wage,"
And "gather fruit" unto Eternity.

M. E. R.

ON THE NEW YEAR'S SHORE—JESUS.

Read JOHN XXI.

By WILLIAM LUFF,

Author of "A Greater Election."

"DO you want a good text for the New Year?" asked a friend.
 "Certainly," I replied. He then gave me John xxi. 4,
 "When the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore."

It was a blessed thought, that on the shore of the New Year, Jesus was waiting to welcome His disciples. And was it not true of every morning? He is always there. "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night; He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, *from* before the people" (Exod. xiii. 21-22).

"When the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore" was true of *the morning of a new dispensation*. The night of the law, in which men toiled and caught nothing, was over; a new commandment told us to cast the net of faith where it would be filled with the great fishes of pardon, justification, peace and joy, power and heaven.

"When the morning was now come"—*the morning of conversion*. The disciples had seen Christ crucified—dark had been that night: now they saw Him risen; and the *sight* in the *light* made all *bright*. Such is conversion: first the night of the Cross, then the light of morning.

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 'I am this dark world's Light:
 Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,
 And all thy day be bright.'
 I looked to Jesus, and I found
 In Him my Star, my Sun:
 And in that Light of life I'll walk
 Till travelling days are done."

"When the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore,"
illustrates the morning after trouble.

"O weary pilgrim, lift your head:
 For joy cometh in the morning!
 For God in His own Word hath said
 That joy cometh in the morning!
 Joy cometh in the morning!
 Joy cometh in the morning!
 Weeping may endure for a night;
 But joy cometh in the morning!"

There had been failure : they had " caught nothing." There had been darkness. There had been loneliness. Now all was over ; for their absent Lord was once more with them.

" Sometimes a light surprises
The Christian while he sings ;
It is the Lord who rises
With healing in His wings.
When comforts are declining,
He grants the soul again
A season of clear shining,
To cheer it after rain."

For what purpose was Jesus standing on the shore ?

To cause a confession of emptiness. " Children," said He, " have ye any meat ? " They answered Him, " No." What a humiliation, for such an experienced fisher as Peter ! Only the Lord can make failing disciples own their failure and emptiness.

But Jesus stood upon the shore *to give them success*, for " He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." A Yarmouth boat has been known to catch a quarter of a million herrings : Christ standing on the shore can give an uncounted and unaccountable haul to spiritual fishers of men.

But the Master was also there *to provide for their immediate necessities*. " As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise."

He also provided for future needs in the miraculous draught : " Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three : and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken."

Having filled their net and satisfied their hunger, Jesus was there *to draw out their love and service* : " So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son of Jonas*, lovest thou Me more than these ? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord ; thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith unto him again the second time, Simon, *son of Jonas*, lovest thou Me ? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord ; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My sheep."

As if pleased to hear Peter's confession of love, " He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son of Jonas*, lovest thou Me ? Peter was

grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me ? And he said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things ; Thou knowest that I love Thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep." There had been three denials : there were now three avowals. Then the Lord added, " Follow Me " : thus changing Peter's service from *fishing* to *feeding* and *following*.

There is another morning and another shore, where there is no night and no failures. Do we half fear landing on that coast ? We need not, if believers, for we shall find Jesus waiting to bid us welcome, and we shall say, " It is the Lord." From an old " Life of Faith," we take the following poem :—

HE'S STANDING ON THE SHORE.

Like billow following billow,
Measured, yet sweeping by,
The roll of time goes ever on,
A wild monotony !
But turn ye from the waters
Our eyes are gazing o'er,
To where the flush of dawning
Is lighting yonder shore.

How slow the night and dreary !
Long has the net been down :
And greater seems the labour,
With little fruit to crown.
But who is this ? A form is there
Like One we've seen before :
Is it—oh, can it be—the Lord
Who standeth on the shore ?

The thought of such a vision—
It chases all the dark !
Now, dancing o'er the waters,
Speeds the erst listless barque.
He speaks, the net is lowered—
'Tis empty now no more.
It is the Lord—even Jesus !
He's standing on the shore !

Oh, the welcome that is waiting
When the boat is pulled to land !
The love in those eyes shining,
The clasp of that dear hand !
And He sets us down beside Him,
Around His own spread board,
And He makes us with Him sharers—
Yes, 'tis indeed the Lord !

O, fisher, toiler of the night,
Long though the hours may be,
Behind the darkness there is One
Preparing joy for thee !
And see, the light is breaking through,
'Tis sunrise on before ;
The feast is spread, and Jesus waits—
He's standing on the shore.—J.R.

THE NEW BIRTH: ITS NECESSITY.

By W. S.

“**YE must** be born again” were words of startling force addressed by our Lord to a cultured, scholarly and religious Jew. The dying robber (Luke xxiii.) or an immoral woman (Luke vii.) and people of that sort, without doubt, need to be born again. All are agreed as to this: but does a religious man need to be born again? Does a kind-hearted professor of religion—a Church member need the new birth? Religion and Reality, Profession and Possession are very different things. Every sinner needs a new nature. He cannot *see* the Kingdom of God without it. He cannot *enter* into the Kingdom of God unless he is born again (John iii. 3, 5).

Reader, O Reader, this vital truth concerns *you* whoever you are. “**Ye must,**” implies an absolute necessity. It cannot be dispensed with. Baptism cannot secure or bring about the new birth. God is its source (John i. 13); the Holy Spirit is the agent (John iii. 6); the Word of God is the instrumental means (1 Peter i. 23). A *new* birth supposes the moral unfitness of the *old* nature, derived from fallen Adam, to enjoy Heaven and enter upon its joys. A new birth is absolutely needful for Heaven. It is not at all a question of gross sins, or even whatever you have *done*. It is what you *are*. In your old Adam nature you are unfit for the Kingdom of God.

You can easily test for yourself whether or not you are born of God’s Spirit:—

Do you love Christ?

Do you love Christ’s people?

Are your desires of a holy character?

Is the reading of the Holy Scriptures neglected, a burden, irksome, or a pleasure and daily delight?

Do you love prayer?

Do you love the company of God’s people?

Is the Race-course, the Theatre, the Ball, the Whist-Drive hated and shunned as formerly they were loved and eagerly sought after?

Have you ever realised the fact that you are a sinner, and as such deserve eternal wrath and condemnation?

Reader, face these questions *now*, and if you cannot truthfully reply, rest assured **you are not born again.** Haste, haste, ere it be too late to the refuge of God's own providing, Christ died for sinners. He died for *you*.

MONDAY MORNING THOUGHTS.

By F. C. JENNINGS.

A blood-red finger stains the east,
And rends the curtains of the night:
Sweet fellowship and sacred feast
Again give place to toil and fight.

Poor warrior I—so often foiled;
With battered shield, and dented helm—
Tired mariner who long has toiled
'Gainst storms that threaten to o'erwhelm.

The past, too, fills my soul with dread,
Foretelling all that I must meet:
This eve shall bring a tired head,
A sorrowing heart, and soiled feet.

The few short years that may remain
Will but reflect the years now past:
Each bear along the same refrain;
Sad monotone from first to last.

The same strong cruel foe without,
With fiery dart and subtle wile;
The flesh within; while round about
The same World with the same false smile.

* * * *

Yet sound, my harp, a nobler chord
Responsive to the grace He gives.
Thy timid fears but shame thy Lord;
And thou must sing; for Jesus lives!

Thy years have passed like freighted ships
Laden with patient tender grace;
Or brimming cups, whence memory sips:
And sipping, calls the heart to praise.

And soon, like Cana's pots, those years
Again shall prove thy Lord divine,
If now He bids thee fill with tears
'Tis but to turn those tears to wine.

Thy gloom is like the mists that furl
Their curtain round the darkened earth.
Let morning gleam touch this—'tis pearl,
Let love of Christ touch that—'tis mirth.

See! dew-drops sparkle in the sun:
With courage then thy race renew.
A morning with fresh praise begun,
Will bring fresh praise with evening dew.

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY: AS A SERVANT.

By R. E.

We invite all to read what is here said about the greatness and unique character of St. Paul's Mission.

WE now pass to the consideration of St. Paul as a servant. His inspired autobiography is rich in records touching his mission and his manner of service. No more interesting study could engage our attention. Not only had he a special mission and a special message, but the whole character of his ministry was of a particular kind.

He speaks of being "*made a minister of the gospel, which was preached to every creature which is under heaven.*" He also speaks of Christ's body, the Church, and tells us he was made a minister of this truth, and intimates that to him it was given to complete the word of God. It was a mystery which had been hid from ages and from generations, that had been given to him to make known. This marks him off, in a striking way, from every other servant that ever lived. Christ said of him, "He is a chosen vessel unto Me" (Col. i. 23-6, Acts ix. 15). The manner of his conversion; the fact of his being sent to the Gentiles; the scope of his missionary labours; his zeal; the persecutions he suffered and manifold trials he had to endure; the success of his labours, as well as the character of his ministry all proclaim him to be the master servant of this and every other age, if we except that One of Whom it could alone be said, "Behold My Servant Whom I have chosen; Mine elect in Whom My soul delighteth."

Again and again does St. Paul refer to his mission. Was he not led to do this? Was it not that we might be impressed with the greatness of his labours, and in them learn the greatness of the gospel he carried? In I. Timothy i. 11, he alludes to the "**glorious gospel of the blessed God,**" and tells us it was **committed to his trust.** Did ever man bear such a message? We hope later to dwell upon the substance of St. Paul's teaching, and therefore we do not pause to enquire what such a gospel—"the gospel of the glory of the blessed God"—involves, but only draw attention to the fact that here was something surpassing all that ever before

had been known, entrusted to one who once, as he tells us in the very same passage, had been a "blasphemer, and a persecutor and injurious," but he adds, "*Christ Jesus . . . counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.*"

What a solemn lesson is conveyed here as to the nature of the Christian ministry. Saul of Tarsus did not choose it for himself: much less did anyone choose it for him. Nor was it a question of education merely, or of some other qualification. Christ put him into it. He was called to the ministry as distinctly as he was called out of nature's darkness. The Apostle affirms this again and again. In the very next chapter, after speaking of the testimony now given by God to men as to the truth that there is one God, one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave Himself a ransom for all—he adds, "Whereunto I am **ordained** a preacher."

That this meant divine ordination is clear from what he writes to the Galatians. "*Paul, an Apostle (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, Who raised Him from the dead.)*" He ever regarded himself as "the servant of Christ." Again, "*Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.*" (1 Cor. iv. 1). In another place he speaks of being "*put in trust with the gospel,*" and speaking "*not as pleasing men but God.*" As a minister he regarded himself as having had a treasure of priceless value committed to him. He never tires of this thought; and never seeks to escape its responsibility. After speaking, in his second epistle to Timothy (chap. 1), of "*the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death and hath brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel,*" he again asserts his appointment to be its herald. So in Titus i. 3, referring to that "eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began," he adds, "*But hath in due time manifested His word through preaching, which is committed unto me.*"

Has not Christendom sunk far below the level of this? Is not the Christian ministry too often regarded as one of the professions? Are there not hundreds in it, who, if they told the simple truth, would have to declare that they are uncertain as to any distinct call from Christ and are not very conscious of having anything committed to them. Has **Christ** put them into the ministry?

We fear, in hundreds of cases, in this country alone, the answer would have to be, No. The proof of this is found in their having no definite message. As to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God; as to the profound truth involved in there being one God and one Mediator, and a ransom given for all—which St. Paul describes as *the truth* to which God would have all men come to the knowledge of—these things are never preached, and they are not preached because they are not known. Any man who knew them **must** preach them. That they are both unknown and unpreached is only too clearly evidenced by the lamentable spiritual condition of the average church-goer. And not only by that, but by the complaint so often heard from the pew: "We do not get what we want."

Thank God there are men still whom Christ puts into the ministry. They are found up and down the land in every denomination; sometimes in quiet corners, occasionally in the very blaze of public notice; they do their work, they preach the word; they bear a faithful testimony; they realise that they have been sent, and that a divine message—true, powerful and effectual—addressing itself to all the needs of men, has been committed to them. They dare not alter it, or keep anything back; and they believe the truth they preach is the truth for all time. They delight to make the words of the Apostle to the Gentiles their own: "**I delivered unto you . . . that which I also received.**"

To all that has been said already as to the greatness of the Apostle's ministry, we may add, St. Paul regarded himself as an ambassador. "**Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us: we pray in Christ's stead.**" This is what he says of himself. Perhaps *he* could say this in a primary sense—a sense in which we cannot. He was not word-painting here. He felt from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, and from his inmost soul, that he was an ambassador. With what splendour, authority and dignity it invested his mission. He was conscious that Divine power was at the back of him. He came from the court of heaven; he was commissioned by the King of Kings; he represented God. Face to face with men he could say, as sent from the presence of the Eternal, "We declare unto you glad tidings." Think too, of his attitude. He tells us what it was. "*As though God did beseech by us.*" A beseeching God! Beseeching men through a man—a man who knew Him! Knew Him

first in his own experience. He knew the terror (fear) of the Lord, and he equally knew the love of Christ. It is this double knowledge that makes the preacher. And having this, St. Paul says "We persuade," "we beseech." How faithfully he interpreted the heart of God to men! And for doing so he afterwards, as he tells us, became "an ambassador in bonds." As the world dealt with the Master so it dealt with the servant, because he so faithfully represented his Master:

We know that St. Paul laboured for eighteen months at Corinth, and that he established a Church there. We also know that for a time those who had been converted under his ministry to some extent became alienated from him. This was perhaps one of the most heart-breaking experiences the great Apostle ever had. His own converts despised him. They listened to those who said, "His bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." And under such influence their hearts were turned away from him. His heart had to bleed over his own spiritual children. Such an ordeal, however, made manifest the greatness of the Apostle's soul, and of the grace bestowed upon him. It also led him to write about himself in a way which ought to make us profoundly thankful. It leads him to declare, "**I was not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles.**" "*But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things*" (2 Cor. xi. 5-6). He could speak of sufferings of which other men who claimed to be Apostles knew nothing: of a power which had caught him up to the third heaven and given him visions and revelations; and of a grace sufficient to enable him even to take pleasure in infirmities and distresses, so that he could affirm, "*In nothing am I behind the very chiefest Apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds*" (2 Cor. xii. 11-12). How wonderful that under the supremest provocation words could be written which were fit to live on for ever, and be a lesson to the Churches for all time! How many of our words, written under stress and trial, are worthy to be thus graven with an iron pen in the rock for ever? Few things could have been more provoking than to see rivals enter the field of his own labours, poison the minds of his spiritual children against him, and cause those he loved as his own soul to depreciate him; while they lauded

those he knew to be utterly undeserving of such praise and even unworthy of it. Yet in the face of all this, instead of penning angry, petulant sentences, which afterwards he would have been glad to recall, he wrote down words which he could leave as a legacy to succeeding ages.

Nor was he slow to acknowledge the true source of all his fruitful service and patient suffering. That source, he was ever conscious, was the Grace of God. Thankful may we be for such an autobiographical reference as we get in the opening of his marvellous chapter on the Resurrection. "*And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am ; and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain ; but I laboured more abundantly than they all ; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*" (1 Cor. xv. 8-10).

This passage reveals two things : the power of grace for service, and also its sanctifying effect upon the vessel. There was what grace made the Apostle as well as what it enabled him to do. Nor must it be forgotten that this grace was, to some extent, *special*. There is grace for all ; there is grace sufficient for all ; but we do not all receive the same amount. "Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." If a man is an Apostle he needs more grace than do ordinary individuals. And the supreme mark that God has called anyone to a special ministry is that He gives grace for it. There are many aspects of grace. There is the grace that justifies, the grace to help in time of need, but there is also this special form of grace of which we are now speaking, which means enduement of power, strength and ability for the mission on which we have been sent. God never sends us at our own charges, and if anyone feels his work to be irksome and a bondage, or beyond him, or a distinct failure, it is because he has attempted work to which he has not been called, and therefore grace has not been given for it.

The grace bestowed upon the Apostle enabled him to say "**I laboured more abundantly than they all.**" So that as we see this servant of God moving from place to place, as we track him along his toilsome journeys, as we witness his disappointments and trials as well as his victories and successes, and as we see him

supported under all, and ever moving to fresh achievements—we are contemplating, not human strength, but divine grace.

This grace also had its effect upon himself. This man who was to be remembered for all time ; who was to write some of the deepest words ever penned ; whose labours not only extended over two continents and resulted in untold blessing to multitudes of his own generation, but reach to our day ; whose mission was of so extraordinary a character that he could speak of completing God's revelation and filling up that which was behind of the sufferings of Christ—this one, was so humbled by the sense of the pit from which he had been taken and the grace that made him what he was, that he could speak of himself as “ the least of the apostles, not meet to be called an Apostle.” He had seen Christ, and such superlative excellence had eclipsed Saul of Tarsus and everything else. The very One, Whose Name he had in mad energy sought to stamp out, had now not only taken possession of him, but was working through him with untold blessing to mankind.

He never could forget that he had persecuted the Church of God. This recollection humbled him in the dust, while the thought of the abundant grace conferred upon him only deepened his humility. It is this combination of humility and greatness, which is so fine. The Apostle of greatest labours, largest achievements, most thrilling experiences, intensest sufferings is yet the humblest. **“ I am the least ” : “ I am not meet to be called an Apostle.”**

One more thought arises out of this particular passage and conveys a solemn lesson to all who seek to serve. **“ His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain.”** The Apostle *used* what was at his disposal. He knew that no result would come of all God's grace unless he laboured. “ We are labourers together with God,” he had said before in this same epistle. It was not God only ; neither was it man only ; that was sufficient. There must be the union of forces—the divine and the human ; the conjunction of God and man. Just here lies the truth—the truth alas ! so often missed. But God *will not* work alone ; and man *cannot* work alone. Together they are invincible. God could, if He pleased, do everything alone, but it is not His plan. There must be God's grace, but that grace working through a human instrument. As in the parable, the father said to his *servants* “ bring forth the best robe and put it on Him.” It was to the servants Christ said, “ Fill the waterpots

with water," before he turned it into wine ; and then told them to bear it to the governor of the feast. So He multiplied the loaves and fishes, but said to the disciples " Give ye them to eat."

The grace was not in vain. Let us take this lesson home. The grace abides. St. Paul has passed away. The other apostles are gone. Thousands upon thousands, who knew in their time the same grace, have come and gone since, but the grace continues. It seeks channels still through which to work. Shall we not place ourselves at the disposal of such power and goodness ?

WHAT A VERSE OF POETRY DID.

*In peace let me resign my breath,
And Thy salvation see :
My sins deserve eternal death,
But Jesus died for me.*

DR. Valpy, the eminent scholar, experienced a blessed change in his religious views not long before his death, and wrote a verse as his confession of faith. This verse Dr. Marsh repeated at a Bible Reading in Lord Roden's family. Lord Roden got it written out and fastened the paper over the mantel-piece in his study, where it still hangs, yellow with age. Some time after this, one of the old heroes of Waterloo, General Taylor, went to visit Lord Roden. He had not at that time thought much on the subject of religion, and preferred to avoid all discussion of it ; but whenever he came to the study to talk to his friend alone, his eyes invariably rested for a few minutes upon the motto over the mantel-piece. At length, Lord Roden said, " Why, General, you will soon know this verse by heart." " I know it now by heart," replied the General, with emphasis and feeling. From the time of that visit a change came over the General's spirit and life.

No one who was intimately acquainted with him could doubt its reality. During the two following years he corresponded regularly with Lord Roden about the things which concerned his peace, always concluding his letter by quoting his favourite motto. At the end of that time, the physician who had attended General Taylor, wrote to Lord Roden to say that his friend had departed in peace, and

the last words which fell from his dying lips were those which he had learned to love in his lifetime :—

In peace let me resign my breath,
And Thy salvation see :
My sins deserve eternal death,
But Jesus died for me.

It happened in after years that Lord Roden told the foregoing story at the house of a near neighbour. A young officer, lately returned from the Crimea, heard it, but turned carelessly away. Some months later, Lord Roden received the intelligence that his young acquaintance was in a rapid decline, and was desirous of seeing him without delay. As he entered the sick room the dying man stretched out both hands to welcome him, at the same time repeating those simple lines. "They have been God's message," he said, "of peace and comfort to my heart in this illness, when brought to my memory, after days of darkness and distress, by the HOLY GHOST, the Comforter."

GRIT.

ILLUSTRATED BY THE LIFE OF JOSHUA.

By W. TAYLOR.

JOSHUA has often been spoken of as a type of Christ, the Captain of our Salvation. The analogy is deeply interesting from whatever point of view we consider it. As, for instance, Moses must pass away before Joshua's leadership could begin, so the law must be fulfilled before Jesus could usher in the dispensation of grace. In the case both of Joshua and the Lord Jesus, God set His approval on their work in the river Jordan. As Jesus comes out of the water, God speaks from the heavens, telling the world of His choice ; coming out of the bed of the Jordan, Joshua is unmistakably set before the people as their divinely appointed leader.

There are other points the perusal of which rewards any who study them, such as his advocacy when the Israelites suffered defeat, typifying our great Advocate with the Father ; the apportionment of the divinely-given inheritance, and the final triumph and rest. But there are other features about Joshua which stamp him equally as the type of the militant Christian, warring against the world, the flesh and the devil, and his numberless unseen foes. A careful study of the life and character of Joshua is therefore well worth our attention.

THREE KINDS OF GRIT.

All great men possess some distinguishing feature, or features, or they would never have attained greatness. Sometimes, as in the case of Moses, there is a peculiar combination of characteristics, but for the most part we find in men who stand out from their fellows some distinctive trait. Their names stand for certain virtues, just as truly as do the familiar names of the towns and villages of Palestine. As the mention of Bethany brings with it a sense of peace and rest, Nazareth of patient toil, Gethsemane of bitter sorrow, Calvary of death and victory, so when we speak of Abraham we think of faith; the name of Joseph signifies purity and prudence; and that of Elijah zeal. In the case of Joshua the leading characteristic is grit—that fearless courage which holds on to a thing one knows to be right and does it at all costs.

Now, there are three kinds of grit—physical, moral and spiritual. We all know what physical grit means—a hardy endurance which bears toil, or privation, or suffering uncomplainingly. We have examples of physical grit even in the animal creation, for a dog set to protect his master's property will, without hesitation, attack an invader much stronger than himself, whether man or beast. As to moral grit, Joseph is a striking illustration. A man with moral grit, keeps on his course unafraid of ridicule or contempt; and sneers have no power to turn him aside. As to spiritual grit, we have of course instances of that in every book of the Bible: to mention one or two at random, Ezra at the rebuilding of the temple, Nehemiah at the building of the wall; Daniel in his resistance to the king's decree. In our own experience, too, we can easily recall cases of the kind of spiritual grit which is not daunted by difficulties. One of these instances is furnished in the life of Duncan Matheson. At one place which he visited a week's meetings had been widely advertised, and a hall had been hired for the purpose. When the meeting time came, Duncan Matheson found no audience. In spite of this he took the platform, and in the empty hall said, "Let us praise God!" He prayed, read the Scripture, and began to preach. One small boy came into the hall. Matheson proceeded, and some one who had looked in spread the news that there was a man preaching to nobody! Two or three men came to see the phenomenon, the next night there was a larger audience, and by the end of the week, the hall was full. That is a sample of spiritual grit which we would do well to copy.

JOSHUA'S EARLY EXPERIENCE.

Now Joshua combined all three kinds of grit—physical, moral and spiritual—and as we briefly trace his history we find this characteristic prominent above all else. He endured hardness as a good soldier from his youth.

Shortly after the Exodus, Amalek bars the way at Rephidim, and Moses appoints a fighting captain to lead Israel to victory. There is no question of the choice to be made. Joshua stands out pre-eminent; and while Moses, rod in hand, watches and prays on the hill-top, strengthened by Aaron and Hur, Joshua marches on to victory, a victory commemorated by the erection of that altar on which is described "Jehovah-Nisi," the "Lord my Banner." It is Joshua again who is chosen to go with Moses into the Mount to receive the law; Joshua, who watches Moses vanish into the presence of God, and who, on his return, looks first into his dazzling face; who accompanies Moses down the Mount, and breaks to him the news of the tragedy below. Once more, it is Joshua who is chosen one of the twelve to "spy out the land," very significant is the action of Moses before he sends Joshua along with the rest. Up to that time Joshua's name had been Oshea—truly a prophetic name—given to him in Egyptian slavery, meaning, as it does, "Welfare." The promise implied therein had been amply fulfilled. His welfare had been already established by Jehovah, and was now bound up with that of Jehovah's people. Henceforward his name is to be Je-hoshua, or Joshua, or Jesus—meaning Jehovah Saviour—a name of great significance to give to him at that time, and in those circumstances. His report, as one of the two faithful spies, strikes the keynote of his life, and at once illustrates the combination of physical, moral and spiritual grit. The keynote is "Fear not." "Fear not" he says, "the people of the land, for they are bread for us; the Lord is with us. Fear not." Of course, he met the reward of all faithful testimony. The people wished to stone him with stones—a healthy sign when fierce opposition is aroused by faithful testimony, when it is sought to restrain one by physical force, or to cast one out of the synagogue! The sequel is well known; only Joshua and Caleb were to be allowed to go into the promised land. The ten faithless spies were killed by the plague; the Israelites, for their unbelief, were condemned to their forty years' wandering; and it was not until the last man died that the Israelites crossed into the land.

AS LEADER.

The time at length comes when Moses must hand over the succession to Joshua. Calling Israel together, he gives to them the keynote of Joshua's life, repeating to them the words of Joshua on that memorable day at Kadesh-Barnea, forty years before, bidding them not to be afraid, but to go fearlessly forward in the strength of the Lord God. Then, setting Joshua before the people, he gives him the same message, "be strong and of a good courage." Joshua, in his eighty-fifth year, takes up the command, and it is remarkable that in Joshua i., God thrice exhorts him to "Be strong and of a good courage"—words which Joshua could never forget, for in the great fight at Gibeon they come naturally to his lips when he wishes to encourage his army.

But how did he become strong? We find the explanation in the first verse of the book of Joshua: "It came to pass that the Lord spake unto Joshua." He had listened to the voice of God, had been shrivelled up in His presence, stripped of every vestige of his own strength before he could "put on the whole armour of God." Before being called upon to lead he had first been taught how to obey. If his grit is to be maintained it can only be by being constantly made "strong in the strength that God supplies." At the outset God instructs him how this is to be done. As He had given him a three-fold inspiration so now He gives a three-fold instruction, which might be regarded by us also as the A, B, C of Christian experience—first, "obey," second, "read the word," third, "meditate."

"Observe to do according to all the law . . . this book . . . shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night."

(To be continued).

"Perfect assurance comes the moment we see what Jesus is to the vilest sinner that trusts Him. To know from His word that all is finished, that I have nothing to do, or to be, and nothing to wait for, but only to receive Him just as I am, and now, brings instant peace and joy."

* * * *

"The mind casts a shadow, just like the body, for good or for evil on everyone that passes by."

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN GROWTH AND GIFT.

BELIEVERS SOMETIMES CONFOUND THE TWO AND THUS
HINDER THE VERY GROWTH THEY WISH FOR.

GROWTH is gradual ; and its speed varies in different plants and animals. The greater the longevity of anything, the longer, as a rule, it takes to reach maturity. *Vice versa*, a thing that matures quickly perishes quickly. Jonah's gourd came up in a night and perished in a night. There are things of mushroom growth. On the other hand a tree, the age of which is more protracted than any other living thing, takes the longest to reach full development. We need not be surprised, then, if we find the same law operating in the spiritual world, or be discouraged if our growth as Christians is more or less slow. It is a work of God ; it is for eternity.

On the other hand, a gift can be received instantaneously.

Now do not let us confound these two things. It is easy to distinguish them in the realm of nature. If a friend presented you with a young cub, the presentation need not take two minutes. It only needs on your part readiness to accept. The growth of the animal, however, until all its powers and stature were fully developed, might take years. So in matters of the soul. There is gift and there is growth. Both words are very conspicuous in the New Testament. But each has its own appointed place.

Gift comes first. I cannot grow in the divine life until I possess it. And it becomes mine by gift. Eternal life is a gift, just as much as natural life is a gift. None of us began to grow as regards our natural life until life was given us. So we read, Rom. vi. 23, "The wages of sin is death ; but the *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Salvation is also a gift. "*To give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins*" (Luke i. 77). Here we learn that forgiveness carries with it salvation. Now forgiveness must be a gift. "*When they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both*" (Luke vii. 42). "That they may *receive* forgiveness of sins."

How? By simply turning to God (Acts xxvi. 18). From Eph. ii. 8, we learn the same truth. "For by grace are ye *saved* through faith; and that not of yourselves; *it is the gift of God.*"

Righteousness (or justification) is also a gift. "And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the *gift*; for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the *free gift* is of many offences unto justification" (Rom. v. 16). In the next verse we read of "*the gift of righteousness.*" Five times over in vers. 15-17, of this chapter, we find the word "gift"; and, not only gift, but "free gift."

Here, then, we have three stupendous gifts offered to us by God—Eternal Life, Salvation, Righteousness; and all summed up in the supreme gift of all: "God so loved the world that He *gave* His only begotten Son." In accepting this gift, in simple faith, we become possessed of all the others.

Here is the start of the spiritual life; and what a start! Before I need think about growth or experience or my feelings, I have only to take God at His word which, while it tells me of my guiltiness, offers me *righteousness*; while it makes plain that I am by nature under the dominion of sin and Satan, offers me *salvation*; and while it tells me I have earned death as my wages—and fully earned it—offers me *eternal life* in Christ. Could anything be more worthy of God or more exactly suit our need? And when God offers us these priceless blessings as a gift, nothing honours Him or pleases Him so much as that we should take Him at His word.

We accept as a gift all that is so necessary to our natural life, why should we hesitate when it is a question of a higher life? The earth we walk upon, the air we breathe, the sun so essential to our health are all God's gift. Who would be so absurd as to say, "I will only walk on the earth, and breathe the air and enjoy the sunshine I can pay for? No, we accept these as gifts, little as we may be grateful for them, sometimes. Let us accept, in the same way, as a gift all that is essential to spiritual life and to the enjoyment of communion with God.

It is when we have accepted righteousness and salvation and eternal life as a gift that growth becomes possible. We are to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." But grace brings salvation to begin with. Grace gives, first. "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." The more simply we accept God's gifts and are grateful for them, the more rapid will be our growth.

Some people make a mistake about holiness. They regard it as a gift. As though it were possible to become holy in a moment by one supreme act of the will. Holiness is not a gift—we mean personal progressive holiness—it is a growth. It is fruit, and fruit grows. "*Ye have your fruit unto holiness.*" (Rom. vi. 22).

REX.

CONFERENCE ON EVANGELISM. IMPORTANT GATHERING IN CHICAGO.

(We have been asked to insert the following).

THAT there are weaknesses in present-day evangelism; that evangelists are not perfect; that unwise methods have been used and insincere messages delivered; and that there is a real need and a great opportunity for a return to sane methods and sound gospel preaching and serious personal work—these are some of the things which were admitted by the 167 evangelistic workers from all parts of the United States and from Canada, who were gathered at The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago for an Evangelistic Conference, September 18th to 20th.

Dr. Gray said, in opening the Conference: "We are here together, a company of brethren. We are going to talk plainly one to another as the Lord may guide us, plainly but affectionately, we are going to keep nothing back. We are going to see the worst, and we are going to ask God to give us the courage to do so, and where we need to confess our sins before God we are going to confess them. Where we need to get back to God we are going to get back to Him by His grace. We are going to seek a new cleansing, a new refreshing, a new renewing from His Holy Spirit, and we cannot do that until we see our sins and admit them, if they are to be admitted."

All the replies gave indication of the spirit which prevailed throughout the sessions of the Conference, an honest desire to face the facts, a serious purpose to meet the requirements, and a determination to make evangelism what it should be—the mightiest factor in Christian life and work. The criticisms were made in the spirit of kindness and fairness; they were received in the spirit of

love and humility, and many a man went away from the Conference with a deeper devotion to Jesus Christ and a more serious purpose to minister in the most acceptable and effective way possible to those for whom Christ died. There was no disposition to dodge the issue or to avoid the consideration of disagreeable facts, but throughout the Conference there was an under-current of deep heart-searching and earnest determination which will mean improvement in the work of some men, and perhaps radical change in that of others. The most important hour of the day was given to Bible study and prayer, and each evening session closed with a special prayer service.

Taking it all together, the Conference was unique and the expressions of many at the time and of others who have since written us, indicate that the hand of the Lord was in it, for which we should thank Him and take courage.

1913.

*"Let thine eyes look right on
Let thine eyelids look straight before thee."*

Proverbs iv., 25.

Once I was blind, but now I see—

Oh grace abounding!

Once I was dead, but now I live—

Oh power astounding!

And now these eyes look up and out to HIM;

And now this life is spent with Him, for HIM,

Until these eyes shall see HIM face to face,

And life be found where life is LIFE indeed,

With HIM who is our LIFE; Amen.—G. W. H.

"The people who are satisfied *are satisfied*. If there is any person who is not satisfied with Christianity it is simply because he has not got enough of Christianity to satisfy him."

* * * *

"It is not the successful ones who will be first in heaven, but those who have had the noblest aims—the highest aspirations."

* * * *

"Faith lays hold of a living God, and finds in Him a living source of comfort."

The Faith and The Flock.

Vol. V.—No. 2.

FEBRUARY, 1913.

PRICE—ONE PENNY.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The Oldest Briton.

THE scientific world has been in a ferment of excitement over the discovery of a piece of a skull and jaw-bone which prove conclusively man's descent from the monkey. It would be humorous, were it not so sad, to see a body of intelligent men exulting over the find which goes to demonstrate that they are highly developed apes. But, as usual, there are nothing but "deductions," "conclusions" and "guesses." In the effort to discredit the Bible, men are prepared to go to any length in credulity; and the general public seem amazingly impressed by the learned discussions on receding jaws, and mylohyoid ridges. But this proves nothing with regard to the age of the human race. The "missing link" still remains to be found. We have ourselves seen living human beings more like apes in appearance than men. A family of such miserable creatures was being brought to Europe on board ship to be exhibited in the low music halls of the Continent. The sight was revolting. They were penned like sheep on the deck of the steamer and fed like mere animals. They were human, but degenerate. The cause was **SIN**, and science has no remedy for sin. The Bible alone provides the all-sufficient remedy in Christ and His atoning sacrifice.

Poor, foolish science, "falsely so-called"!

* * * *

Flint Implements.

SOME people seem imbued with the idea that "spear heads" and "axe heads" found in certain strata are indisputable proof of the immense antiquity of the human race. They imagine that man's *ascent* (!) has been a very gradual one, and that these flint implements, wherever found, are clear evidence of a remote past. But man's condition in different parts of the world varies at the same epoch. Contemporaneously with the powder and shot, the cannon and the gun of Europe, we find the wooden club of the South Sea Islander. As a matter of fact, the savage, instead of being a step in the upward development of the human race, is the sad exhibition of the result of giving up God (see Rom. i.). And what

would England become in a few decades if every Bible and every believer in Christ were removed? Let a well-known rationalist writer call a halt to those who are disposed to give up the Bible. He writes:—

“ I fear that when we indulge ourselves in the amusement of going without a religion, we are not, perhaps, aware how much we are maintained by an enormous mass of religious feeling and religious conviction, so that, whatever it may be safe for us to think, for us who have had great advantages, and have been brought up in such a way that a certain moral direction has been given to our character, I do not know what would become of the less favoured classes of mankind, if they undertook to play the same game. . . . These men, indulging themselves in the amusement of going without a religion, may be thankful that they live in lands where the Gospel they neglect has tamed the beastliness and ferocity of the men who, but for Christianity, might long ago have eaten their carcasses like the South Sea Islanders, or cut off their heads and tanned their hides like the monsters of the French Revolution.”

* * * *

Fear and Religion.

SOME people seem never happy if they are not finding fault with the Bible or firing their pop-guns against Christianity. We do not know Mr. G. Murray Campbell, but he seems to have a marvellous acquaintance with “ primitive man ” and his religion. How far back he goes we cannot say, nor whether his primitive man is on this side or the other of the “ missing link ” between the simian and the human. But we wonder how Mr. G. M. C. would govern the world if all sense of fear were eliminated. It would be interesting to see him propounding his theories of “ government by love ” in the Court of Petty Sessions, or the County Assize !

The whole question is, Is there such a thing in the world as *Sin* ? And if so, is God less holy and righteous than man in dealing with evil ?

Mr. C. prefers the religions of Ancient Greece and Rome to Christianity. In the former he sees nothing but “ high national art culture,” in the latter nothing but “ the propitiation of an angry God by a vicarious blood sacrifice.” He seems to have forgotten the deification in the former of all the vile lusts and passions of sinful humanity ; and where in Christianity does he get his idea of an angry God ? Certainly not in the fact that “ God so loved the world

that He gave His only begotten Son." God must judge sin or cease to be a holy and just God. But what the righteousness of God demanded the love of God provided. It was not primitive man, but highly educated and civilised man that saw, hated and crucified the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet ever since God has been proclaiming pardon and salvation through His name. Is this a religion of fear, or is it "grace reigning through righteousness"? A. H. B.

IN MEMORIAM.

Mrs. ALFRED MACE.

Departed to be with Christ, December 12th, 1912.

BY her prayerful and faithful life Mrs. Mace supported her husband in his service for the Lord for nearly thirty-six years, and triumphantly departed to be with Christ on the above date. We are able to furnish our readers with a few particulars of her last moments, and as our brother is so well known and highly esteemed for his labours in the gospel, they will have a special interest, not only for their own sake, but for his, and will, we are sure, elicit the prayers and sympathy of all.

The following is the touching record of Mrs. Mace's last moments :

"After sending, a few hours before she passed away, farewell messages to certain friends, I asked 'Are you happy, darling?' 'Oh, yes,' was the ready response, 'Christ is above.'

"As some stood around her bed, she said, 'Let us be in earnest, not half in earnest. There is nothing worth living for but Christ.'

"After warning one whom she feared was drifting into the world, she entreated me (her husband) to be out and out for Christ, and to be faithful to the end.

"She left some messages for the absent ones. After I remarked upon the grace that had saved and kept her so long—'All praise to Him,' was the hearty rejoinder.

"Having quoted 'Unto Him Who loves us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,' she added a loud 'Amen,' 'I'm sorry for you (referring to those of us who were being left) but it will be all glory by and by.'

"'For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God . . . then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them . . . to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.'"

A few of us were privileged to gather at the house on the occasion of the funeral, which took place on December 16th. There was a season of prayer and thanksgiving before the coffin was removed—prayer that the bereaved husband might be sustained under his heavy loss, and thanksgiving for the beautiful and consistent life

just closed. All through, there was complete triumph in the midst of the sorrow.

The following passages were read and words spoken before the body was committed to the grave:—

Psalm xc. vers. 1-6, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17.

1 Corinthians xv. vers. 20-21, 42-49, 51-58.

The fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians appears to be an answer to the Prayer of Moses (the 90th Psalm). In the 90th Psalm it is man's weakness, but in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, we have God's power. God manifests His mighty power, the greatest He has ever exhibited, in order that He might bring in another life; not an ephemeral life, nor a life of pain and infirmity, but eternal life, where we shall be free from all these shortcomings.

Moses prays, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." The answer in 1 Cor. xv. is, "As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." God has no greater beauty than the beauty of Christ, and this beauty will be on everyone of us who are His; we have borne the image of the earthy, but we shall bear the image of the heavenly. What a pleasure and delight to God it will be when He sees myriads of His creatures shining in all the beauty of Christ Himself, the Lord out of heaven.

Moses prays again, "Let Thy work appear unto thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children." Do we not see in 1 Cor. xv. God's greatest work, His crowning work, the work that delivers us from the consequences of Adam's fall and which will, in its full fruition, emancipate us from every effect of the fall, and eliminate every trace we have borne of Adam's race.

We are here in one sense as mourners, but in another not. A face loved will be missed and a form cherished is gone from our midst; but her influence will abide, and her last triumphant words, "CHRIST IS ABOVE," will not be forgotten. But she is gone, and there are those here who deeply mourn her loss; but we can also speak of victory even in the presence of death, and for the believer what death can do is only to separate the body from the soul, and in the presence of it we can say: "Thanks be unto God." It seems to come from our very heart of hearts; when we have to face the worst, we can give thanks. Why? Because "He hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Mr. Alfred Mace and family desire to return their warmest thanks to the numerous correspondents whose words of sympathy have been to them such a source of comfort in their recent bereavement. It is impossible to reply to all direct.

HINTS TO YOUNG PREACHERS, AND INCIDENTS OF GOSPEL WORK.

By ALFRED H. BURTON.

WELL do I remember the first time I sallied forth to preach. It was right away back in the summer of 1870. I was not very old—too young according to some. But be this as it may, I have never ceased to thank God that I started young.

Life is short, and youth is full of vigour and energy. I have met many who sincerely regretted that they delayed enlisting in the service of the Lord until middle age, but never one who at the end of their short life, grieved over the fact that they gave the best of that life to God.

The Lord has need of servants to-day, and all the more is this the case since so many who should be preaching the Word have turned aside to fables. But preaching is no child's play. It is not everyone who is called to do it, and it is not anyone who can do it. As in everything else, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Many young Christians earnestly desire to preach effectively, and it is to such that these few words of counsel are addressed.

In those early years of my own career, I had advantages which few amongst the readers of this magazine are likely ever to enjoy. Mighty men of God were then labouring all over the land. Giants in the Scripture many of them were, and gifted servants of the Lord. To say nothing of the teachers, what powerful evangelists these were! What scenes have I not witnessed at the meetings held in London and the provinces under the ministry of such men as Charles H. Mackintosh, Andrew Miller, Charles Stanley, John Beaumont, E. P. Corin, H. M. Hooke, Lord A. P. Cecil, &c., &c. In writing this I do not wish to discourage any, but would seek to give whatever little help I can to those not so favourably situated.

Then, too, there was a special energy of the Holy Spirit in those days. They were days of united effort, and the time and zeal that in recent years has been wasted in conflicts and divisions amongst the saints of God was then devoted to the spread of the Gospel. Evangelisation in those days was not carried on by professional evangelists, as it is too frequently done to-day. It was not a trade,

with highly paid agents, and a cumbersome machinery of choir and music ; but men, labouring with their hands for their daily needs, or devoting their substance for the spread of the Gospel out of hearts all aglow for the conversion of souls.

The Work of an Evangelist.

When the Lord calls anyone to the work of an evangelist, I believe it will generally be found that the call is heard early in life. It is not invariably so, no doubt. Brownlow North was well on in years before he was converted, but he began his labours immediately. As a rule, people are converted while young. Thank God ! even when a lifetime has been spent in sin and the service of Satan, His grace is sufficient, and He is mighty to save. But if a census of converts were taken, by far the largest number will be found to have been brought to the Lord in early life. And it is in those early days of the Christian life that the first promptings are felt to tell others of the Saviour we have found.

For my own part, I felt the call most distinctly when I was but a boy. C. H. Mackintosh had been the instrument of a mighty work of God in the old country home in Ireland. Though as long ago as the year 1862, his preaching remains indelibly impressed on my memory. I can see him now in the hay loft over the stables, with a crowded audience before him, drawn from miles around, an old tea chest for a desk, and primitive benches constructed by the carpenter on the estate who has only recently gone home to heaven. Ah, but those were never-to-be-forgotten seasons of blessing ! One night, after a powerful address on Isaiah vi., the family were just sitting down to supper when an urgent message came requesting C. H. M.'s attendance in the kitchen, where a large company had gathered after the meeting, unable and unwilling to return to their homes. In a short while he came back to the dining-room, saying, " I have left a roomful of salvation ! " Every person, I believe, in that kitchen, was saved that night.

No wonder that dear C. H. M. had a large place in my affection and esteem, and when, a few years later, the family moved to London, his annual visits were looked forward to with intense delight. It was in 1867, that my father, then residing at Holland Park, secured Seymour Hall (now Steinway Hall) in Lower Seymour Street, for two Wednesday nights, and had some bills printed announcing two lectures by Mr. C. H. Mackintosh, the subjects

being "*The Salvation of God.*" I can well remember C. H. M. picking up the notice and learning for the first time that his subject had been chosen for him. At first he was a little upset, but it was pointed out to him that "the Salvation of God" was wide enough to embrace any portion of the gospel message.

Rarely I think, did I ever hear him speak with greater power. On the first evening he took for his text, Acts xxviii. 28 :—

"Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."

On the second evening, he took Titus ii. 11-15 :—

"The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared."

dividing his subject under three heads :—

1. The salvation that grace brings.
2. The lessons that grace teaches.
3. The hope that grace sets before us.

These meetings were so successful that the Hall was secured for Sunday evenings, and for years thereafter, became the birth-place of souls. It was there that I served my gospel apprenticeship. Every Sunday night standing at the corner of Portman Square, the passers by were given a four-page tract containing a simple statement of the gospel, and announcement of the weekly services.

On Saturday nights in the house of a friend, now with the Lord, a band of young men used to meet for "prayer for the gospel." This was specially in connection with the Seymour Hall work, and oh! what seasons we had. Individuals were prayed for, and one by one were all brought to the Lord.

Just about this time, I passed through a crisis in my own spiritual history with reference to the inspiration of the Scripture. Was the Bible true or false? Was Christianity a fable? Was there any such thing as a hereafter? Such like questions began to trouble my mind, and doubts were insinuated by lecturers on science and other subjects. But God, who knew the struggle I was passing through, sent me deliverance in the shape of three lectures which were given in the Queen's Concert Rooms, Hanover Square, London, by the late William Kelly. These meetings had been arranged by the late Mrs. R. C. L. Bevan and my own mother, and invitations sent out to large numbers of clergy and others, many of whom availed themselves of the opportunity. The subjects were :— "Rationalism," "Ritualism," and "The Creation." All three

lectures were taken down in shorthand and published. The two first greatly helped me, but the last set me free from my doubts, and proved my salvation from infidelity. This was in 1869. The following year, with heart and mind set at rest as to my own conflicts, found me in the midst of a wonderful awakening in Suffolk.

The True Preparation of the Preacher.

Here let me say, that before anybody can be used in the conversion of others, they must first be converted themselves.

“ We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed and therefore have I spoken ; we also believe and therefore speak ” (2 Cor. iv. 13).

If I were asked what were the essentials for successful gospel work, I would say :—

1. The definite conversion of the preacher.—No one can invite another to trust in the Saviour who has not first trusted in Him himself.

2. A life free from all known sin.—Paul, the greatest of evangelists, declared that it was his constant exercise to keep a conscience void of offence before God and men (Acts xxiv. 16). A person may be truly a child of God, he may have been definitely converted, and yet, through carelessness, sin in some form may have come into his life, and where this is the case, all power for service is gone. A grieved Holy Spirit will be a source of weakness in the battle, just as an ungrieved Spirit is a power that nothing can withstand.

3. Individual and collective prayer.—As I look back over years of gospel work, I can testify that the places I have most prayed for, are the places where it has been my privilege to see most definite results. It has been aptly said : “ Much prayer, much blessing ; some prayer, some blessing ; no prayer, no blessing.” In these days when so much reliance is placed upon organisation and music, we do well to cultivate the ministry of prayer. The individual certainly should pray, and so much the better when others of a like spirit can unite in prayer. But speaking from personal experience, I would say, it does not do to wait till others are stirred to prayer—set to work, pray, preach, and others will soon catch the fire.

4. Distinct guidance as to where to preach.—This for the evangelist, is very important. Filling pulpits is disastrous. Get your marching orders from headquarters. I do not say that an

invitation to come over and help may not be a definite call from God. I am sure that if Christians in a locality were alive to their responsibilities and privileges, they would be found more constantly in prayer together for the districts where their own lot is cast. Praying constantly for those districts would soon lead them to activity, and in many cases, I am sure, in some striking cases I have proved, they would be led of God to invite a preacher.

(To be continued.)

SOME WEIGHTY TRUTHS

PLAINLY TAUGHT IN HOLY SCRIPTURE.

SCRIPTURE TEACHES "that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. xi. 3).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that man, unlike the beasts that perish, was created in the image, and after the likeness, of God. His proper life is distinct from the body. Though the body may die, men still "live unto God" in another sphere, in circumstances either of bliss or of woe (Gen. i. 26 ; ii. 7 ; Luke xx. 38 ; xvi. 22-26).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," that all are alike "ungodly," "alienated and enemies in their mind by wicked works." Every mouth is thus stopped, and all the world is subject to the judgment of God (Rom. iii. 23 ; v. 6 ; Col. i. 21 ; Rom. iii. 19).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that men are altogether "without strength," and that no man "can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Rom. v. 6 ; Ps. xlix. 7).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that salvation is by grace alone, "not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 8-9).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that "the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared." "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (Tit. ii. 11 ; John i. 17).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that Jesus Christ is the eternal Word, through whom, and for whom, all things were created, the upholder of the universe. He is the brightness of God's glory, the express image of His person, and Himself "over all, God blessed for ever." As Son, His eternal home is "the bosom of the Father" (John i. 1-3; Col. i. 16-17; Heb. i. 2-3; Rom. ix. 5; John i. 18).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth." Born of a virgin by the power of the Holy Ghost, Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Though eternally in "the form of God," He "took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Yet "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He is truly Man, and truly God (John i. 14; Luke i. 26-35; Phil. ii. 6-7; Col. ii. 9).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." "His life was taken from the earth." He is "the one Mediator between God and men . . . who gave Himself a ransom for all." "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." "Apart from shedding of blood is no remission" (1 Pet. iii. 18; Acts viii. 33; 1 Tim. ii. 5-6; Lev. xvii. 11; Heb. ix. 22).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that God raised His Son from amongst the dead, and seated Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places. This was God's public vindication of His Son, and His divine testimony to the sufficiency of His atoning death (Eph. i. 20; Rom. i. 4; Acts v. 31; Heb. x. 12).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that "a man is not justified by works of law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ." "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Gal. ii. 16; Rom. iv. 5).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that every believer in Jesus is pardoned and justified. All believers are alike saints by divine call, and possessed of eternal life, placed beyond all possibility of judgment in the risen Christ (Acts xiii. 38, 39; 1 John v. 13; Rom. viii. 1-33).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that every man's eternal future depends upon his attitude towards the Son of God. "He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the Only Begotten Son of God" (John iii. 18).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that the true hope of the believer is the personal return of the Son of God from heaven to receive all His own to Himself, that where He is, His redeemed may be for ever (John xiv. 3; 1 Thess. iv. 15-17).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that the Lord Jesus Christ is "ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." His living enemies He will destroy before Him at His appearing; the dead He will judge at the close of His Millennial Kingdom—when time is no more (Acts x. 42; Rev. xix. 11-21; xx. 11-15).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that the portion of all who "obey not the Son," and of all who "neglect so great salvation" is "the second death, the lake of fire." "Eternal" is in Scripture always opposed to "temporal." The "temporal" is bounded by time; the "eternal" knows no bound. "Everlasting fire"; "everlasting punishment"; "weeping and gnashing of teeth"; "their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" are some of God's terms descriptive of the condition of those who die in their sins (John iii. 36; Heb. ii. 3; Rev. xx. 14, 15; 2 Cor. iv. 18; Matt. xxv. 41-46; xxii. 13; Mark ix. 44).

SCRIPTURE TEACHES that God has made "the same Jesus, whom men crucified, both Lord and Christ," and that at the name of Jesus every knee must bow, of beings in heaven, and beings in earth, and beings under the earth, and that every tongue must confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Acts ii. 36; Phil. ii. 10-11).

SCRIPTURE AFFIRMS of itself that it is "inspired of God" (God-breathed), and that its words are not those of man's wisdom, but the words of the Holy Ghost. The authority of Scripture is thus absolute, and its decisions are final and irrevocable. Those who "wrest" the Scriptures do so "to their own destruction" (2 Tim. iii. 16; 1 Cor. ii. 13; 2 Pet. i. 21; iii. 16).

"To this man will I look (saith the Lord), even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My Word" (Isa. lxvi. 2).

(Copies may be obtained from W. W. Fereday, Uttoxeter, Ls. 3d. per 100. Post free.)

GRIT:

ILLUSTRATED BY THE LIFE OF JOSHUA.

By W. TAYLOR.

(Concluded).

JOSHUA'S response was such as God loves; his faith in God's promise is a lesson for all time. "Prepare you victuals," he says, "for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan." The ready response of faith is what God is always looking for. It is the channel through which blessing comes, the conduit which connects the empty human heart with the reservoir of heaven. It is for this Jesus was always looking, and, when found, continually commending, whether in the case of the palsied man, whose trust brought healing to body and soul; of the man whose withered hand became strong like its fellow; or of the two blind men whose reply to the question "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" was followed with restoration of their sight.

But Joshua had not only faith in God's promise, he had faith in God's presence, for no sooner is Jordan crossed than he says to the people, "The Lord, the living God, is among you." He had his eye ever fixed on the Great Captain of their salvation, and that explained his marvellous march from victory to victory. The leadership of God was to Joshua as much a reality, His presence as great an inspiration as if Joshua saw him continually with his natural sight. It is said that when Julius Cæsar was in Great Britain, the affection and attachment of his soldiers was such that they, who, under other commanders were nothing above the common rate of men, became invincible, and met the most dreadful dangers with a courage that nothing could resist. It was even so with Joshua; it may be also our experience if, like him, our eyes of faith are steadfastly fixed upon our unconquerable Leader.

What was his Mission?

Joshua's mission was two-fold. In the first place, he had to take possession of the land; in the second, to make a clean sweep of everything that hindered God from dwelling among His people. Some critics have complained of Joshua's fierceness and cruelty in "driving the natives" out of their territory. But this is only another illustration of how mistaken are the views of those who

base shallow criticism on imperfect knowledge. As a matter of fact, Canaan belonged of right to the Israelites. The Canaanites were interlopers. The land, we are told on good authority, was originally peopled by Heber; whence the name Hebrews. When Abraham passed through the country, God promised He would give it to him "for an everlasting possession." When Joseph was a prisoner in Egypt, it will be remembered, he told the chief butler that he "was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews." So that in taking the land of Canaan, the Jews were only coming into their own again. As for the charge of cruelty in exterminating the people, if one considers how terrible was the depravity of the inhabitants, one must acknowledge that it was the only way of cutting out a festering sore.

Joshua's Characteristics.

In considering the life of any man, especially of any man of God, we naturally take account of his personal characteristics. If grit is the leading feature of Joshua's life, it must not be forgotten that grit is a combination of other virtues. Instances of his grit have already been noticed. As to his courage, we have a further illustration of that when, beneath the walls of Jericho, he comes face to face with the man who has in his hand a drawn sword. Undaunted, Joshua boldly confronts him, and asks "Art thou for us or for our adversaries?" When Joshua finds that it is the Captain of the Lord's Host, all his strength, however, vanishes, he falls on his face, and it is not until he learns that the renewal of his strength comes from God alone that he proceeds to execute the strange command concerning Jericho.

The simplicity of his nature is strikingly shown at the crisis of his life. Like a warrior of our own day he was

Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.

Then, again, he was a perfect gentleman—a trait not always associated with grit. Strong characters are not always polite. The rugged Northerner, who is supposed to have more stamina than the Southerner, too often lacks the Southerner's gentleness and courtesy. In Joshua they were, however, combined, as we find by the manner in which he treated Achan. Firm and unbending, knowing that he must inflict on him the death sentence, he yet handles him with the

utmost gentleness. "My son," he says, "give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me." His gentleness, let it be noted, did what harshness might have failed to do—it drew from Achan prompt and full confession.

Joshua also was "a man of his word." When the Gibeonites deceived him by the story that they came from a far country, and secured a league of peace by false pretences, Joshua faithfully kept his promise. The clamour of the people for their punishment was unheeded; the Gibeonites were allowed to live, although they were condemned to servile work. Shortly afterwards there came a greater test of Joshua's fidelity to his promise. Five kings leagued themselves against Gibeon, jealous because of the peace they had made. To their surprise it proved both an offensive and defensive alliance. To their prompt appeal for help Joshua hastens with his gallant army and heaps coals of fire upon the heads of the Gibeonites by gaining for them a great triumph on that memorable day when God prolonged the light until "the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies"—a day unique in the world's history, for "there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man."

Finally, we ought not to overlook the fact that Joshua was a man capable of showing gratitude, realising that his help came from God alone, that apart from Him he could do nothing. Joshua, like David, was ever grateful for what God had done, and the stones of memorial placed in the midst of Jordan were an abiding witness of the thankfulness of Joshua and the nation for whom God had wrought such a wondrous deliverance.

Joshua and Caleb lived to be very old men. It was not until he was ninety-two years of age that Joshua retired, having in six years conquered six tribes under thirty-one chiefs. He lived in retirement eighteen years, and died at the age of a hundred and ten. But before he died, he gathered the people around him and once more gave utterance to that which had been the key-note of his life, and which had strengthened his grit and resolution to the end: "Be ye therefore very courageous." And as a parting message he gave to them the words which God had spoken to his soul—that they should do what was written in the Book of God, that they should be a separated people, and that above all they should take good heed that they loved the Lord their God.

SELECTIONS.

“How precious to God, in the present broken and disjointed state of the Church, is any longing for the oneness of heart amongst the children of God that shall be a picture of the oneness between the Father and our once Crucified Lord. May we give joy to the heart of our God and Father, and to the Lord Jesus, and to the Spirit that dwells in us, not grieving Him by anything in us that would hinder oneness of mind amongst us. Oneness of mind amongst fellow saints should be, in measure, a mirror of the oneness of mind between the Father and His Beloved Son.”

* * * *

“The disciple is not above his Master,” were the words uttered by the Heavenly Master to the few who were known as His disciples, and when, on the same night in which He was betrayed, He referred to those words (John xv. 20) and bade them remember them, He added “If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you, if they have kept my saying they will keep yours also.” “If”; the entire path of one who owns himself a disciple of Christ hangs on these two letters. Have they persecuted Him? Then, “In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

* * * *

“If we seek to approve ourselves to God, God will take care of our reputation. I need not care what is said against me if I am walking so as to please God according to His Word.”

* * * *

“Not a single thing in which we have served Christ shall be forgotten. Lazy, alas! we all are in service, but all shall come out that is *real*, and what is *real* is Christ in us, and this only. The appearance now may be very little, but what is real will abide. Our hearts clinging closely to Christ, we shall sustain one another in the body of Christ. The love of Christ shall hold the whole together, Christ being everything, and we content to be nothing, helping one another, praying one for the other, I *ask* not the prayers of the saints, I reckon on them. The Lord keep us going on in simplicity, fulfilling as the hireling our day, till Christ shall come and then ‘shall every man have praise of God.’ Praise of God! Be that our one object, and may God knit all our hearts together thoroughly and eternally.”

A DEAD LAMB, OR A LIVING LAMB—WHICH?

“**W**HEN I see the **Blood**, I will pass over you ” (Exod. xii. 13).

This was the language of Jehovah on the night of Egypt's doom. The blood of the slain lamb sprinkled outside on the door posts of the houses of Israel *alone* secured the safety of the inmates. Jehovah did not say, “When I see the *live* lamb,” I will pass over the house securing it from judgment. A carefully selected lamb, without blemish and in full vigour of life could not suffice to arrest the sword of judgment. **It must be killed. It must die and its blood be applied.** The Holy Life of the Lamb of God could not avail to expiate sin. “Without shedding of blood is no remission.” God's appointed Lamb must die. His precious blood **must** be shed and sprinkled, or else there is no salvation. Salvation is by **Blood** alone.

Reader, it is not simply looking *on* Christ as He walked and lived in His rugged path of absolute holiness for 33 years, but we do most earnestly ask you to rest your soul on that saving statement, **“Christ died for our sins.”** Jehovah did not look upon the sins of the people, or upon their character, or upon them at all. He looked *for* the blood, and when He found it, He looked *upon* it. Thus righteously Jehovah could pass over—preserving from judgment an otherwise sinful and guilty people. It was so *then*, it is so *now*.

S.

THE PRAYER OF SOLOMON.*

II. CHRON. VI.

By R. ELLIOTT.

IT is impossible to read the supplications of Solomon at the dedication of the Temple without being convinced of the unique place prayer occupies. The house built by Solomon was to be distinguished from all other edifices by two things: It was God's dwelling place; and it was a house of prayer. Centuries after, and when successive buildings had been reared in the place of the one first erected, our

* From “Some Thoughts on Prayer.” To be obtained of the Author. Price 5d. post free.

The above is a second edition, and “The Prayer of Solomon” has not appeared before.

Lord Himself could speak of the Temple as "My Father's house," and also describe it as, "A House of Prayer for all nations." When we reflect that a place specially set apart for God was also specially set apart for prayer, and to which all prayer might be directed, we see that there is nothing wanting to raise prayer to the highest level. These two stupendous facts are inseparably linked together: a place where God would dwell; and where He would have men turn to Him about all their needs.

As we meditate upon this momentous fact, a difficulty at once confronts us. Seeing that the Temple no longer exists at Jerusalem, and that God's earthly people are scattered; and bearing in mind that all which was said by Solomon in his prayer related solely and exclusively to that particular spot and habitation, the question arises, Are we entitled to believe that the children of God to-day have anything like the same resources and the same privileges? It is easy to imagine all that it meant to a godly Jew, to be able to turn to a recognised spot and make known all his requests; and to be assured by God Himself that, if he did so in truth and uprightness, seeking forgiveness and desiring to walk in the good way, he would be heard and answered. But what about ourselves? Are we less highly favoured? Can we believe that those under the Christian dispensation are worse off? Has Christ lived and spoken and died and gone back to heaven to such little purpose that we have nothing to take the place of the earthly advantages enjoyed by the Jew?

These questions need to be answered.

Thank God, they can be answered in the negative. And this without laying claim to anything to which we have no title. There are certain good people who would like to make the Cathedrals and Churches of our land substitutes for the Temple at Jerusalem. They think that if they pray in a building of this kind there is something meritorious about it; and they are almost ready to believe such petitions are more likely to be answered. In saying this, it is not prayer we are objecting to, wherever it may be offered, but the thought of any *place* on earth, to-day, giving special efficacy or sanctity to those prayers.

Nor are we objecting to public prayer. There is, of course, both public and private prayer. But it cannot be too clearly stated in this age of ritualism and formality that it is not the building—not the bricks and mortar—whether consecrated or unconsecrated,

but the *people* who are present that make public prayer effectual. Praying in concert with others is undoubtedly both a privilege and an inspiration, and our Lord in contemplating it said, "*If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them.*" From this we learn it is the persons and not the place. Two or three, and Christ Himself there! Is not this equal to anything ever realised by a Jew?

The New Testament would be searched in vain for a single statement attaching importance to any material building. That they are necessary in this country, no one doubts. Nor would we, for a single moment depreciate the importance of attendance upon the public ministration of the word and Christian worship. But our Lord said, "Ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father." Stephen reminded his hearers, "the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands"; Paul declared the same truth in precisely the same language, on Mars Hill (Acts xvii. 24); and we find on one occasion that the place where prayer was wont to be made was the river side, and on another, even a prison.

Let us admit, then, what we are bound to admit, if the truth is to prevail, that we possess no earthly structure comparable to the Temple at Jerusalem. But if we have not a throne on earth, we have a throne in heaven—we have a throne of grace; we have a great High Priest; and we come unto God by Him (Heb. iv. 15-16). Just as a Jew, far out of range of the earthly sanctuary, could look toward it—even from a foreign country—so we have a point to which we can turn our eye, on whatever spot of earth our feet may be resting, and we can "draw near." In spirit we can be transferred to the presence of God, at any moment from any quarter and any distance.

Thus it will be seen we are not at any disadvantage. A heavenly sanctuary cannot be inferior to an earthly one. And, in addition, we draw near to God through a Person—and that Person, His own Son. Moreover, God is revealed more fully to us than He was to the Jews; and the Holy Spirit helps our infirmities. The Christian, then, has at least four advantages. A throne of grace in heaven instead of on earth: God revealed as

Father ; Christ the One by Whom we draw near, and whose Name we can use ; and the Holy Spirit our teacher and helper, so that we are enabled to " pray in the Holy Ghost."

Notwithstanding the superiority of the believer's position, prayer remains substantially what it always was—the expression of need and dependence, and the seeking of forgiveness and help. Consequently, there are some valuable lessons to be learned from this prayer of Solomon's. And to this we now turn. For one great lesson runs through all prayer, and continues from one generation to another—the needs of the twentieth century after Christ are not very different (as we shall see) from those of the centuries that preceded Him ; and the principles on which God can hear and answer prayer are the same.

Sacrifice the basis of Prayer.

One very important matter demands our first consideration. It has reference to Solomon's position on the occasion. We read, " And he stood before the altar." We learn from chap. vii. 1 that upon the altar were the burnt offering and sacrifices. All this is of immense significance. *We cannot approach God apart from sacrifice.* Ever since sin entered, this principle has been of universal application. It was with coats of skins, the Lord God clothed Adam and Eve. This involved the death of a victim. It represents being clothed in the righteousness of another. Abel was accepted on the ground of sacrifice. Abraham had his altar. So we read of " the blood of the everlasting covenant." It was always and the only ground of blessing. " GATHER MY SAINTS TOGETHER UNTO ME ; THOSE THAT HAVE MADE A COVENANT WITH ME BY SACRIFICE " (Ps. l. 5). To approach God on any other basis is to court refusal. How significant, then, is Solomon's attitude, " *He stood before the altar of the Lord.*"

Let us imitate him. Let us realise that God is offering us a basis for our prayers. The sacrifice we need, He supplies. He is offering us Christ as our righteousness and all that Christ has done. Apart from this we are under judgment, having no claim, and without any ground of approach. Sin has broken every link with God. But that link may be established in a higher and better way through the provision God Himself has made. We are not discouraging anyone from prayer. God bears with ignorance, and listens to the cry of even unconverted people. We are only insisting

upon a broad and vital principle which needs to be recognised, viz., that sin has put us at a distance ; by nature we are guilty and subject to God's judgment ; and God is asking us to accept His way of reconciliation ; so that we may have good ground for asking and receiving. It is quite right for us to stretch out our hands to God, but we miss our own blessing if we fail to realise that *God is stretching out His hands to us* and offering us pardon and peace on the ground of the sacrifice of Calvary, and through faith in Him Who died there on our behalf. It is necessary to insist upon this, however elementary it may seem, because doubting souls are often asking of God, when, all the time, their first need is to receive something *from* God. In other words, God speaks to us before we can rightly speak to Him. Let us never forget to plead the blood of Christ as the reason why God should answer our prayers. We have no other ground whatever of approach to God.

The next point to notice is the manner in which Solomon begins his prayer. He extols and magnifies the One to Whom he prays. "*O Lord God of Israel, there is no God like Thee in the heaven, nor in the earth.*" When we approach God in prayer let us never forget to contemplate His majesty. The attitude of the King, too, is worthy of notice. He "*kneeled down upon his knees . . . and spread forth his hands toward heaven.*"

Solomon also bases his prayer upon the promises of God. He remembers how God has fulfilled His word, and asks Him to verify His promise in the future. Then he becomes lost in the sense of God's greatness and at His condescension in deigning to dwell in a house built by human hands. All this is surely most appropriate, and indicates a fine intelligence, as well as a happy state of soul.

The Cry and the Prayer.

There is another utterance in this prayer which should not escape us. Solomon asks God "to hearken unto the *cry* and the *prayer* which Thy servant prayeth before Thee." There is not only a general petition, but there is the "cry." This seems to imply urgency and definiteness. Let there be the "cry" as well as the prayer when we approach God. We all know how our children may ask for a thing, and sometimes but little attention be paid to their request, but only let us hear their "cry," and we run to their aid at once. So, "This poor man *cried*, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles."

Forgiveness.

The first thing Solomon asks God to do is to *forgive*; and it would be well if we often followed his example. Do not let us be misunderstood. There is a forgiveness which every child of God ought to be assured of (see Acts x. 43; xiii. 38-9; xxvi. 18; Eph. i. 7; 1 John ii. 12). But we also read that "in many things we all offend" (James iii. 2). And this very prayer we are considering reminds us, "there is no man that sinneth not." There are sins of *omission* as well as *commission*, and how often we need to seek forgiveness for these, that thus our communion with God may not be hindered. And then having received forgiveness ourselves we have to extend the same forgiveness to any who may have trespassed against us, or our prayers will not be answered (Mark xi. 25-6).

The Comprehensiveness of the Prayer.

This prayer takes account of every variety of need. Every conceivable circumstance—difficulty, danger, loss, sickness—is included. Calamities of every kind are mentioned. Whatever the position of an Israelite; whether at home or in a foreign land; whether prosperous or the reverse; he might look toward God's earthly dwelling place and pray, with the conviction that he was being heard.

The righteous man might look to God to justify him. Or, if the whole nation sinned, and they, as a consequence, were put to the worse before the enemy, when they asked forgiveness, Solomon entreats God to "bring them again unto the land which Thou gavest to their fathers." The judgment might be of a different kind, and the heaven be shut up; or there might be dearth, pestilence, blasting, mildew, locusts or caterpillars; "*Whatsoever sore or whatsoever sickness there be, then what prayer or what supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all Thy people Israel, WHEN EVERYONE SHALL KNOW HIS OWN SORE AND HIS OWN GRIEF, and shall spread forth his hands towards this house: then hear Thou from heaven Thy dwelling place, and forgive, and render unto every man according unto all his ways, whose heart Thou knowest.*" Thus we see that whether the need were national or individual the provision was the same. Not only the great matters of state, but the personal needs could be told to Jehovah: "When everyone shall know his own sore and his own grief." The common causes of sorrow are thought of, and also the peculiar and particular causes, for the heart knoweth

its own bitterness. What a tale of sorrow might be poured into the ear of Jehovah. Day by day He listened to a recital which no other ear but His was permitted to hear. All over the land there were voices raised and hands stretched out toward His temple.

And has God changed? Is He less sympathetic or less approachable to-day? Nay, He is more accessible. Jesus, when He was on earth, stood still at the cry of a blind beggar; and He could say, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." Our Saviour is now our Intercessor, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and by Him we draw near to God.

Does it not strike us, as we read Solomon's prayer, what a wonderful provision the God of Israel was making for His people? All *state* matters, all *private* matters—the needs manifest to all, and those known only to the heart in secret, could be brought to the One all powerful to help. God would have His people speak to Him and tell Him their griefs and their fears. And God has not been less thoughtful as to us. We are exhorted to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." It is always a time of need—there is not a day that does not bring some fresh experience of it—and there is always help ready at hand if we come for it. Whether the matter is of public importance or of private interest; whether calamity threatens the nation or it is a question of each man's own sore and own grief; we may come boldly to a throne of grace and meet with One Who sympathises and succours.

To us it is said, "*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.*"

The Conditions for obtaining an Answer.

It is important to observe the conditions which are invariably attached to prayer. This is so in every dispensation. As to this, the prayer under consideration is full of instruction.

1. The prayer had to be directed towards God's house. An Israelite thus recognised, in a very definite way, the existence of God. He did not pray aimlessly or into the air. So we read in the New Testament: "*He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.*" How

often the soul needs to fall back upon that simple fact : *God is ;* and knowing that He is, come to Him.

2. More than once Solomon mentions the confession of God's Name. " Pray . . . and confess Thy Name." Everything, in reality, depended upon this. We are answered, not because of anything in us, or in our prayers, but because of what God is. All that God is is now set forth in the Lord Jesus Christ, and we are told to ask in His Name. Let us always in every prayer attach the greatest importance to this and give the utmost place to it. Making a confession before God of the worthiness of Christ.

3. Another condition of prayer being heard is that we turn from our sin and seek God with our whole heart. It is imperative that we forsake every evil way, if God is to grant our requests. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me, says the Psalmist ; how much less will He hear if it is allowed in the life. So we find Solomon saying, " If they turn from their sin." And if they pray, saying, " We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly." To obtain God's ear there must be the fullest confession and forsaking of evil ; for God will not be an abettor of sin. He demands that we should return to Him with all our heart and with all our soul, and learn the good way wherein He would have us to walk.

It is essential we should conform to these conditions if our prayers are to be heard.

With such privileges, is it any wonder we find Daniel, when in Babylon, opening his window towards Jerusalem three times a day. Even when he knew his life was at stake he could not and would not desist.

Let us remember, then, that while such ample provision was made for Israel, a throne of grace is ever open to us. A " throne," the symbol of power, stability and resource ; and one of " grace " ; the pledge and guarantee that all that power is for us, and not against us. Thither we can bring all our cares, our troubles and our needs, and leaving them there, carry away the help which divine power is able and ready to bestow, and which will sustain and keep us until the need and the occasion of it have passed away for ever, and the vicissitudes of our earthly pilgrimage given place to the rest and satisfaction of heaven.

“TREASURES OF THE SNOW.”

JOB xxxviii. 22.

FOR THE YOUNG.

Hast thou considered, says God,
The treasures of the snow?
There are therein contained
Lessons which you should know!

See how each little flake
Speaks of a Power Divine;
Varied and frail, yet they,
Beauty and charm combine!

And thus with you and me,
God's handiwork we show—
So wonderfully made
For usefulness below!

How soon the snow will change
The scene where it is found,
Marking a landscape fair
With purity around!

Likewise we Christians too,
Wherever we may be,
Thus influence for good,
And all the change shall see!

Then snow will also help
Preserve the springtime flow'rs,
Keeping the tender plants
Through many harmful hours!

And we must also guard
The young for Jesu's sake
From evils that abound
Lest they should shipwreck make!

How silently it falls
No effort is required!
Combining with the rest
What strength is soon acquired!

Thus you and I should be,
Hiding ourselves away,
Unitedly in Christ
We shall His pow'r display!

The snow will help as well
To fructify the ground
And thus its increase give
And benefits abound!

Does not our God expect
That each of us below
Should fruitful be to Him
And spread His blessings so?

In thinking thus about
God's treasures in the snow
May you and I believe
And practise what we know!—C.W.C.

The Faith and The Flock.

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PRICE—ONE PENNY.

HINTS TO YOUNG PREACHERS AND INCIDENTS OF GOSPEL WORK.

(Continued).

By ALFRED H. BURTON.

II.

GOD uses simple means sometimes in directing His servants. One of my happiest recollections is a visit I paid many years ago to a little Bedfordshire town.

Standing one evening on London Bridge platform awaiting my usual train, I spent the time examining one of Horniman's pure tea maps. In those days, these maps were hung in almost every railway station. I was specially interested in them, for they gave the population of every town where their agents were to be found. On this particular occasion, my eye fell on the word "Dunstable." I fancied I heard a voice at my side, "Go to Dunstable and preach." So assured was I that this was of God, that the next day found me prospecting the town itself. The Corn Exchange seemed just the place for gospel work, and there and then I secured it for Sunday and Wednesday nights. I knew nobody in the place, but had been given the name of a Christian man residing in the town. On enquiry, I found that Mr. H.'s house joined hard by the Corn Exchange. As I walked in, he greeted me with "Come in Mr B." I was surprised, and asked how he came to know me. "Well, I heard you preach in the Market Place at Calne, some months ago. What brings you here?" I told him that I felt God would have me preach the gospel in the place, and that I had secured the Corn Exchange for the following Sunday. "This is of God" he said, and opening his desk produced a letter he had written to me more than a month before, inviting me to come! God had been working at both ends.

Little wonder was it that we had a time of wonderful blessing. Many souls were converted, and not a few of them have been called home, Mr. H. amongst the number.

I well remember a man addressing me at the close of a Wednesday night meeting. "I can't make you out. I get along with you very well on Wednesdays, but I can't do with it at all on Sundays. It seems impossible to think that it is the same man preaching." The fact of the matter was, the man was a Calvinist. On Wednesday night I was speaking to Christians, and on this particular occasion had been speaking on Eph. i. : "Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world"; this suited him down to the ground. But on Sunday nights, addressing myself to the unconverted, I gave them the free invitation of God's blessed gospel, "Whosoever will let him take the water of life," and this the poor Calvinist could not approve. All Scripture is inspired of God, and the young preacher needs to remember that the Word of God is the one effectual weapon to use in the work. Preach the Word!

I was not very old at this time, but full of the desire to be used of God in conversions. The memories of the great Irish Revival were still fresh, and I seemed to have a longing to visit every village in the land. Many a large town and country district did I visit, and at every house, great and small, have I left a gospel book and spoken a few words. The great day that is coming alone will declare what the result of reading these silent messengers has been.

"Had I counted the Gas Jets?"

Those Dunstable meetings were seasons of great blessing. The Corn Exchange used to be packed to the street doors on Sunday nights in spite of what a sceptical policeman had foreseen. I had told this stalwart guardian of the peace that I had hired the Corn Exchange and was going to preach the Gospel, and would he come? No committee, no chairman, no choir, how was I going to draw the people? He looked at me with a sort of pity, and asked, had I counted the gas jets? I said "No, why?" "You'll get about as many people!"

However, the people came. God brought them, and large numbers were converted.

These meetings gave me a start in a new line of work. On the Wednesday evenings I used to speak to Christians, it was my first attempt at giving a lecture! I had just been reading "*Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects*" by the late W. Trotter. I recommend every young preacher to do the same, and to get the thrill of those glorious themes into his soul. For the first time I began

to speak definitely on subjects connected with the coming of the Lord, and from that day to this—it was in the early seventies—I have ever found that the Lord has used a distinct and simple testimony along these lines both in the awakening of His people and the conversion of sinners.

While on this point, I would recall a remarkable incident that took place in a small New Zealand town about twenty years later. I was preaching in the Theatre, and God was giving great blessing to His word. One Sunday afternoon, I noticed a young lady walk in and take her seat on the front row of chairs. She had every appearance of being a thoroughly worldly and unconverted girl. She seemed to take no interest whatever in the service. She kept turning round, and twisting about, and moving in her seat most uneasily. In fact, she seemed to be doing it purposely to annoy me.

At the close of the meeting I went straight down to her and asked her if she had enjoyed the address? "Not at all," she replied. This did not surprise me, so I asked her if she believed what I had been saying? "Not a word of it," was the prompt reply. "But don't you believe the Bible?" I next asked. "No, I don't." "Then why did you come here to-day? for you must have known I was going to speak on the Bible." "I don't know why I came, I am sorry I did, and I shall certainly never come again." "I am not so sure about that," I replied, for I began to feel that God was at work in this young soul. "But, did you never believe the Bible?" "Oh, yes, I used to believe it, but then it did me no good, I believed it because I was brought up to believe it." "But were you not happier when you believed it?" "Oh, yes, and I wish I could believe it like you do." I found out that a clever University man had instilled all sorts of questions about the inspiration of the Scriptures into her mind, and all these doubts were ever present with her when she opened the Bible. Her case became a matter of earnest prayer amongst some Christian friends, and in spite of her determination not to return, she was found attending night after night.

There again I took up the subject of the Lord's Second Coming, going through the two epistles to the Thessalonians in a somewhat expository manner. On one never-to-be-forgotten night we had reached the second chapter of the second Epistle. It was an awfully solemn occasion. I told the people that in that chapter God had given a clear account of what would take place in Christendom after the Lord had taken His saints away in the twinkling

of an eye. I told them what I saw from the Scripture, that the Lord might come at any moment, that He might come that very night, and "if you want to know what will happen after that in this very town, read 2 Thess. ii." I then went on to speak of the apostasy from the Christian faith that was predicted, and that is even now largely developed; of the manifestation of the man of sin (not the Pope, but the great leader of apostate Jews and Christians); and finally, I dwelt solemnly on the hopeless doom of those who rejected the truth of the Gospel and should be found alive, and be left behind when Christ should come.

It was a terribly solemn occasion, and the hush and awe of it remains with me as I write, twenty years later. So much did I feel it that I told the people that I did not want anybody to come to me at the close and argue or reason about the matter. "I have told you as simply as I can what God has revealed in His word, if you do not like it there is no use your coming to me and telling me so, for I am not the author of 2 Thess. ii.; it is God's word, and God's revelation. If you do not like it, go home, go down on your knees and say, 'O God, I don't like what Thou hast said, take it out of Thy book.' We cannot pick and choose. We must take the whole Bible or none of it."

Miss B—— came forward at the end of the meeting: "Do you *believe* what you have been telling us to-night? Do you believe the Lord might come back to-night? Do you believe that the door of salvation might be closed to-night, and that the people of this town would have no chance of being saved after that?" "Of course, I believe it. Do you think I would have given up the world and all the pleasures and enjoyments of society, do you think I could take the trouble and go to the expense of going up and down the country preaching if I did not believe these things?"

She stood for a moment or two and then slowly and with emphasis on every word, she replied: "Then its *awful*, that's all I can say, simply awful! I have been in this place all my life, I know all the girls in the district. We go to the theatre together, we go to the ball-room together, we go to the race-course together, we go to church together, but to say that we are ready—? How can we be Christians, the name of Christ never crosses our lips?"

"Yes, it is solemn, and God intends us to feel it, and this is one of the ways in which He leads people to decision. Salvation is at this moment offered to you—it is now within your reach. If you

put it from you, if you reject it, if you choose the world and refuse Christ, and He comes this night, there will be nothing before you but God's strong delusion. It is either salvation or judgment."

I shall not describe how great a struggle went on in this soul between light and darkness, God and Satan, faith and infidelity, until one afternoon some months later, she was brought to accept the simplicity of the Gospel as contained in John v. 24. And who can tell how many millions shall be in glory with Christ through those blessed words :—

" Verily, verily, I say unto you, 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."

Now, to return to Dunstable—one Sunday night after the Gospel Service in the Corn Exchange, a lady invited me to her house to meet and converse with some who had been awakened through the preaching. As we separated, she suggested we should all sing a hymn together. I remarked that while I enjoyed singing immensely, I thought it would be difficult to find a hymn we should all be able to sing, for some of us were rejoicing in Christ, others were anxious about their souls, while others again were apparently indifferent and unconcerned. Our hostess herself selected one which began something like this :—

When Thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come,
And all Thy ransomed shall appear,
Shall I amongst them stand ?

" I don't feel very happy in singing that," I remarked " But it is a beautiful hymn." " That may be, but there are two reasons why I cannot sing it happily. First, when Christ comes *for* His saints, He does not come as Judge, but as Saviour, ' Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour ' (Phil. iii. 21). Then again, I have no doubt whatever about being amongst the ransomed by-and-by, for I am one of them already, ' in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins ' (Eph. i. 7)."

The next hymn that was suggested was :—

'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought—
Do I love the Lord, or no ?
Am I His, or am I not ?

" Why," said I, " that is worse than the first. Do you know the first place that we read of singing in the Bible ? It is in

Exodus xv. Let us imagine Moses and the Children of Israel joining thus :—

'Tis a point we long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought—
Have we really left Egypt or no?
Are we free, or are we not?

The absurdity of it evoked a smile all round. No, the blood had screened them from the judgment of a holy God, redemption had been accomplished, Pharaoh and his host lay dead in the waters of judgment, and the redeemed people were standing on the resurrection side of those waters of death and judgment, and in the full sense of their deliverance they thus sang unto the Lord :—

“The Lord hath triumphed gloriously.”

* * * *

Time would fail to tell of all the happy and thrilling memories that crowd into one's soul in looking back over the years beginning from 1862, when the Lord in His great mercy visited one of the most worldly families in the county, first for their own eternal blessing, and that to the second and third generations, and then through them to others in many lands. It is not in any boastful spirit that these words are penned, but to realise more fully the exhortation. “Let him that glorieth glory in the Lord.”

In closing, we would urge upon all young Christians to take up some definite spiritual work for Christ. Let each find out on bended knee what particular service he or she may be called to, then let all the energy they possess of mind and body be enlisted for Christ. Pray much—study the word, keep a tender conscience, do not grieve the Spirit, and be not weary in well-doing, knowing that the reaping time is certain.

One of the happiest things in advancing life is to recall the triumphs of the gospel, and the places visited, and the people with whom one has been linked in the great battle with the powers of darkness. These surely are not the things that God would have us to forget, nor shall we forget them in that day when along with Paul and the Thessalonians we shall greet on the cloud those whom grace has made our special joy and crown of rejoicing.

“Bring the perplexities of life, the impossibilities of man; when God handles them what are they?”

NONE OTHER NAME!

By S. E. McN.

"There is none other name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved." Acts iv. 12.

THE apostle's inspired declaration places Jesus Christ, the Nazarene, in an altogether solitary position.

It affirms that He is *Saviour*, and, in the whole wide world, He alone is that.

An extraordinary interest always belongs to a unique specimen. Be it the last rose of summer or the first that appears in early spring, a special interest attaches to it because of its isolation.

But the interest of the Apostle Peter's statement has a far profounder significance than is inspired by a first or last example. Not only there is none other name, but there never was another, nor will be. And the special interest of the fact is that it clearly concerns ourselves.

The marvellous statement has stood the test of *time*. No re-casting of creeds has called for the elimination of the words spoken by fisherman Peter to the Chief Priests in Jerusalem. Thrones have shaken, empires have passed away, great names have faded into doubtful history, but the Name above every name lives on. Its charm has not been lost. Its power has never been lessened. Marvels undreamed of in Peter's day have been revealed to the patient investigator by the lamp of science, but as yet he has discovered none other name in the whole universe to which a *saving* virtue attaches.

The words have stood the test of *place* and *condition*. True for the fisherman who uttered them then as the expression of his personal experience, they have been translated into the spoken language and the spiritual history of untold millions from his day to ours. Jesus is a Saviour *now* from humanity's sin and sorrow, and there is none other than He. He saves to-day from the follies of youth, from the mistakes of maturity, from the weakness of declining years. He saves the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the learned and the ignorant. The unlettered savage learns to cry to Him for salvation from his wickedness, and the

greatest intellects of the day know of none other name whereby they may be saved from the frailties which the best must own to.

The Name has stood the test of *competition*. Rival religions have multiplied. Pretentious philosophies have advanced their claims. The world is a babel of conflicting theories as to how moral problems may be solved, but no religion, no science, no philosophy has a message of salvation for the sinner, except that which brings him the name of Jesus: Jehovah—a Saviour.

It has stood the test of *attack*. Christianity has been assaulted as no other religion. It has been explained away by false friends, and, to their own satisfaction, "exploded" by its enemies. But whatever theorists may say, facts prove that the name of Jesus saves still; that it saves alone. No fact in the universe is attested by such a cloud of witnesses as is the saving power of Christ. Not only the *words* of millions confess it, but countless changed lives, transformed homes, vanquished sins confirm the testimony that *Jesus saves*.

Reader, Is this a fact of your personal experience? Many will tell you that there is no saving virtue in the Name above every name. A curious characteristic may be noticed in all who say this: they have never put the matter to the test of personal experience. They have not taken note of the conditions which enable others to say, The Name of Jesus is a saving power to me. But the positive experience of every one who has tested the matter contradicts their pessimistic negation.

Try it! Touch it, as the stricken woman touched the hem of the seamless robe! Take time, take thought—*pray* to know what the Name of "Jesus" connotes. Learn that it means divine love reaching down to your guilt, able and willing to raise you to the gladness and glory of the Father's house. Test it, when temptation's blast beats fiercest: then let God's Spirit flood your soul with all that the Name must mean: love that sought, love that suffered, love that cares, love that cleanses. Nor love alone, but One who loves living, caring, cleansing now.

"There are two ways in which we learn the knowledge of God—by enjoying Him, or by our needs, to which He ministers. At present it is chiefly the latter; by and by it will be the former."

"SECRETS OF TRUE SERVICE."

S. E. D.

"Thine are we David, and on thy side" (1 Chron. xii. 18).

"EARNESTNESS," verse 8.

ALL true followers of the rejected Christ are trained and fitted for conflict. Those who can go forth in the power of His might, for His cause, with the shield of faith, knowing His work requires "Endurance," "Earnestness" and "Haste."

"SEPARATION," verse 15.

It is said, a person is known by the company he keeps. If any soul desires to be a witness for Christ he must part company with the world. Go over Jordan (the place of death) and seek to live in separation and newness of life.

"DEVOTION AND DECISION," verse 18.

"Thine are we David." That is Decision. "On thy side." That is devotion. Paul could say, "Whose I am and whom I serve." The greatest privilege on this earth is to be here for the Lord Jesus Christ and His interests. Let us never be ashamed to own Him.

"FELLOWSHIP," verse 22.

Our fellowship in His service must be a daily thing. Day by day we must go to the true David for our instructions. To seek to meet the desires of His blessed heart every moment of the day.

"EQUIPMENT," verses 32 to 34.

Every Christian worker who looks for the Crowning Day will seek, in the meantime, to be equipped. We should, therefore, seek to have understanding of the times like Issachar.

Go forth, and be not of a double heart like Zebulun. May we take the whole armour of God, so as to stand for Christ until the Crowning Day comes.

"All through the Gospel of John we find Christ occupied with putting His disciples in the same place with Himself, before God, and before the world."

GLEANINGS.

“ The life-giving preacher is a man of God, whose heart is ever attune for God, whose eye is single to God, and in whom by the power of God’s Spirit the flesh and the world have been crucified, and his ministry is like the generous flood of a life-giving river.”

* * * *

“ A school to teach preachers how to pray as God counts praying would be more beneficial to true piety, true worship, and true preaching than all theological schools.”

* * * *

“ Sermon *making* will engrass and harden, will estrange the heart by neglect of prayer from God. The scientist loses God in nature. The preacher may lose God in his sermon.

* * * *

“ Jesus Christ cannot make an impression upon our whole life—He cannot raise it to its real level until the last sacrifice is made, till the last secret objection is overcome. When a vessel of water contains some lumps of ice, the temperature of the water will not rise until every particle of ice is melted.”

* * * *

“ There are seven things which characterise a disciple of Christ. 1. Continuance in His Word (John viii. 31). 2. Self-denial (Luke xiv. 26). 3. Cross bearing (Luke xiv. 27). 4. Fruit bearing (John xv. 8). 5. Persecution (John xv. 20). 6. Love to one another (John xiii. 35). 7. Reward (Matt. x. 42). These form a precious chain, the first link of which is “ the Word of His mouth,” the last “ the reward ” which He will bring with Him, and the intermediate links all closely allied with Himself. If ever Master and servant were one, the Heavenly Master and the feeble disciple are indissolubly linked together.”

* * * *

“ I feel the importance of definitely apprehending the *relationship* in which the Lord has set us. Hence should follow that rigid obedience (and obedience is the only thing in which a Christian should be rigid) which would keep us from *latitudinarianism*, and that nearness to Christ which would keep us from *sectarianism* (the most natural weed of the human heart, for sectarianism is getting an interest in a little circle round ourselves) and it would give us an interest in the whole Church of God, for Christ can love nothing less.”

ISAIAH LIII.

No man's history was ever written before he was born. Many never have their history written even after they have lived and died. Christ alone, of all who ever entered this world, has the unique honour of having His birth, life and death depicted beforehand.

THIS chapter is remarkable in many ways. It is the clearest and fullest prediction we have of the coming of Christ. It enters into the very details of His wonderful life and death. It contains a prophecy which has been fulfilled to the letter. Its language is remarkable. The truth embodied in the language is even more remarkable. It has been called a miniature Bible. Nowhere, perhaps, in the whole range of Scripture, are the sinner and the Saviour brought more directly face to face: nowhere have we a plainer statement of the sinner's need and that which can meet it: nowhere are the atoning sufferings of Christ so pressed home upon our attention. Is it any wonder that many have been converted by reading it?

Moreover, in addition to indirect references to this chapter in the New Testament, it is directly quoted some five or six times (see John xii. 38; Rom. x. 16; Acts viii. 32; 1 Peter ii. 22; Luke xxii. 37). The first verse is quoted in John xii. 38, and proves conclusively two things: (1) that the prophecy in the chapter refers to Jesus: (2) that it was fulfilled when Israel rejected Him.

Verse 2 is divided into two parts. The opening words, "For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground," refers to what He was in the sight of God. The "He" being Christ, and the "Him" God. The second part tells us what this same One was in the eyes of men. "He hath no form nor comeliness, &c." What a chasm between God and men in their opinions about Christ. In God's account nowhere else was there anyone like Christ, in man's eyes He was nothing. To the former Christ was the only living thing—the true vine—the One in Whom alone fruit could be found: all else was like "dry ground": to the latter there was no beauty to be seen.

HE WAS DESPISED AND REJECTED.

And not only did men see no beauty in Him, but verse 3 tells us they "despised and rejected Him." And this because He was a

“man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” And so they hid their faces from Him and esteemed Him not. How truly all this depicts the attitude of men towards the Lord Jesus the fourfold Gospel narrative shows.

Verses 4-6 contain the words which will be used in a future day by repentant Israel when they discover that Jesus was really their Messiah. But they have a meaning for us to-day. Verse 4 is quoted in Matthew viii. 17, and refers to our Saviour's three and a half years' public service. He not only healed disease and raised the dead by His power, but He *felt* for all. Every mourner, every sick one, had His sympathy. There was more than the touch of power, the heart went out to the sufferer. See Him *touch* the leper : hear Him *sigh* as He says, “Be opened” and unstops the deaf ears : behold Him *weep* with the mourners at Bethany before He cried, “Lazarus, come forth” (Luke v. 13 ; Mark vii. 34 ; John xi. 35). In Jesus, not only was the arm of Jehovah made bare but His heart. “He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.”

But verse 5 carries us beyond this to the Cross. Christ was not a sin bearer in His life time, but He carried our sorrows then. But we had *sins* as well as sorrows. And Christ is sufficient for both, but we need Him differently for each. He could not *sympathise* with our sins. His holiness prevented that. And no amount of sympathy could have removed them. He must suffer what our sins deserved if ever *they* were to be taken away.

“No act of power could e'er atone
No wonder-working word.”

And so in verse 5 we read, “He was *wounded* for our transgressions, He was *bruised* for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon Him ; and with His stripes we are healed.” Notice in verse 4 it is “griefs” and “sorrows” : in verse 5, “transgressions” and “iniquities.” Moreover, in the one case He simply “bore” them and “carried” them, in the other something was inflicted upon Him. He was “wounded” ; He was “bruised” ; He bore “chastisement” and “stripes.” How different the two verses are. For my griefs and sorrows I need sympathy. For my sins I need that someone should bear the punishment instead of me. And in Christ we find both. In verse 5, God is telling us of One Who bore all this for us—our sins as well as our sorrows. First telling us how perfect in His sight this One was, and then unfolding to us the astonishing but unquestionable fact that this

very Person—His own Son—suffered on account of the sins of others. Both our sorrows and our sins are thought of. How wonderful !

Ah ! happy indeed for us, if we can make the language of that verse the language of our faith and say (putting “ my ” in the place of “ our ”), “ He was wounded for *my* transgressions, and bruised for *my* iniquities.” This is what God would have us do.

As we listen to and ponder the wondrous truth of verse 5 does not faith spring up in our hearts ? As we discern God’s provision for us, and see it is exactly what we need, do we not feel constrained to accept it ? Surely, it shall never be said of us, “ Who hath believed our report ? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed ? ” But rather we shall indeed find it to be true, “ Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

THE EFFECT OF CHRIST’S DEATH.

In verse 6 we are allowed to see the impression this sight of the death of Christ produces. “ *All we like sheep have gone astray ; we have turned everyone to his own way ; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.* ” Here is the language of one who realises the meaning of verse 5. Notice the two “ alls ” ; one at the beginning and the other at the end of verse 6. All who consciously come within the first, and own it, may confidently rely upon being included in the last. It is not only what *we* have done, but there is something God has done. We have gone astray, but the Lord (Jehovah) hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Here is the very essence of atonement. Do let us grasp it. It was God Himself—for He alone could do it—Who laid on Christ iniquities that were not His but ours, and He answered for them. Reverently and adoringly it can be said that this is the most wonderful work God ever did.

Thus Christ suffered at the hands of God for the sins of believers, all, in fact, who make the confession of verse 6. But He also suffered at the hands of *man*, and this is described in the next three verses, verses 7-9. All that man was ready to do against God came out at the same time that God was doing His utmost for man. Just before Christ died for the ungodly, man was allowed to shew his bitter enmity towards God. And all this was spoken of and predicted hundreds of years before it happened, proving so distinctly that the Bible is the very word of God. “ He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth ” (Read Matt. xxvi. 62-8 and xxvii. 11-14). A wonderful contrast comes out here between vers.

6 and 7. In verse 6 *we* are likened to sheep going astray ; in verse 7 Christ is likened to a sheep, but in what a different way—"As a sheep before her shearers is *dumb*." Man for the moment was allowed to do what he liked. Christ said nothing. When He opened His mouth it was to make intercession for the transgressors, not for Himself. See last clause of last verse.

The real force of verse 9 is, "They made His grave with the wicked, but He was with the rich in His death." That is, their intention was, not only to give Him a malefactor's death, but a malefactor's grave. This God did not permit. After the Cross, God stepped in and allowed man to do no more. They were not allowed to break a bone of Him, and God sends those two rich men, Joseph of Arimathæa and Nicodemus to attend to the burial of His beloved Son.

THE FUTURE.

And now we have three verses remaining of this wonderful chapter, and they tell us what is to be the outcome of this wondrous life and death. It was because God pleased, that it all happened. Can we read anywhere more wonderful words about God and His beloved Son than these? *Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him ; He hath put Him to grief : when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin.*" It is God's work. It is Christ suffering at the hands of a holy God. And when I see that was for me, what can I do but believe and adore? Can I have a doubt, either about God's willingness to save or as to everything having been done in order that I may be freely forgiven? God bruised Him. God put Him to grief. Christ made His soul an offering for sin. Can anything more be needed? Might not the Saviour well say at the end, "It is finished."

And what shall I think of Him? Of Him Who took my place, and with my sins upon Him came under the stroke of God's judgment against them, and felt in the very depths of His soul's agony what sin was—His creature's sin—and to be outside of God's presence on account of it. "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" What shall I think of Him? Need I be surprised if I feel an unaccountable drawing to Him, and that eternity will not be long enough to repay Him all I owe; and feel that the One Who was great enough to bear my sins, is great enough to satisfy my heart for ever.

And He, what will He get out of it all? "He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall

prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." Yes, God's pleasure shall be done, and Christ will be satisfied at the result. And this will be when the last penitent sinner is brought to God, and the earth is full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas, and when the supreme place of honour in heaven and on earth is accorded to the One Who "poured out His soul unto death." *"Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."*

R. E.

THEN FACE TO FACE.

1 COR. xiii. 12.

To see His Face—His Blessed Face—
My only consolation
Is, through His tenderness and grace,
This sweet anticipation.

To see His Face—His Stricken Face—
In death and condemnation
He bore my judgment, took my place,
Secured for me salvation.

To see His Face—His Risen Face—
In grateful adoration;
His path of sorrows to retrace,
Sublime commemoration.

To see His Face—His Glorious Face—
His Home my destination;
Be like Him, near Him, share His place,
Eternal consummation.

To see His Face—His Holy Face—
To feel His Love's pulsation;
My highest rapture—His embrace—
To know no separation.

To see His Face; yes, just *His* Face—
Supreme edification.
The light of knowledge there to trace,
Glory, and new creation.

His promise stands; time nears apace,
My faith's substantiation—
In glory to behold His Face,
And share His Saints' translation.—W. J. H.

“GO FORWARD.”

By J. H. D.

“Speak unto the Children of Israel that they GO FORWARD” (Ex. xiv. 15).

THE people to whom this command was given had been redeemed from Egypt by blood, under Jehovah’s instructions to Moses. Typical of the believer’s redemption from sin, and its bondage.

Before this blessed command could be obeyed a great and marvellous act had to be accomplished, whereby Egypt’s bondage, and the enemy’s power, would be a thing of the past, but, to the natural eye, things were anything but rosy—for the people lifted up their eyes and SAW Pharaoh and his army pursuing them, fully equipped for battle. They knew his power, and the severity of his commands (Ex. v. 6-18). All these things were fully known to them by painful experience; and they had great cause for such fear when they remembered the brick kilns and the task-master’s lash but they were now about to prove, as never before, the power of Jehovah. In their distress and terror they cried out and murmured. Moses had been the recipient of a communication from Jehovah (Ex. vi. 2-8), and although the people did not hearken to it, Jehovah had spoken, and it must come to pass. Their deliverance did not depend on themselves.

“Fear ye not, **stand still** (sounded forth from the lips of this man of faith) and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will shew to you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. THE LORD shall fight for you, and YE shall hold your peace” (chap. xiv. 13-14). What confidence! It was perfectly true the enemy were in sight, in fact, on their heels (vers. 9-10), but the utterance of Moses was one of faith in the word of Jehovah, given to him in chap. vi. 2-8. Did Jehovah fail him? No! this could not be—Jehovah had spoken, and Moses believed His word. There is encouragement and instruction for every reader here. When God speaks let us not only hearken, but believe, and put into practice our faith.

The Lord did not intend his people to fight on this occasion. He was going to do the fighting. What He required was, that the people should trust him and afterwards make progress.

We, too, cannot fight our great enemy, the Devil. The Lord Jesus Christ has done that and annulled him, but God does expect us to use the shield of faith, to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one. We shall also need to use the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, as the Lord Jesus Christ did when tempted of the Devil. In fact, we cannot dispense with any part of the armour of God in our path of progress (Eph. vi. 10-18).

Now comes the next important step. They were to hear from Moses God's command to **go forward**. But how? Here, again, Jehovah comes to the rescue. "Speak to the Children of Israel that they **GO FORWARD**," and by His command the way was made through the sea. The pillar of cloud which had led them forward removed and stood behind them, and while they were in the light, the Egyptians were in darkness.

"Speak unto the Children of Israel that they **GO FORWARD**." While these words had their special application and significance at this particular moment, yet these words should ring in our ears at all times. Is our Christian life a progressive one? Are we forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? (Phil. iii. 13-14). Are we seeking to run the race and finish our course acceptably to God? There are some who loiter, the close of life does not find them running the race set before them—they pause—they linger, perhaps it may be said of some who read this, "Ye did run well, what doth hinder you!" Let us who are young rally ourselves. John, the Apostle, writing to the young men says, "I have written unto you young men because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one" (1 John ii. 14)

There are times when we must "**Stand still**" and see God's deliverance:—"Be still and know that I am God." **Sit still** at Jesu's feet to hear His word; but it is that we may be better able to make progress afterward.

It is true, the enemy of God and Israel had said, "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, My lust shall be satisfied upon them, I will draw My sword, My hand **SHALL DESTROY THEM**" (Ex. xv. 9), but what of all this? We doubt not he had the power, naturally; but Jehovah had said (chap. vi. 6-8) seven times, "**I WILL.**"

- “ I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians ” ;
 “ I will rid you out of their bondage ” ;
 “ I will redeem you with a stretched-out arm, and with great judgments ” ;
 “ I will take you to me for a people ” ;
 “ I will be to you a God : and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians ” ;
 “ I will bring you into the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob ” ;
 “ I will give it you for an heritage.”

“ I am Jehovah.” He could not fail. GO FORWARD, then, it is the Lord’s command, let us obey with ready mind, and cheerful heart. Are we standing still or are we progressing? The sea of troubles will open before us, and He will shew us the path through. Obedience to the command makes all the difference between success and failure, triumph and defeat. GO FORWARD ! let us do our duty now, for the time is short, and opportunities once lost may never be ours again.

The slothful man saith : “ There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets ” (Prov. xxii. 13). But God has said, “ Fear thou not ; for *I am with thee* : be not dismayed ; for *I am thy God* : I will strengthen thee ; yea, I will help thee ; yea I will uphold thee, with the right hand of my righteousness ” (Is. xli. 10).

“ How sweet it is to look to the end of our weary way—and what an end—‘ The House of the Lord ! ’ and that ‘ for ever ’ ! Surely ‘ goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,’ and ‘ I will dwell in the House of the Lord for ever.’ Can anything be sweeter, goodness and mercy *now*, the house of the Lord *hereafter* ? ”

* * * *

“ All things are possible to him that believeth. Faith never stumbles at difficulties or trials, but always looks to where God is, which is the bright side of everything. Godward, trials are bread for faith. Paul knew this well—Christ knew it—may we know it also.”

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY :

AS A SERVANT.

By R. E.

The Manner, Method and Matter of His Ministry.**The Manner.**

WE have considered the greatness and unique character of St. Paul's mission. Let us now contemplate the manner, method, and matter of his ministry. These heads will embrace the general scope of his service, and enable us to form some idea of the mighty instrument he was in the hands of Christ, Who had raised him up to be the Apostle of the Gentiles and endued him with power, so that "through mighty signs and wonders by the power of the Spirit of God," he made "the Gentiles obedient by word and deed." In an autobiographical note, he tells us, that, grace had been given him of God that he "should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." And he adds: "So that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ."

In Acts xx. we have a record of the apostle's address to the elders of Ephesus, which contains most valuable and precise information as to the manner and method of his labours in their city. We have, therefore, in his own words a vivid rehearsal of his labours, and it is probable that what he depicts as taking place at Ephesus was pursued with equal energy and devotion wherever he went. In verse 18 we read: "**Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons.**" How much these few words convey. "*From the first day.*" The Apostle began as he meant to continue. He was no haphazard worker. His manner and method were determined beforehand. Though it was God's work, he was sane enough to know that there was a right and wrong way of doing things, and that carelessness might hinder the work. He therefore laid down rules for himself. For the God of grace is the God of creation, and order is heaven's first law. And if this determination to have a method showed concentration and self-control, the words "after what manner I have been with you at all seasons," reveal continuity and consistency of purpose.

“ At all seasons.” What fine consistency ! It is this that tells. Our spasmodic efforts produce correspondingly fitful results. But, “ from the first day,” and “ at all seasons,” here is the secret of permanent achievement. The same diligence, the same high standard ; the quality of service never lowered—this was the great Apostle’s manner of service ; whatever the people might think of him among whom he laboured, and in spite of all difficulties and discouragements. In all this he is an example to everyone who seeks to serve. From the first day until the last he pursued an undeviating course. Can we do better than study the manner and method of such a man ?

And first as to the *manner*. The Apostle speaks thus of himself : “ **Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews** ” (ver. 19). Do not these opening words, “ Serving the Lord,” explain those expressions “ From the first day ” and “ at all seasons ? ” He had his eye on the Lord. But for this, he might often have failed, if not given up altogether. It was this which accounted for his unremitting toil, and gave him such undeviating purpose. In all his service he had the Lord before him ; and it makes all the difference whether we serve people or Christ. To realise we are serving the Lord imparts an immeasurable tone and distinction to our labours. The Apostle was occupied neither with service nor the people he served. He entered fully into the teaching of his Master. “ *But which of you having a servant ploughing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat ? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken : and afterward thou shalt eat and drink.* ” The lesson of which surely is, that we are to make everything of the One Whom we serve, and not of the service or those we serve. If it is service that occupies us or the people, we shall be either puffed up or cast down ; thinking that *our* service is more important than that of others, or else, contrariwise, thinking that it is of no use at all. But if we are “ serving the Lord,” every service, however insignificant, becomes great, because the One for Whom it is done is so great. And, moreover, with His greatness in our eyes, we shall not think ourselves great, but say in the language He Himself puts into our lips, “ We are unprofitable servants ; we have done that which was our duty to do ” (Luke xvii. 7-10).

Yet, on the other hand, no one was more considerate of the people he served than was the Apostle. He endured all things for the elect's sake. He became all things to all men, if by any means he might save some. "I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls," he writes to some; while to others he can say, "We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us . . . As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children." All the gentleness of a nurse, and all the wisdom and helpfulness of a father, characterized the one whose service was to the Lord.

Was it not because he was free from all that he could, and did, become servant of all? And to be truly the servant of the Lord must impart a character to all we do. The thought of "serving the Lord" gives boldness; it lifts the mind above petty considerations; it enables us to overlook and forget vexations, which otherwise would annoy; and saves us from the snares only too numerous in the path of service. It gives, too, a proper independence: "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment . . . but He that judgeth me is the Lord." So wrote the one who yet could make himself "servant of all."

How did the Apostle serve the Lord? "With all humility of mind," he tells us. And surely what gave him this humility was that he always had his eye on the One he served. He knew that as far as he himself was concerned, he was an "unprofitable servant," doing merely his duty; but his Master was supremely great and glorious. He realised that the splendid success of his labours was not due to him: "Yet not I," he says, "but the grace of God." Again, "I will not dare to speak of any of those things that Christ hath not wrought by me." "Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me." "He that wrought effectually in Peter . . . the same was mighty in me." It was Christ Who did the work, and not Paul. Such was his humility that he styled himself the *chief* of sinners, but the *least* of the Apostles, and *less* than the least of all saints. He never sought place or patronage. When he found that his name was being used as a party cry at Corinth, he falls, as it were, on his face, like Moses did before him. "Who then is Paul?" he

asks. And again, "These things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written. . . . For I think that God hath set forth us the Apostle last . . . even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place, and labour, working with our own hands, being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we intreat; we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." Who but a humble man could have trodden such a path!

Such strangely perverse creatures are we that service, unless the flesh is kept under, instead of making us humble, is apt to puff us up. The publicity, which to a great extent is inseparable from service, the position it gives the servant, and the many inducements to make him think something of himself, arising from the very nature of the work—all these may tend to self-exaltation. If we have this example of the apostle continually before us, we shall be saved from many a pitfall. Humility in the apostle did not mean feebleness—when occasion called for it, he knew how to magnify his office, and he could write to another and say, "Let no man despise thy youth." Humility has generally marked all the servants of Christ who have been especially owned of God. And in this quality they have resembled the Master Himself. Who so humble as He? He washed His disciples' feet, and said to them, "Know ye what I have done to you? . . . I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you?" He told them, "I am among you as He that serveth." The apostle followed His Master in this, though of course, at a distance. In the passage we are considering he puts humility above everything. He does not speak of his success, he does not mention the number of souls that were converted under his ministry, but he speaks of *humility*. Yet, Ephesus was where his mightiest work was done. And others too, though of lower rank than the apostle, have been distinguished for the same grace. Whitefield was as conspicuous for humility as for his marvellous gift. Notwithstanding all that God wrought by him, notwithstanding his unequalled popularity with men, he ever remained a truly humble servant.

St. Paul gives us several reasons why humility should characterise the servant of the Lord. One is in 1 Cor. iv. 7: "*For who*

maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou, that thou didst not receive? now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" Another, in the previous chapter, ver. 7 "So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." And 2 Cor. iv. 5 affords an additional reason, "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Here, then, we have three solid reasons why humility should characterise the servants of Christ. First, as to what they *have* and *are*, the Lord makes His servants to differ as to their qualifications; secondly, as to what they *do*, it would come to nought unless God gave the increase; and, thirdly, as to what they *preach*, they exalt Christ, and Christ *only*.

But there was another thing that marked the apostle's service. He served the Lord "with many tears." Now, why does the apostle mention this fact? It is hardly too much to say that in a large measure it reveals the secret of his success. A man who weeps is alive to the importance of his mission, and is downright in earnest about it. If we are not moved ourselves, how can we expect to move others? The blessed Master is a pattern in this as in everything else. He wept over Jerusalem; He wept at the grave of Lazarus; He wept in the hour of His agony, when, with strong crying and tears, He offered up prayers and supplications unto Him that was able to save Him from death. Depend upon it, if there were more tears, there would be more conversions. Hearts would be touched. "How is it that your seed comes up so soon?" said one gardener to another. "Because I steep it," was the reply. The reason why our preaching is often without effect is—we have forgotten to steep it in tears. "He that goeth forth and *weepeth*, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." These are the conditions. Weeping in secret, when no eye sees us but God's, is, after all, the great thing.

The next thing we notice, in connection with the manner of the apostle's ministry, is "temptations." No doubt this word would also include all that is ranged under the head of trials. It has been well said, "Prayer and temptation, the Bible and meditation, make a good minister of Jesus Christ." Trial and temptation are the badges of service. They are incidental to the work. The servant is seeking to pull down the kingdom of Satan and establish

the kingdom of God, and no wonder that the great adversary will not let him alone. He is in the forefront of the fight and must expect blows. An unusually large share fell to the apostle's lot. (Read 2 Cor. xi. 23-28). Moreover, trials have a purifying effect. "When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." They also have a mellowing effect. What a lack is discernable where there has been freedom from trial! Such a servant may have much gift, but hardly be as distinguished for grace and usefulness. "If I am in sorrow," said one, "commend me to a bruised brother." Who is it has been made perfect through sufferings? Is it not the Lord Jesus? And is there any other road for His servant? In trial and temptation, the servant learns too the deceitfulness of his own heart, discovers his weakness and imperfections and experiences his own emptiness. But, on the other hand, they cast him upon God, he grows in deeper acquaintance with Christ, tests the boundless resources of his Master, and learns experimentally that His "strength is made perfect in weakness." As a consequence he becomes better able to help others. Often when some message from one of the Lord's servants has been used to us, we have little thought of the suffering he has had to pass through to fit him to be such a channel of blessing. If it is true of believers generally, it is even more true of servants: "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."

No servant will ever distinguish himself who has not passed through the school of suffering. We might mention many of God's servants, whose history illustrates what has been said. Look at Joseph! Think of his pathway! From his father's house to the pit, from the pit to the prison, and thence to the palace. Moses had to keep sheep at the backside of the desert, before he led forth the people of God, and what trials he had afterwards; David wandered as a fugitive, ere he was established on the throne of Israel. If any who read these lines are passing through special trial and temptation, let them remember it may be the needed preparation for future service.

"In the parable of the Prodigal Son, note the *father's love in falling on the son's neck*, and kissing him in all his *rags*, then *introducing him into the house*, clothed in the *best robe*. It would have been *discreditable* to the father, had his son been in his house in rags."

The Faith and The Flock.

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PRICE—ONE PENNY.

THE COMING OF THE LORD.

By ALFRED H. BURTON.

NEARLY two thousand years ago, the little band of eleven Apostles (for Judas, the traitor, had "gone to his own place") wended their way up the slopes of the Mount of Olives. They walked in the company of the Risen Christ.

The great work of atonement had just been wrought at Calvary. That stupendous moment in the history of the universe had just taken place—the moment to which the eternity of the past looked forward, and to which the eternity of the future will look back. Christ, the Incarnate Son of God, had laid down His life, but He had taken it again, and as the mighty Conqueror had returned from the battlefield where He had annulled Satan, and had vanquished the powers of darkness, triumphing over them in His Cross (Col. ii. 15).

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

That blessed Christ was both God and man. He was as truly God as was God the Father and God the Holy Ghost. Never in the history of Christendom was it more necessary than it is to-day to insist upon this fundamental truth of the Christian faith.

A mass of unregenerate men have taken possession of the theological seminaries of the land. They sit in the professor's chair, and attempt to discuss the mysteries of divine revelation after the fashion of teachers of mathematics or chemistry, or other such-like sciences. With their puny, finite minds they would grasp the infinite, ignoring altogether the plain statement of the Word of God that "the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. ii. 11).

Before any one can be a true minister of Christ he must first of all have passed from death unto life (John v. 24). Before he can "know the things that are freely given to us of God," he must first of all have received "the Spirit which is of God" (1 Cor. ii. 12).

The absence of this in the present day is, we believe, what produces all the unbelief, the spiritual doubt, the infidelity, we may call it, that is now flooding the land.

Hence we feel called upon to state in no uncertain manner our unchanged and absolute conviction of the truth of the full and essential deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. We repeat, He is as truly God as is the Father and the Holy Ghost. One God only, but revealed in three persons—an infinite truth which baffles the understanding of the finite mind of man ; but a truth which the Bible asserts, and which every Christian believes. The man who denies it has abandoned the Christian faith, and forfeited his claim to the name of Christian.

But not only was Jesus God, He was as truly man as He was truly God. Hence, in connection with the glorious truth of the resurrection, it is said on the one hand that having laid down His life He had power to take it again : that is, as a divine Person He laid it down, no man took it from Him ; and as a divine Person He took it again, for He had power to do so (John x. 17-18). On the other hand, as man He was taken by wicked hands, was crucified and slain (Acts ii. 23), and as man He was raised from the dead by the mighty power of God (Eph. i. 19-20). The rationalist would stumble at this. How can this possibly be ? he exclaims. No man took His life from Him, and yet He was slain by men's hands ! But the child of God, born of the Spirit, and indwelt by the Spirit, receives the things of the Spirit of God in simple and unquestioning faith. These things to the unregenerate natural man are foolishness, but to the child of God—the spiritual man—they are amongst the deep things of God, freely given to us that we might know them, enjoy them, walk in the power of them, and have the heart overflowing with adoration and praise because of them (1 Cor. ii. 9-16).

On the memorable occasion to which we have referred (Acts i.), the Risen Christ led his disciples outside the walls of Jerusalem and up the slopes of Olivet. There He spoke to them, amongst other things, of the coming of the Holy Ghost. In three ways were they to be affected by this entirely new fact of the Spirit's presence on earth, fruit of the redemption work of the Lord Jesus. The Spirit had wrought before, from creation onwards ; He had come upon men, both saved and unsaved, making them the vehicles for communicating God's mind, as, for example, Balaam, Saul the King of Israel, as well as David and the prophets. But never until

redemption had been accomplished did He come here to dwell in person. The Holy Spirit's influences had been felt before, His presence as a divine Person was now to be known when the day of Pentecost had fully come.

The Presence of the Holy Spirit.

In three ways, we repeat, were the disciples to be affected by the presence of this august Person. First, as "the promise of the Father" (Acts i. 4, and cf. John xiv., xv., xvi.), introducing them into the conscious relationship of sons.

Second, as the baptism of the Holy Spirit, introducing them into the unity of the body of Christ (Acts i. 5, and cf. 1 Cor. xii. 13).

And thirdly, as the power for service and testimony (Acts i. 8 ; ii. 1-13).

Every Christian, then, is a son of God, and has the Spirit of adoption in his heart whereby he cries, Abba, Father ; every Christian is a member of the body of Christ, and is livingly united by the Spirit to his exalted Head in heaven, as well as to all his fellow-Christians, as members of the body of Christ on earth ; and every Christian is a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is endued with the power of the Holy Ghost for that service, in whatever direction it may lie, whether amongst the saints of God as pastor and teacher, or toward the world as evangelist, or in any other way.

Having spoken to His disciples these things, and while they beheld, the blessed Lord was taken up. A cloud received Him, and hid Him from their gaze. Seen but a moment before, He was now out of their sight. A cloud had intervened—a cloud, and nothing more.

With steadfast eyes they look toward heaven. Had they not seen Him "as He went up" ? Was He not then in heaven ? Yes, verily, and there in heaven He has been ever since that day of all-absorbing memory.

But, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel. Angelic messengers were these, who, fresh from heaven's courts, where they had that very moment just witnessed the entrance there of the glorified Redeemer, now impart to His wondering disciples the joyful tidings that "this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts i. 11).

We are writing specially for those to whom this truth is more or less unknown. For, strange as it may appear, though the Scriptures from one end to the other abound with references thereto, the teachers of Christendom have allowed it to drop almost entirely from their testimony. So much is this the case that when allusion is made to the subject, the strangest misconceptions are found to exist as to what is implied by the words "the coming of the Lord."

What it is not.

Some imagine that the words are to be taken as referring to death. Let this thought be banished from our readers' minds. The Scriptures speak in numberless passages of the coming of the Lord, in the various aspects of this great event, but in none of these is death the subject.

No, the coming of the Lord and death are two totally different things. True, they may either of them take place at any moment. Before the writer has time to lay down his pen, before the reader has time to turn over the page, death might come to the one or the other. But besides this, even before death has time to overtake us, the coming of the Lord might take place; if saved, we should then be caught up into heaven without dying (1 Thess. iv.); if unsaved, left behind for the awful judgment that will fall upon the living at the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ in flaming fire (2 Thess. i.). But these two things, death and the coming of the Lord, are totally distinct, though either might take place at any moment.

Again, there are others who imagine that by the coming of the Lord is meant the end of the world. This is not so at all. After the Lord has come and taken His people home to glory, the world will continue its course, evil will increase and apostasy become complete. The Lord will then appear to execute judgment; after that will take place the millennial reign of Christ, so that the end of the world, as it is now physically constituted, cannot take place until more than a thousand years after the coming of the Lord for His people.

Every Christian ought to be waiting for Christ.

Many seem to think that the coming of the Lord is the special doctrine of only a few peculiar Christians. So far from this, we affirm that it is the bounden duty, as well as the holy privilege of every Christian to be waiting for Christ. Three things are said about it in the Scriptures.

1. The coming of the Lord is a *comforting* hope to the child of God (1 Thess. iv. 18). In a world where death is constantly at work the Christian's circle is often broken ; loved Christian friends are removed. But the sorrow that overwhelms the world when death rudely snaps the bond of human friendship should never take possession of the Christian's heart, for he has the comforting hope that before he has time to lay the precious dust in the grave, the Lord may come, and in a moment saints whom death has parted for a time shall be reunited in eternal bliss.

2. The coming of the Lord is a *blessed* hope. In a scene where ungodliness and worldly lusts abound, where the Christian himself is called upon to be ever on the watch lest the spirit of the world overtake him, and swamp him so far as his happiness, his usefulness and his testimony are concerned ; here where prayerful energy needs always to be in exercise that he might " live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world," what encouragement is derived from that blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ ! Soon the battle will be over, and we shall see Him " who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people " (or a people of His own possession), " zealous of good works " (Titus ii. 11-15).

3. The coming of the Lord is a *purifying* hope. Believers are already the children of God. The world knows them not, for it knew not their Master. He was misunderstood, so are they ; He was despised, so are they ; He was hated, so oftentimes are they. Very far indeed is our measure of all this from His. But presently we shall be perfectly like Him. When He shall appear in glory we shall be like Him—perfectly like Him—for we shall see Him as He is. Having this hope then in Him, we purify ourselves, even as He is pure (1 John iii. 1-4).

The coming of the Lord is a comforting hope, a blessed hope, and a purifying hope. Every Christian, then, ought to be waiting for Christ.

" A prudent man may weigh evidence, and embrace Christianity as truth, but salvation is of God alone, not for clear head, but contrite heart, not for apt scholar, but lost sinner, not for wise and prudent, but for babes."

THE LIFTED EYE.

Read Gen. xiii. 8-17.

ABRAM'S faith was sorely tried and tested, yet by Divine grace grandly victorious! He stands before us in the Word as the typical man of faith—father of all who believe. God in His infinite wisdom always tests the grace that He imparts, for purposes of blessing. Hence, we are not to think it “strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you”—but rather rejoice, because in every trial of faith the Lord designs that we should know more of Himself, and become more fully conformed to the Divine mind and will—the afterward “yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them which are exercised thereby” (Heb. xii. 11). Abram's faith was tried when called to leave his country, and his kindred, but “he obeyed and he went out, not knowing whither he went.” The Word of God was sufficient, and every step was a victory of faith—he went on in triumph over all that hindered or opposed his onward path! Again, his faith was sorely tried in reference to the birth of Isaac—the promised Seed—and he was called to years of patient waiting. Even when the promise was renewed, when it was utterly impossible according to the course of nature, yet was he “strong in faith, giving glory to God” (Rom. iv. 19-21). He looked not at second causes, or surrounding circumstances or temporal difficulties; but the heart rested in the promise of Him Who never fails! And as surely as faith was tested, so surely was faith rewarded, and the promised son was given! But the most severe trial of his faith must have been when commanded by God to take that God-given seed and son of promise, and offer him up for a burnt-offering! What a mysterious and unheard-of mandate! Yet how promptly and implicitly obeyed!—the three days' journey over with its depth of anguish; the place reached, the aged father with his own hands “built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood”—“took the knife”—this was obedience to the utmost point; but not until then did God's deliverance come in, and the divinely appointed substitute was given to take the place of the beloved Isaac! All this was beautifully typical of the Coming One, yet at the same time a glorious victory of God-given faith! Now it was in the power of that faith that

Abram said to Lot : " If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right ; or, if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left " (Gen. xiii. 9). He could well afford to let Lot choose, assured, through faith, that his own portion was absolutely secure ; but alas ! Lot, in making his choice, appears to have had the eye fixed only upon the earthly, for we do not read he sought God's guidance or glory in the matter. How many in the present day put the earthly before the heavenly, the temporal before the spiritual—the things of time and sense in the place of eternal blessings ! How many are seeking to grasp the one at the expense of the other, living only for the life that now is ! The Lord Himself has warned us, " Whosoever will save his life shall lose it," and is not this a solemn word for saint as well as sinner ? Are we not in danger of seeking satisfaction in things around, forsaking the " Fountain of living waters " and hewing out to ourselves " broken cisterns " which must soon utterly fail ! Thus we miss the mark and deprive ourselves of that very satisfaction and delight which we so eagerly sought in a wrong direction ; all our efforts end in loss—loss here, loss at the judgment seat of Christ !

Lot chose for himself (always a dangerous path), for as surely as the child of God does this, he brings sorrow to his own soul.

One has beautifully written—

" Our plans may be disjointed,
But we may calmly rest,
What God hath once appointed
Is better than our best."

Rather, beloved, let the Lord ever choose for us, and in deep humility of spirit at His dear feet, may we ever say—

" Take Thou my cup and it
With joy or sorrow fill,
As ever best to Thee may seem,
Choose Thou my good or ill."

Then, surely, all must be well !

The three steps in Lot's career are very significant :—

1. " Lot chose " (Gen. xiii. 11).
2. " Lot pitched . . . his tent toward Sodom " (ver. 12).
3. " Lot sat in the gate of Sodom " (xix. 1).

The choosing for oneself leads to world-bordering, always a dangerous place for the Christian—the place of ruined testimony, loss and failure. It was one of Satan's stratagems in seeking to retain the children of Israel in Egypt : " Only ye shall not go very

far away" (Ex. viii. 28). If the enemy can only succeed in getting the believer into close proximity to the world he gains a great point; for the saint's blessing, influence and power are alike hindered! Oh, Christian, beware of world-bordering—"pitching toward Sodom!" It does not end here, for a little while after Lot is found "sitting in the gate," and you remember the terrible sequel, how he was pulled out of the burning city with the loss of everything, in addition to the sorrow he entailed upon himself; for Peter tells us: "That righteous man, dwelling among them in seeing and hearing vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds" (2 Pet. ii. 8). Lot's deliverance from Sodom is a picture of some (perhaps many) at the Judgment Seat—"Saved, yet so as through fire" (1 Cor. iii. 15). Loss of reward—gone, forever gone, with no opportunity of regaining: places of honour in the kingdom forfeited: crowns lost!: "an abundant entrance" trifled away! Yet through mercy the soul saved! Reader, let us heed the lesson for our own eternal profit, and, above all, for the glory of Him Whom we profess to love.

What a full reward to Abram's faith is shown us in ver. 14 of our chapter. "The Lord said unto Abram . . . lift up now thine eyes." What a divine comment (as it were) upon the "lifted eye" of Lot, and yet what a marvellous contrast to his choice!

Lot had chosen *for himself*, "Now lift up thine eyes," God seems to say, "and see the fair inheritance *I have chosen* and secured for thee. Do it now, and from the place where thou art. See all the land is thine northward, southward, eastward, westward!" Every foot of it, in every direction all his own by Sovereign gift and divine choice! Blessed portion! And, beloved, blessed, thrice blessed word for your heart and mine! The world may have its own, and money-getters and money-grubbers may hoard their wealth and hug their gold; yet our blessed portion is secure—preserved by sovereign, almighty power, only you must have the "lifted eye," and remember the word "now," and "from the place where thou art." Yes, just now, and just where you are, lift the eye of faith and behold for yourself the fair inheritance within the veil!

"Incorruptible"—its perfection.

"Unfiled"—its beauty.

"Fadeth not away"—its duration.

“Reserved in Heaven for you.” No power on earth or in hell can rob you of it ; no sin can stain, nor moth corrupt. And, mark, it is all thine own, “Every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ” (Eph. i. 3). Truly ours now, though as yet we have not entered upon the full enjoyment of it. The moment of grand investiture is at hand, when, as the royal co-heirs with Christ, we shall enter upon all that He has made ours by grace ! Sons now, and “if children, then heirs ; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ” (Rom. viii. 17). Our portion vast as God’s creation, for “all things are yours.” . . . “Ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.”

“How vast the treasures we possess,
How rich Thy bounty God of grace,
This world is ours, and worlds to come,
Earth is our lodge, and Heaven our Home !”

Above all, how blessed to know that Christ Himself in all His wondrous fulness, the fulness of the Godhead, is the everlasting portion of all who have received Him by faith, and in Him and with Him, the soul possesses “all things !” Reader, may we live day by day in the enjoyment of this precious truth, with the eye “lifted” above the earthly scene. Surely thus shall we be strengthened for the path, and find that rest of heart which none else can give or take away.

(To be concluded.)

THE WORD OF GOD AND THE SON OF GOD.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

“Yea, hath God said ?” Gen. iii. 1.

“If Thou be the Son of God——” Matt. iv. 3.

THE brief sentences at the head of this paper are Satan’s first recorded utterances in the Old and New Testaments respectively. They are very suggestive, shewing as they do the deadly hostility of the chief rebel in the universe against both the Word of God and the Son of God.

The story of the Garden needs no repetition here. The first man was set up there in responsibility, surrounded by every bounty that a good Creator could bestow. It was at once his duty and his

privilege to continue in his first estate in humble fidelity to God. But Satan came along with his poison. Gaining the ear of the woman, by her means he gained the ear of the man also. The result was disastrous. "Yea, hath God said?" It was treason so to speak. God had said, and that in terms which none could misunderstand. Presently, finding his suggestion not unobjectionable, the enemy went further, and flatly contradicted the Word of God. "Ye shall not surely die," said he. From that day onward the energy of Satan has been ceaselessly exercised in the same sorry work of leading men to disbelieve and distrust God. He has never had more marked success than at the present hour. "Hath God said?" is one of the great questions of our times. Not put precisely in this form, we grant. "Has God indeed spoken to men in any definite way?" "Is the Bible really the Word of God?" "Is it simply a religious production, such as the sacred books of India, Persia, etc., or is it absolutely unique in character in the realm of literature?" "Can it be trusted from cover to cover—doctrines, biographies, histories and miracles alike?" In these forms the old Eden question is surging in the minds of men to-day.

The writers of Scripture certainly had a lofty conception of their writings. The first of them says repeatedly "Jehovah said unto Moses" (Exod. iii. 7, 14; iv. 2, 6; Lev. i. 1, etc., etc.). Believing that God had spoken, Moses and Aaron invaded the presence of the greatest despot of his day with the demand, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, let my people go." (Exod. v. 1). When his end drew near, Moses committed the book of the law to the Levites, and bade them put it in the side of the ark (Deut. xxxi. 24-26). Its home from that moment was thus the holiest of all.

The book of Joshua opens with the statement, "After the death of Moses the servant of Jehovah, it came to pass that Jehovah spake unto Joshua the son of Nun." The book of Judges states in its second verse, "Jehovah said." We will not multiply instances. From the first book of Scripture to the last, it is plain that the writers had a profound conviction that God had spoken, and that they were His messengers to men. If these men were all deluded, then their writings are unworthy of further attention at our hands. I absolutely refuse to be troubled with the productions of any man who claims to be the mouthpiece or the scribe of the Almighty, if indeed he is no such thing. But if we thus cast aside the Bible, where are we? Is there a substitute for it? Has it a peer?

Brethren, let us be on our guard. Our all is at stake when the old evil question is raised, "Hath God said?"

Satan's hostility, as we have said, is directed against both the Word of God and the Son of God. Accordingly, he is first introduced to us in the New Testament as approaching the Second Man even as he approached the first. Blessed be God, he had nothing in Him (John xiv. 30). Though he found Him, not in a garden, but in the wilderness, he had to retire from His presence baffled and defeated. But the hostility continues, changing in its methods with changing times, but always the same in its essential character. He will even cry Him up as the greatest of all teachers, the holiest of all Exemplars, and the most saintly of all martyrs, if only he can thereby destroy the thought of His Deity in the minds of men.

The wiles of the devil are more to be dreaded than his loudest roar. In a refined age such as our own, the coarse practices which were successful in the past would in a large degree fail to produce the desired effect. Accordingly, roundabout methods of attack are adopted, the true object of which are only perceived by those who have anointed their eyes with eye-salve that they may see (Rev. iii. 18). As an example of what we mean, take the story of Jonah. It evokes a smile to-day to refer to the prophet's sojourn in the belly of the fish as sober historical fact. Quite well-intentioned people will sometimes ask, when rebuked for their incredulity: "What does it matter whether we regard the story historically or allegorically? Nothing of a spiritual character is affected by it." Reader, *everything* is affected by it. The Son of God emphatically endorsed the Jonah story, both as regards the preaching and as regards the three days in the fish's belly, in Matt. xii. 39-41. If He did not know what He was saying, or if He knowingly endorsed a falsehood, then (God help us) all ground of confidence in the Saviour has gone. How can we trust Him concerning heavenly things (of which we can obtain no human corroboration), if we cannot trust Him concerning earthly things, *i.e.*, if He could pass on fable or allegory to us as historical truth? Satan's objective, in arousing ridicule concerning Jonah, is not the son of Amittai, but the Son of God.

Thank God, the truth abides—it "shall be with us for ever," says the apostle, in 2 John ii.; but both reader and writer may easily slip away from it, and so lose its sweetness for our own souls. As the predicted apostasy hastens on, the Lord make us vigilant that in nothing we may be deceived by the tireless deceiver.

“GRACE TO HELP IN TIME OF NEED.”

Without a want, how could I kneel
 And take the suppliant's place?
 Without a need how could I taste
 The riches of God's grace?

With errands to the Throne of Grace
 I'm furnished every day,
 Yea, every hour, as wants and needs
 Arise upon life's way.

Poor sin-sick souls salvation need
 And knowledge of their state,
 That they may seek the promised help
 Before it be too late.

The mourner needs a comforter,
 The weak one needs an arm,
 The tried, a Helper ever near
 To shelter him from harm.

We thank Thee, Lord, that though our needs
 Are various and great,
 Far greater is the Helper, Who,
 To meet them now doth wait.

He “waiteth to be gracious,”
 He hears His children's cry,
 And He has promised in His word,
 He will their needs supply.

Then grant, oh, Lord, that I may see
 My needs, then seek that place
 Where help is surely to be found,
 “The glorious Throne of Grace.”—M. E. R.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES : an Exposition.

By A. C. GAEBELEIN.

This is an important work on a most important section of the inspired Word. We can heartily commend it to all those who wish for help upon this portion of Scripture. What can surpass in interest an account of all that the Holy Spirit was pleased to accomplish through men at the beginning of this present dispensation. The same power is available still, but how grieved and hindered is the One Who alone possesses it. A perusal of the above book might lead many to realise in a new way the reality of the presence of God the Holy Ghost with the Church.

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WHAT SHALL WE THEN SAY TO THESE THINGS?

Romans viii. 31.

By WALTER SCOTT.

CHAPTER vii. does not describe the *continuous* state and experience of a Christian. It is the record of a past condition. It details the fruitless, unavailing efforts renewed again and again to master the evil within. Our warfare is with wicked spirits in heavenly places (Eph. vi. 12, see margin). It is the Spirit's work, and His alone, to subdue the flesh, not apart from us, but in us and with us (Gal. v. 17). We gladly welcome the truth that the Spirit gives *life*, but we are exceedingly slow in learning the lesson that in the Spirit alone is *power* within. It is this latter truth which the poor struggling soul, after the slow and laboured experience of its own utter helplessness, is brought down to acknowledge. The struggles cease, and the soul appeals to God for deliverance, pure and simple (Chap. vii. 24). God responds to the cry, and Chap. viii. unfolds the deliverance objectively—God *for* us—and subjectively—the Spirit *in* us. What a blessed and triumphant experience must flow from the combination of these truths—God acting *for* us, and the Holy Spirit acting *in* us! It was the disclosure of these to the soul of the Apostle which led to the singular energy and devotedness of Phil. iii., and the holy confidence in view of death and judgment of 2 Cor. iii.—v. Such ought to be the continuous experience of every child of God.

1. Deliverance (vers. 1-11).

There is neither judgment nor condemnation for sin awaiting the believer. He is completely and eternally delivered from both. There is just one thing, and only one, in which the Christian and the Church, at the present moment, are equal to Christ, that is, in being outside the sphere to which eternal judgment applies.* "As He *is* so are we" (1 John iv. 17) puts us in company with Him in absolute immunity from judgment; *that* can no more reach us even "in this world" than it can Him in glory. The Father "hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John v 22); then in ver. 24, the Lord, *the Judge*, declares that the believer shall not

* Not omitting of course: "And hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me."

come into judgment ; while in Rom. viii. 1 the Spirit writes, " there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Condemnation succeeds judgment, and is final and irrevocable. If, therefore, the believer shall not come into judgment, he cannot be condemned, and if there is no condemnation *now*, there cannot be judgment *then*. How complete the deliverance from judgment and its fear ! Even if death ensues, the believer is not simply raised *to* a place in glory, but he is raised *in* glory (1 Cor. xv. 43). Could a glorified person stand in the dock to be judged ? How monstrous the thought !

But deliverance is now applied personally, and as freedom from the law of sin and death (ver. 2). Law here means a fixed, uniform principle of action. There is a law in the sinner's nature which impels to sin and leads to death—a law as uniform in its application as any law in nature. But there is also a law in the spiritual world, " The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," *i. e.*, the Holy Ghost which acts in the life imparted to the believer, and sets " me free from the law of sin and death." The one law sets me free from the other. *I may* sin ; *I may* die.* If I do the former, there is a remedy provided in the advocacy of Christ (1 John ii. 1). If the latter befalls me, a resurrection in glory is sure (1 Cor. xv. 42-44). But we dare not say a believer *must* sin, that is, obey sin's law, or, *must* die, that is death's law, from both of which we have been delivered. Were we habitually moving and acting in the power and communion of the Holy Ghost we would not sin, but, alas ! herein we fail. But further, for our strength and comfort, our glorious deliverance reaches down to the root of evil, and sets us in conscious God-given victory over it. God has " condemned sin " (ver. 3). He has applied the axe to the root of the tree. Sins are forgiven, sin is condemned. Thus the fruit and root of the utterly corrupt tree have been divinely dealt with. Man in the flesh cannot produce fruit for God. Sin in its nature and principle has been condemned by God in the death of His Son. If, therefore, not a particle of goodness can spring from the polluted source in the creature, seeing that the *root* of all life and action is so bad that God could only condemn it, what a relief ! And how one is cast upon God, that the Spirit may in the new nature produce acceptable fruit to God.

We are not then in the flesh (ver. 9) ; that is a *past* condition (Chap. vii. 5), and one of weakness and sin. We are in the Spirit.

* *May*, in the sense of possible.

In the flesh it is impossible to please God (ver. 8). But the flesh is in each of us, and only death, or the change at the coming of the Lord, shall free us from it. We have deliverance from its dominion *now*, and from its presence *soon*.

But the crowning act of deliverance, the free and blessed answer to the heart-breaking cry, "Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" is found in ver. 11. In the glad sunrise of the glorious resurrection, the mortal body of each believer shall be quickened or made alive. If dead, it shall be raised; if alive, it shall be changed. How complete the deliverance! The casket and the jewel will then be in moral harmony. The new home of the Spirit will then reflect the moral glories and beauties of the man within.

2. Relationships (vers. 14-17).

To God we sustain the endearing relationship of children (ver. 16): the dignity of sonship and the glory of heirship have also been conferred on us (vers. 14, 17). A father's eye oversees, a father's love provides, a father's wisdom guides, a father's arm sustains, a father's strength supports each and every child of the blood-redeemed family. Oh, gather up your weakness and weariness, your sorrows and perplexities, and lay the burden on God, our Father. There are cross children, unruly children, ill-tempered children, self-willed children, weak children and children of all ages, character and growth. But for each there is special training, and there is love and a place in the Father's heart and house for all. He knows the needs, the fears, the sorrows and the trials of each child. The weak, the helpless and needy are special objects of His tender regard and solicitude. How the heart thrills with tender emotion as we fondly linger over the word *Father*! God who created, who stills the tempest, and gave His Son to die, is our own very Father; yes, our very own.

The term "sons" refers to the dignity of Christian position and privilege in contrast to the state of believers under Judaism. Jewish believers were children. Christian believers are both children and sons; this latter is not used of Old Testament saints, and could not be, as we become "sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 26). Jewish faith came short of apprehending Christ in glory. As sons we are led by the Spirit of God (ver. 14), and as sons we are to be publicly manifested in glory (ver. 19), and because we are sons (no uncertainty as to that) "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 6). Christ is

called "the Son of God," but never "Child of God." The words, "Thy holy *Child* Jesus," should read, "*Servant* Jesus" (Acts iv. 27).

But if *children* then we are heirs (Rom. viii. 17). and if a *son*, then an heir (Gal. iv. 7). Hence the place of child and the position of son involves heirship of God. What wealth of blessing is wrapped up in that truly wondrous expression "heirs of God." We are heirs of boundless resources, all that the infinite love, and omnipotent power of God has seen fit to give us. We are heirs of God, and we also jointly share with Christ what as man He possesses, or is about to possess. We are "joint-heirs with Christ." We are brought to God. But the full possession is yet in prospect. We are heirs awaiting the moment of our complete redemption; then in the vigour of eternal life, in the fadeless bloom of immortal youth and beauty, our buoyant spirits will revel in our inheritance. For that we wait in patience, for that we sigh and pray, and in the meantime work and worship till the morning of cloudless glory dawn.

These, then, are direct relationships to God. We are children, sons and heirs. The first is the most intimate, the second the highest position, the third the most glorious.

(To be continued.)

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY:

AS A SERVANT.

By R. E.

The Manner, Method, and Matter of His Ministry.

THE method as well as the manner of the apostle's ministry comes before us in Acts xx. They are doubtless interwoven, and yet distinct. The one reveals the *man*, the other the servant. In the one we see character, in the other ability. And both were combined in an eminent degree in this devoted servant. In whichever way we regard him, we see what a remarkable vessel he was, and how conspicuous was the grace of God in him. As a man he was humble, courageous and unselfish; as a servant he was gifted and devoted. He could say, "I laboured more abundantly than they all"; but truly adds, "yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Cor. xv. 10).

First of all, in ver. 20, he says, "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you." The apostle thought of his hearers and of their profit. He knew very well that what he received he was bound to communicate; he was a steward "of the mysteries of God." (1 Cor. iv. 1). He was perfectly aware that all that was revealed to him must be for the profit of those to whom he ministered, and he faithfully delivered it. It was to this very assembly he afterwards wrote an epistle which unfolds the highest truth, the subject of which doubtless formed part of his oral instruction, and therefore the apostle considered *it*—no less than the other parts of revelation—profitable to his hearers. The fact is, under the Spirit's guidance, it is impossible to turn to any part of revealed truth that is not profitable. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable," the same writer says in another epistle (2 Tim. iii. 16). There is need to emphasise that word *all*. No doubt there are chapters in God's word—as well as doctrines—of special importance, but the point to be borne in mind is that all are *necessary*. A face with any feature lacking we should consider sadly deformed. The undue prominence of others would not make amends; and so not only should every truth find a place, but its right place, and that in proper proportion.

In the apostle Paul's writings there is no lack of variety; and even in the chapter before us we find his ministry comprised the following themes: repentance and faith, the grace of God, the kingdom of God, and the whole counsel of God. As to ourselves, all scripture lies open before us. Over this vast field—every part of which in turn yields "meat in due season"—we are privileged to roam. The profit of his hearers was what the apostle ever had before him; and under the Spirit's guidance he seems to have known in a wonderful way just what was needed—like his blessed Master, who spake "the word unto them, as they were able to hear it" (Mark iv. 33).

Here lies the secret of successful ministry—to be so near the Lord as to know what He would have given out. It is one thing to be enjoying a truth ourselves; quite another, whether that will meet the special need of others. Someone has said, "Proclaim every atom of the truth so far as God has taught it you. Harmony requires that the voice of one doctrine shall not drown the rest, and it also demands that the gentler notes shall not be omitted because

of the greater volume of other sounds. All revealed truth in harmonious proportion must be your theme. We would give every portion of Scripture its fair share in our heart and head. Let us abhor all one-sidedness, all exaggeration of one truth and disparagement of another." Such was the method of the apostle Paul; his teaching embraced repentance on the one hand, and the counsel of God on the other, and we may add, all that lies between those two extremes.

He proceeds, "but have showed you, and have taught you." This seems to give a further insight into his method. He was not content with shewing, he explained and enforced what he had shewn. A master may be perfectly acquainted with a mathematical problem, and be able to demonstrate it on the blackboard; it is another thing to be able to impart his knowledge to his pupils. Now this is what the apostle, the "teacher of the Gentiles," sought to do. Hear what he writes to the Colossians (chap. i. 28-29), "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labour, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily." To this end, the apostle, not content with public ministry, went from house to house. He doubtless found in his visits that much he had said in his public address had not been grasped. Is not this a most important branch of the work? Are we not often surprised when we question our hearers, to find how little they have retained? And what they do remember they only imperfectly understand. But in another way this visiting work is most important. Not only is the opportunity afforded of meeting difficulties in the minds of Christians, but the servant gains additional experience, which cannot fail to make his public utterances far more useful.

And the apostle warned as well as instructed. "I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears," he says. Evidently this was done individually. What a watchful pastor he was! He not only fed the flock, but warned them of the dangers that threatened them. Little use would it be to feed a flock of sheep if the next moment they were to be eaten by wolves. If the apostle warned the saints at Ephesus of what was coming in, surely there is additional need for warning, now we are in the midst of it. Mark the apostle's words, "ceased not," "night and day," "with tears." May this

faithfulness, zeal and love be found in some measure in every true servant of the Lord.

The apostle warned with *tears*. What a noble example he presents ! What a picture of a true servant ! He not only preached publicly, he also visited from house to house ; he not only taught, he also warned. He could speak to crowds, and he would care for souls individually. Nothing was too great for his mind, nothing too little for his heart. It was not merely preaching to multitudes that engaged his attention. On one occasion he could stand on Mars Hill, and address the learned Athenians, disputing with their ablest philosophers ; and on another he could pen a letter of entreaty to a master on behalf of a fugitive slave.

Amidst all this he was constrained to remember that he was only a servant, and that he was passing off the scene. He could not continue, and so we find him commending these Ephesian elders " to God, and to the word of His grace." The most faithful, the most indefatigable servant must go, but God and His word remain. It is eighteen hundred years and more since the great apostle of the Gentiles went to his rest, and all that he predicted has come true ; but God and His word are unchanged. What a comfort !

But the apostle had no regrets as regards his own service. While he had opportunity he did all he could. Let us think of what he was able to say in the closing moments of his active service. " I kept back nothing " ; " I am pure from the blood of all men " ; " I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears " ; " I have shewed you all things." Here are his methods.

And in addition to all his accumulated labour and the " care of all the churches," he could say, " These hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." To the Thessalonians he also writes, " For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail : for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God." At the same time he fully recognised our Lord's maxim, " the labourer is worthy of his hire " (See 1 Cor. ix. ; Phil. iv. ; Gal. vi. 6.) Why then, it may be asked, did not the apostle take more advantage of it ? On the one hand, this devoted servant would not assert his rights, for fear he should be misunderstood ; and on the other, he felt such was the state of some of his

converts, who had only just been reclaimed from the grossest darkness, that they needed an object lesson in him, how to gain an honest living. He says to the Thessalonians, "Neither did we eat any man's bread for naught; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you; *not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.* For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat" (2 Thess. iii. 8-10). These are the reasons, or some of them, why the apostle took this additional burden upon himself, and nobly did he sustain it. On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that there were occasions when he did receive, and he fully recognised that to be the divine order. "I robbed other churches," he wrote to the Corinthians, "taking wages of them, to do you service" (2 Cor. xi. 8): and again to the Philippians (chap. iv. 18), "Having received . . . the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God." What pure disinterestedness is thus observable in the apostle! What absolute forgetfulness of self! He could not have a more fitting epitaph than that provided by his own words, "*Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live—Christ.*"

Well may he say to the Ephesian elders, "I have shewed you all things." And well it is for every servant whose life is an exemplification of his own teaching.

And lastly, having spoken to men, he turns to God; "he kneeled down, and prayed with them all." Thus the curtain drops upon the scene, for the record of his active missionary labours closes here. It ends as it began. "Behold, he prayeth" (See Acts ix. 11).

When seeking to prove the inability of Jehovah to "deliver Israel out of his hand," Sennacherib mentioned nine other gods, which had been unable "to deliver their countries out of his hand." Jehovah proved to "all nations," as well as to Sennacherib, that He had power to do what gods of "wood and stone" could not do. And Nisroch, Sennacherib's god, was found to be as helpless to save his life (though worshipping him) as were the nine to save nations (2 Kings xviii., xix.).

THE HOPE LAID UP IN HEAVEN.

By the Late Dr. S. B. BROOKS.

(Since this article was written, the writer has entered into the Lord's presence.)

SINCE doubt and uncertainty are so universally characteristic of the experience of mankind, it would seem as though the ever-merciful God had taken special means and used the plainest language in His word to assure the hearts of His people of the certainty of their hopes being fulfilled and their prospects realised, so long as their hopes are based upon His own word. In Old Testament times God had a people upon the earth who were peculiarly distinguished from all the nations of the world, one of the most important marks of distinction being that earthly property would be the reward of obedience on the one hand, and distress and misery the proof of disobedience on the other (Deut. xxviii.). Now, *i. e.*, in this dispensation, God having set His earthly people aside, He is calling out of the world a people for Himself who are to be associated with Christ in heavenly glory throughout the eternal ages.

This at once is the answer to be given to the scorner who taunts the suffering saints of God on account of the trials they endure in consequence of embracing Christianity and the practice of it in their daily life, but it must not be forgotten that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come." But more than this, and what is one of the glories of Christianity, is the certainty of the future: not something vague and indefinite which seems to separate the believer from the future, but the blessedness of hope comes in to inspire and stimulate the heart of the believer with the assured prospect of heavenly glory. The Apostle Paul tells the Colossians (i. 5) of "the hope which is laid up for them in heaven," and this it is for which he thanks God. The way in which hope is here spoken of is not the same as that of which we read so often. It is not here an experience of the soul, a feeling within us of a subjective character, for here it is spoken of objectively, as something which is "laid up" for us in heaven. What can this be which is "laid up" in heaven? Evidently it is something which cannot be lost, something which cannot

slip away from the grasp of the believer, for he did not lay it up there, but it was "laid up" there for him, and He Who laid it up will certainly ensure that it shall be possessed by the one for whom it was intended. We are told elsewhere (1 Tim. i. 1) that Christ is "our hope," and in Col. i. 27, that Christ is the "hope of glory." Would we separate our hope from Christ or Christ from our hope? It cannot be done. What blessed assurance this gives; what divine certainty is held out to the believer inasmuch as Christ Himself is the hope of glory (Col. i. 27).

The saints at Colosse, like many Christians in the present day, were in danger of being beguiled with "enticing words," and being spoiled "through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ," so the apostle brings before them the only remedy which can free the soul from legal or ceremonial bondage, and that is, Christ in glory, sitting "on the right hand of God" (Col. iii. 1).

What a delight and joy it is to be free from the trammels and bondage of an earthly religion. Judaism was an earthly religion, though it was given by God Himself; but the Apostle Paul speaks of those who had been the subjects of it as being in bondage (Gal. iv. 3). He declares to them the impossibility of being "justified by the law in the sight of God, for "the just shall live by faith." To them who are seeking to be justified by the law, Christ had become of no effect, they had "fallen from grace." All who were waiting for the "hope of righteousness by faith," *i.e.*, Glory, were doing so "through the Spirit" (Gal. v. 5).

The danger and snare into which the Colossian saints had fallen was ritualism, which is a fruitful source of danger. The apostle, in seeking to turn their minds away from this fascinating and most dangerous error, directs their attention to the person of Christ Himself. This is to be most carefully considered. Christ Himself, Christ as our life, is the great cure for the dangerous and soul-destroying errors of ritualism.

If Christ Himself in His Own person and glories be really known, and personal communion with Him experienced and enjoyed, and the heart's love drawn out in holy affection, anything purporting to be a representation or image of Christ could never possibly give satisfaction, or joy, or rest? When Christ was upon earth, and He, in His almost ceaseless activities, was ministering to the needs of

those who came to Him, no words that He uttered seem to be fraught with a sweeter savour than when He said, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The ritualism of the present day is quite as incapable of ministering rest to a guilty, sin-burdened conscience as were the rites and ceremonies of the Pharisees in the days when our Lord spake those words. How many thousands of distressed sinners have found rest unto their souls because they accepted the blessed invitation "Come unto Me." Oh, what dishonour to Christ, what danger to the soul, when anything is allowed to come between the soul and Christ. Personal application by the sinner to Christ for forgiveness; and personal communion with Christ by the believer for support and joy as the daily path is travelled, are the only sure and safe means whereby our hearts can be satisfied, until we attain to that "hope" which is nothing less than Christ in glory.

It is quite understood that some who read these words will attribute to the writer great boldness, if not presumption, in speaking of the future with such absolute confidence. The writer of this epistle declaring so confidently the prospect of future glory, it would be presumption for a professed servant of God to cast a doubt on the truthfulness of what we find written here. The way in which the Apostle Paul connects the hope which is in heaven with the gospel is very beautiful, for it shows that the gospel which tells the sinner of his salvation from sin will not be completed until he is in heaven, for there it is where his hope is laid up, and if as we have seen Christ is our hope, then our salvation cannot be complete until the believer is in heaven where Christ is. How blessedly this links up our hearts with heaven, for He is our hope Who is in heaven and we are to be there with Him. What a motive this supplies for setting our "affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Let us come back again to the blessed fact that our hope, *i.e.*, Christ, is in heaven and that we are to be there with Him. What a precious thought this is. Had it not been revealed to us in the word of God, how presumptuous for us to have entertained it, but now let our hearts break away from the various influences we are subjected to, so that we may be free to set our minds on the things which are above where "Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." If our mind were more habitually set on the things which are above, where Christ is, the blessed fact that we are to be manifested with Him in glory would not be so strange

as it often is to some of God's children, who are afraid to regard themselves as candidates for such high and heavenly privileges as we are now contemplating.

Is it not a fact that every child of God upon the earth at the coming of the Lord will be caught up to meet Him? Also there is the fact that when Christ is manifested in glory all such will be manifested with Him. What abundant reasons then we have for saying that Christ is "our hope," and how joyous to know that that hope is "laid up for us in heaven." Here we have a delightful attraction upwards.

While our stay down here on the earth is prolonged, it is our privilege to be daily cherishing this heavenly hope. The experience of the Psalmist when he cried, "My soul cleaveth to the dust," will doubtless often be that of the Christian, but the abundant privileges which are ours, inasmuch as we possess the full revelation of Christianity, must forbid our contentment with an experience which characterised an Old Testament saint, with his limited knowledge and privileges. We who are privileged to live in this Christian period, having had given to us the full revelation of divine truth as contained in the New Testament, should be contented with nothing less than a personal acquaintance with Christ in glory as revealed to us in the New Testament, and this chiefly in the writings of the Apostle Paul. Nothing can so effectually detach the heart of the Christian from the world and its attractions as the possession of the knowledge that he is already in the mind of God associated with Christ in heaven, and that it is only a question of a little time when the purpose of God to bring home to glory every child of HIS on the earth, together with those who are sleeping in their tombs will be an accomplished fact. Can the Christian entertain any more delightful prospect than that of being manifested with Christ in glory, as we are told will be the fact in Col. iii. 4?

That surely will be the gratification of every holy desire, the fulfilment of every heaven-born hope. Then will be understood, as never before, the meaning of those words, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

"A union of doctrine and opinion more than of life and love will soon become an empty name."

The Faith and The Flock.

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PRICE—ONE PENNY.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The Church's Need.

THERE is a growing feeling that matters are not right with the Church. Decline in Church membership; decreasing attendance at the Sunday services; the almost complete alienation of large numbers of the working classes; and the failure to retain the elder scholars of the Sunday Schools, are a few of the symptoms that warn us there is something radically wrong.

Yet whenever the sad evidences of weakness and decay are touched upon, the real cause is invariably passed over. Anything and everything is suggested as a possible reason but the right one. We have recently read the address given by the President of the Free Church Council at the annual meeting, the subject of it being the very topic we are discussing. He opens with the following quotation from some remarks recently made to him by one who feels there is real need for anxiety: "We have somehow lost our grip of God." Mr. Connell himself goes on to say: "Something has changed or something has gone. The Churches seem to have lost the old impressiveness of their appeal. Vital religion has suffered depression and decline in visible strength. The commanding note that compels general thought about Christ's regal claims is far to seek." Yet, in spite of these grave admissions, and the general admission of failure (not absolute, of course, but relative) which pervades the whole address, one looks in vain to see if the speaker points out wherein the mischief lies. He does, indeed, towards the close of his address, tell us that "Conviction of Christian truth must be re-born in us by quiet and careful brooding over the supreme things of salvation." But he does not attempt to tell us why this conviction has been lost.

* * * *

Lost Conviction of Truth

It is this lost conviction of Christian truth which lies at the back of all that we deplore in present-day Christianity. But how has this come about? Is it not necessary to trace the source of this disaster? If fever invades a city or a dwelling, are we content to

say that fever exists, and fever is a bad thing, and nothing can prosper while fever lasts? Do we not go further than this? What is the use of deploring the disease and saying all will be well when it is got rid of, without enquiring the cause? Supposing the milk supply is tainted. If *that* remains so, is it much use bemoaning the fever?

Strange to say, the President of the Free Church Council refuses to believe in what, to many people, seems a patent cause of "lost conviction." He says, "Nor can I agree that our problem is wholly accounted for by an altered attitude to the Scriptures." Indeed, from further remarks, he leads us to believe that the altered attitude is a gain. Yet, is not the altered attitude a main cause of altered conviction? We do not see how it could possibly be otherwise. And how has that altered attitude been produced? It began in the professor's chair. It spread to the students of theological colleges. From thence it found its way, naturally, into the pulpit, and was proclaimed from the preacher's lips; and now, at last, it pervades the pew.

* * * *

***The Ordeal of
a Theological
Student.***

IN Jeremiah's day, God brought this solemn indictment against the religious leaders. "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land. The prophets prophesy falsely. . . . and My people love to have it so." False testimony suits the natural heart, for which the unadulterated truth of God is ever too searching and too severe. It cannot be too plainly stated, that what happened in Israel long ago is happening in Christendom to-day. The criticisms, the questionings, the doubts that spring from unbelief and mere reasoning, are the stock-in-trade of the Theological Colleges of our land. We had this on the testimony of a student, the other day. Many students leave these seminaries for the ministry, either bewildered or with their faith in the Bible, as the incorruptible word of God, thoroughly undermined. Is it any wonder there is a lack of certainty in their preaching? And this lack of certainty, in the natural course of things, finds its echo, sooner or later, in the pew. Here is the reason of the present low tone in the Churches. This accounts for the little headway they make against the forces of sin, and error. Their want of conquest is explained by their feeble testimony; and their feeble testimony is the result "of an altered

attitude to the Scriptures." Because of this, sin is not spoken of as it used to be, and man is scarcely treated as a sinner. And, consequently, the atoning work of Christ is kept in the background, and judgment hardly alluded to. In excuse of this it is said, each generation needs its own presentation of truth. As though there were some *new* truth for each generation, and as if the truth of sixty years ago had become obsolete. People who say this confound *generation* with *dispensation*. The truth of dispensations may vary, but not the truth for each generation. As long as this present dispensation, which began at Pentecost, lasts, the truths proclaimed in the early Church must be proclaimed to-day. Those truths are as potent as ever to save and bless, if they are proclaimed in the power of the Holy Ghost. It is not some *new* truth, but *all* truth, that people need. What God said to Jeremiah in his day is what He says to us: "Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the *old paths*, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." It was not something new that was needed then; it is not something new needed now. But we fear the answer to-day, on the part of many, is similar to the one made to Jeremiah: "But they said, We will not walk therein."

THE BELIEVER'S PORTION.

By WALTER SCOTT.

Romans viii. 18-27.

The Future Glory (vers. 18-25).

[I]T may not be the privilege of every one of God's saints to suffer *for* Christ, but it is the exceeding privilege of all to suffer *with* Christ; but Christ and we—"glorified together"—is the certain answer to the suffering now (ver. 17). We are to be raised in glory (1 Cor. xv. 43), *that* precludes all question as to coming into judgment for our sins, or, as to the acceptance of our persons. There is, besides, a glory to be revealed *to* us, not "in us" (Rom. viii. 18). Of the nature of this glory we are divinely informed. The creation throbs in pain, she groans in agony. What scenes of sorrow are witnessed on her surface! How deep and universal her anguish. Death, sighs and tears proclaim the reality of the present sad condition, Creation sorrows sadly, but in hope (ver. 20). The present

degradation will cease when the sons of God are manifested in glory (ver. 19). All is to be reversed. Men's tears are to be wiped away. The universal groan shall cease. God will spread over creation a great calm. The folds and plies of redeeming love will be wrapped round the bleeding earth, and staunch its wounds. The heavens and earth will unite in song and melody. Israel saved and happy will fill the length and breadth of Emmanuel's land. The ear will never tire of millennial song and sound; nor will the eye ever weary of the beauties and grandeurs—all heaped up in the concrete word "the glory"—which will ravish heart and soul. But better and higher than all, and infinitely better than the best, will be the sight, and presence, and touch, and voice of Jesus—our eternal Lover, Saviour and Friend. We wait in hope and in patience (vers. 24-25).

The Spirit's Intercession (vers. 26-27).

God, Christ and the Holy Spirit occupied themselves with us when we were sinners (Heb. x. 5-17), and as the result of their love and work *we are saved*. This is the great wonder of redeeming love. The spiritual world teems with wonders. Here is another, and one as perfectly unique in its kind and character as the great wonder of Divine love for sinners; God, Christ and the Holy Ghost occupying themselves with the whole condition and state of the saints from the Cross to the Glory. Such is the fulness of the Divine provision that every separate want, and feeling, and state of soul has been provided for. The intercession of Christ for us, and the intercession of the Spirit in us, cover the whole present condition of the Christian. Christ's intercession on high has a double character viz., that of priesthood (Heb. ii. and iv.) and of advocacy (1 John ii. 1-2). As Priest, He takes account of life's trial and difficulty, and sustains, consoles, succours and strengthens in our pilgrim journey. As Advocate, He takes account of our sin, and takes care of our interests above, at the moment, too, when we might consider them imperilled. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate"; not if any man confess, but if he *sin*. The after-confession of the heart-broken child is the blessed fruit of the Lord's intercession with the Father. The Lord's priesthood is with *God*, on behalf of the pilgrim, tempted, and it may be, suffering. The Lord's advocacy is with the *Father*, on behalf of the *child*, and in connection with its sin.

But it is the intercession of the Spirit in us to which our verses refer. He helps our infirmities. Sickness, mental or bodily weakness or defect, may constitute an infirmity. Now infirmities and temptations must not be confounded with sin. The Spirit then makes intercession for us (but *in* us), with groanings which cannot be clothed in human language. We are not heard according to our unintelligent and stuttering petitions—thank God for it, say we. The Spirit's intercession is according to God. He presents our true wants, as He knows them, before God. The answer is most sure. God searches our hearts, and there He finds the mind of the Spirit, and *that* He answers. The Spirit then gives our groans and cries their true value. He enters into our circumstances. He is in us a great controlling, directing, sympathetic power. His intercession in the weak and sinful vessel should prove an immense comfort to us. Between our many and varied infirmities on the one hand, and the sinful nature in us on the other, our complex condition demands such help as none but God the Spirit can give. His intercession in us is continuous, and ever prevails with God. The double advocacy of Christ on high and of the Spirit in us thus covers our whole condition of need till pilgrim days are done, weariness exchanged for rest, and groan and sigh and tear for the song and everlasting gladness of heaven.

(To be continued.)

THE LIFTED EYE (*Concluded*).

By A. PAGE.

Joshua's "Lifted Eye" (Jos. v. 13-15).

"And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes, and looked" (ver. 13).

THE Children of Israel had by Divine power and grace been delivered from Egypt, led safely through the wilderness, and were now in the promised land, with the Red Sea (judgment) and Jordan (death) behind them.

Before them were seven nations greater and mightier than they. They could not go back, and it was quite as certain that in their own strength they could not go forward. Just at this crisis—this nick of time, man's extremity—the Captain of Jehovah's host appears upon the scene on their behalf, for their salvation, and to lead them on to certain victory! All their strength and hope were

centred in *Him*—His omnipotent arm ; His almighty grace. They had but to yield implicit obedience to His will, to bow to His commands, to trust Him under every circumstance, and victory on victory was theirs ! Beautiful picture of God's provision for us. Every believer, who knows intelligently his or her standing in Christ, understands that death and judgment are behind us in the Cross of Calvary. The Red Sea lesson is, " He died for me." There we see Divine judgment executed. The Jordan lesson is, " I died with Him," and thus in the Person of my blessed Substitute I have already borne the extreme penalty of the broken law. Death and judgment are behind, but we are called to face the foe—to " fight the good fight of faith."

We have the threefold enemy—the world, the flesh and Satan arrayed against us. Blessed to know that in the Captain of the Lord's host we have one infinitely superior, and Who has Himself, on our behalf, laid every enemy low ! Moreover, see God's wonderful provision. Faith gives victory over the world ; for " this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith " (1 John v. 4).

Moses, in the power of that God-given faith, could turn his back upon all the learning and honours of Egypt, and esteem reproach for Christ " greater riches " than it all. Paul, in the same spirit, could, and did, " count all things but loss " for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. Yes, and however attractive the fascinations, allurements and sinful pleasures of the world may appear to the natural eye and heart, the believer may, by divine grace, be victorious over it, and will be, as the " lifted eye " of faith rests upon the Captain of the Lord's host, and we derive all our strength and wisdom from Him. If faith is victorious over the world, the Spirit gives victory over the flesh ; desperately wicked, corrupt and sinful as it ever is, and ever will be, under every condition however favourable. He that dwelleth in us is greater than the depravity of the natural heart. Hence we read : " Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh " (Gal. v. 16). In dependence upon His power, in subjection to His will, assuredly He will " lead from victory unto victory." Though the carnal nature still lives, and seeks to work through the believer, it is blessed to know that complete judgment was passed upon it at the Cross, in the Person of our all-gracious Substitute. Paul could say, " I have been crucified with Christ " (Gal. ii. 20). God reckons

us dead to it, and it is our privilege to reckon so, too ; while full deliverance from it awaits us at the coming of the Lord. Saved from sin's penalty now, He lives to save us from its power, and He is coming to save us from its very presence !

The whole armour of God is the divine provision to meet, oppose and conquer "wicked spirits in the heavenlies," and the injunction is "Wherefore take," "Put on" (see Eph. vi. 10-18). Reader, ponder well this wondrous panoply, "The girdle of truth," the truth received into the heart, with all its keeping power. "The breastplate," practical righteousness. "Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." "The shield of faith," faith in God and His Word. "The helmet of salvation," which takes in past, present, and to come. "The sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God." Let us see to it that we lack no part of this divine defence. Thus fully equipped, "Be strong in the Lord, and the power of His might." "Praying always," and certain victory is yours over all the powers of darkness.

The military orders contained in Joshua vi. for a host of armed men to march round those towering walls in perfect silence until a given signal, may have appeared to some passing strange. The Ark of the Covenant borne by Priests and preceded by seven others, blowing their rams'-horn trumpets: no battering rams nor engines of war to lay flat those mighty defences. All this so utterly different to the general art and stratagems of war. And yet how complete the triumph, how absolute the conquest ! And thus, dear Christian, we have in the inspired record the path of victory marked by an all-wise, unerring hand. May it be ours humbly to follow it, in simple dependence upon Him, for "the battle is the Lord's."

"Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established ; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper" (2 Chron. xx. 20).

Isaac's "Lifted Eye."

"And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at eventide ; and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and behold the camels were coming" (Gen. xxiv. 63).

The chapter before us beautifully sets forth the calling out of the Church. If in Gen. xxii. (Isaac upon the altar) we have a foreshadowing of the Cross of Calvary ; and in chap. xxiii., in the death of

Sarah, we have a type of the present spiritual death of Israel, consequent upon their sin and rejection of Christ ; in chap. xxiv. we see God's purpose (typically) concerning a Bride for His beloved Son. The servant is sent to seek a bride for Isaac. So the blessed Spirit has come from heaven to earth to seek and call out an elect company destined to be the companion of Christ, and the sharer of His eternal joy ! The servant meets her at the well (figure of the grace of God)—that grace which alone seeks and saves the guilty and the lost, and brings the poor rebel sinner into such wondrous relationship to God in Christ. In ver. 22, she is immediately sealed for the absent one, and receives the pledges of his love : so every saved sinner is not only made a member of that one blood-bought Bride, but sealed by the Holy Ghost unto the day of redemption, and receives through Him the sweet assurances of His grace and favour. Further on in the history, the servant testifies of Isaac in the far-off country, and makes known his vast possessions and abounding wealth to the listening ear of Rebecca. How the Spirit, when our hearts are bowed to Him, delights to take of the things of Jesus, revealing to us His matchless glories and infinite perfections ! May we ever remember that we are absolutely dependent upon Him for these revelations of the Christ, through the Word. In ver. 53, Eliezer brings forth "jewels of silver and jewels of gold and raiment." These are from the one whom, up to this time, she had not seen, although her heart was open to receive him. Beautiful figure of those precious graces, so dear to the heart of God, and which is the true adorning of every heaven-born soul. What a rich profusion is presented to us in the verse before us, and how grand the counterpart in Gal. v. 22-23. Oh, beloved, may they be manifested more and more richly in our lives, by divine grace, and surely it will be even so, as we walk in companionship with Him, from whom alone is all our fruit found. Abiding in Him, and He in us, the sequel and outcome will be "much fruit" to his glory ! One great point in the narrative is the captivated heart of the Bride-elect.

"Wilt thou go with this man ?" And she said, "I will go." Her heart is won for Isaac. He, henceforth, of all earthly objects, takes the first place. Kindred and country, friends and home, she is willing to quit for his sake. It is himself who fills her vision and engages her thoughts and heart. Ah, dear reader, in a still higher and spiritual sense may our hearts be entirely captivated for Christ, our absent, yet quickly-coming Lord ; Oh to love Him

with all the powers of our ransomed being. May our whole hearts so completely respond to His mighty love, that we may joyfully yield to Him in "loving, sweet surrender."

May we enter more fully into the experience of one who has beautifully written—

" I have seen the face of Jesus,
Tell me not of aught beside ;
I have heard the voice of Jesus,
All my soul is satisfied."

Day by day may He become to you nearer still—dearer still—

" A living bright reality ! "

" She followed the man." Sweet testimony ! Nothing had she to do with picking or choosing her own path—her will was yielded to another. Difficulties and dangers there were—perplexities and annoyances, sorrow mingled with joy, cloud and sunshine, but through it all " she followed the man ! " How lovely the portrait ! Grandly has the Spirit traced the pathway for your feet, dear believer. A greater than Eliezer has gone before—" leaving us an example that ye should follow His steps " (1 Pet. ii. 21). And what a path He trod of suffering, sorrow, rejection, shame ! What a pathway of perfect love and absolute self-sacrifice ! The truly separated One—separated unto the will of God. The key-note of His whole life—" Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." (Heb. x. 9). How different this from the mere profession of religion—the name without the power. How different, too, from the self-seeking and the self-pleasing of too many in the Church of God. Christian, awake to your responsibility, for " the night is far spent." Hear afresh the Master's voice as He calls to the path of true service and testimony—" Follow thou Me."

In ver. 63 we read : " And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide : and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming."

Isaac, contemplating the joy of receiving his bride, surely gives us a foreshadowing of that joy which not only sustained the blessed Saviour in the very midst of His suffering and humiliation, but also of that deep joy which now, even now, occupies His gracious heart, in the midst of all those glories surrounding Him at God's right hand—the joy of receiving His ransomed and blood-bought Church unto Himself ! He anticipates the reward of His travail and sorrow,

and that *anticipation* shall soon have its blessed *realisation* when He comes to gather from the tombs and from the earth " His loved and His own."

" There amidst the joys of Heaven,
Sweeter to His ear,
Is the footfall through the desert,
Ever drawing near.
There made ready are the mansions,
Glorious, bright and fair,
But the Bride the Father gave Him,
Still is wanting there."

Surely within the veil He has the " lifted eye " upon that which is so dear to Him, and which cost His own life's blood to redeem. Yes, although enthroned so high in Heaven, His eyes and heart are here, ever watching and yearning over His poor, tired, sorrowing people, and rejoicing in the prospect of having them for ever with Himself.

" *And Rebekah lifted up her eyes and . . . saw Isaac* " (ver. 64). Blessed, glorious consummation! Happy, thrice happy climax! She actually sees him of whom she had heard so much—the very one for whom her heart had been captivated and won, and for whom she had been willing to leave country and kin, and brave the difficulties and dangers of the unknown and untrodden way. She saw her bridegroom. Ah, dear children of God, well may our hearts beat high with holy anticipation—the long, tedious journey of the desert will soon be o'er—the long dark night soon be past—the breaking day is truly at hand—earth, with all its sadness and sorrow, will be left far behind—

" The Lord Himself shall come,
And shout a quickening word,
Thousands shall answer from the tomb,
For ever with the Lord."

Then, indeed, our " lifted eyes " shall behold Him even as He is, and we shall be for ever like Him. Oh, moment of supreme rapture! Day of wondrous triumph! Eternal triumph for Him, and for His loved ones through Him! Emancipation from all our woe!—complete deliverance from the very presence of sin—the joy of the resurrection body—bodies " fashioned like unto His body of glory"—the meeting and greeting of long-severed loved ones—above and beyond all, the blessed, sweet, eternal joy of gazing upon *Him*, Whom here we love—delighting in the beams of His peerless face, and in the realized fellowship with the triune God as we have never known,

and never could know, on earth. Even now may the eye be "lifted" to anticipate it with still greater delight—to dwell upon, and live in, the joy of it from day to day. So, even here, shall many a cloud be dispersed, many a sorrow lightened, and our "Marahs" turned to "Elims" of gladness. In view of such a combination of glories we may well sing amid our tears—

"What will it be to dwell above,
And with the Lord of Glory reign,
Since the blest knowledge of His love,
So brightens all this dreary plain?
No heart can think, no tongue can tell,
What joy 'twill be with Him to dwell."

In conclusion, we would say to any dear unsaved one, into whose hands this little book may fall: "Life and peace can only be yours, as your eye is lifted to *JESUS* the Sinner's Friend, and only Saviour.

"If, at this moment, you are conscious of your guilt and danger, earnestly desiring to know the blessedness of God's Salvation, listen to His Word: 'Look unto Me, and be ye saved.' Yes, 'there is life in a look at the Crucified One,' and none other can satisfy and save. Look and live, why will ye die? May your eye even NOW be thus *lifted* to Him that you may know Him as your own personal Saviour, then with the 'Lifted Eye' follow on in the path of obedience to His Will till Glory crowns His work of Grace!"

POWER TO SAVE.

By R. E.

ROMANS i. 1-7.

**The Gospel is concerning One Who possesses power to overcome all our foes,
and Who is consequently a Saviour Indeed, and worthy of all our trust.**

THIS Epistle is the most distinct and orderly unfolding of the Gospel, that we have. For this reason it has been prized by all generations of believers, since it was written. The reading of it has, through faith, given millions to know in what way God justifies the ungodly; what it means to have "peace with God," and to have the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given to us. We need not be surprised, therefore, that it takes its place at the head of *all* the epistles, for it lays broad and

deep the foundation of the believers' faith and of all those priceless blessings grace bestows so freely upon all who feel their need, and are ready to accept as a gift the salvation God offers.

Accordingly we find in the very opening verse a reference to the gospel. St. Paul tells us he was "separated unto the gospel of God." There is nothing so important as the gospel, and the Apostle was separated from everything else to be its minister.

Ver. 2. So important is it, that it was the subject of God's promise long before the Saviour appeared. To him gave all the prophets witness. How sure it makes everything when we see that the coming of Christ was not unexpected and unannounced, but was in fulfilment of promises given by God through all the years that intervened between Creation and the birth at Bethlehem.

Ver. 3. The gospel gains additional importance from the fact that it is concerning a Person, and that Person God's Son. Let us grasp the fact that in the forefront of everything is placed this Person. All the blessing the gospel offers comes to us through Him, and is dependent upon Him. Faith in this Person is all that is required, in order that the treasures the gospel contains may become ours. The vital question is, then, Is He trustworthy? and, Is He sufficient? Let us see how this double question is met.

Not only is He said to be God's Son, and therefore the most glorious Person Who could come on such an errand of mercy, but His personal name is Jesus—which really means, Jehovah the Saviour. In addition, He is the Christ—the Anointed—the One chosen and ordained of God for a special purpose; and He is also Lord, which implies that God has conferred everything upon Him and given Him all power and authority. Moreover, He is said to be of the seed of David, and thus He is heir to all the promises given to David, and heir of the royal line.

Now, is not such a Person worthy of our trust? Could anyone more distinguished or more able undertake our case?

But the question may be asked, Has He sufficient power? Ver. 4 answers that. The mightiest power attaches to Him. Resurrection has been the greatest exhibition of Divine power ever given in this world. And resurrection, and nothing less, attests the power of Christ.

Two statements occur in this verse which prove Christ to be a sufficient Saviour. To be so, He must be without sin, and He must have power. Both of these qualifications we find in the One spoken of here. He is "declared to be the Son of God with *power* according to the spirit of *holiness*."

If He had had any sin of His own He could not have saved us. Or if He had not possessed sufficient power, He could not have delivered us from our enemies. Man was under Satan's authority; he was the slave of sin, and subject to death. Had Christ not possessed power to meet all these, He would have proved insufficient. But He is "declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead." Resurrection rids us of all our foes. In rising from the dead Christ destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the Devil, and proved Himself stronger than our great enemy. It also proves that His sacrifice for our sins was all-sufficing, or HE could not have been raised. Resurrection also annuls death. Here is One, then, presented to us in the gospel, Who has power to grapple, and grapple successfully, with all our foes—Satan, sin and death. Is this not a gospel indeed? Is not such a Saviour worthy of our utmost confidence?

In ver. 5 we are informed that this Risen Son of God had qualified and sent the Apostle Paul to bring all nations to the obedience of faith for His Name. In other words, in order that that which the gospel offers may become ours—pardon, peace, the Holy Spirit be given to us, and the love of God shed abroad in the heart—all that is needed is that we acknowledge the One God has sent: believe Him to be all that God says He is, and trust Him. He is for all nations, and without Him there is no Saviour.

The Gospel thus brings us face to face with this glorious Person—a God-provided Saviour—One with all power to meet every need. He has done everything required; He only asks for our trust.

And what is the consequence when we do trust Him? (*i.e.*, *come* to Him, *believe* on Him, *confess* Him). We become Jesus Christ's (ver. 6). It should read, "the called to be Jesus Christ's."

Ver. 7 tells us of other consequences. We are beloved of God. We are saints, or separated ones. No longer classed amongst guilty sinners or part of a doomed world. God is our Father, and Christ our Lord, and instead of judgment from them, there is only grace and peace. Notice how the Apostle addresses all alike as

beloved of God. It is not a question of our age or advancement. Of *all* the Christians in Rome it is stated, they were "beloved of God." The simple question is, have we turned to the Saviour as needing His salvation, and in real faith?

" On the Lamb our souls are resting,
What His love no tongue can say :
All our sins, so great, so many,
In His blood are washed away.

" Sweetest rest and peace have filled us,
Sweeter praise than tongue can tell ;
God is satisfied with Jesus,
We are satisfied as well.

" Conscience now no more condemns us,
For His own most precious blood
Once for all has washed and cleansed us,
Cleansed us in the eyes of God."

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY :

AS A SERVANT.

By R. E.

The Matter of His Ministry (Acts xx.).

HAVING looked at the manner and method of the Apostle's ministry, we have now to consider its matter. We have it indicated in the chapter before us.

1. Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ (ver. 21).
2. The gospel of the grace of God (ver. 24).
3. The kingdom of God (ver. 25).
4. The whole counsel of God (ver. 27).

The apostle naturally begins with man's side, "repentance toward God." He begins there, but he does not stop until he has declared the whole counsel of God.

The repentance spoken of is towards *God*. It is more than mere sorrow for sin, which may be found even in an unconverted person. We truly repent when we see our sins as God sees them. David knew what repentance meant when he exclaimed, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight." Yes, when we realise what it is to have sinned against a God of holiness and love, we know what true repentance is.

And further, it involves justifying God, and condemning ourselves. In the same verse, just quoted from, David continues, "that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest." Then he entreats God to cleanse him. "Purge

me with hyssop, and I shall be clean, wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." So the next mark of true repentance is the felt need of a Saviour. This leads us to what the apostle connects with repentance, "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Repentance and faith must go together. The bitter herbs were eaten with the flesh of the lamb roast with fire, after the blood had been sprinkled outside (Ex. xii.). It is as we enter into what Christ endured on our account that repentance becomes real. The felt need of a Saviour produces true repentance; and the deeper the work of repentance, the greater the appreciation of the work of Christ, and the more ardent the love to the Person of Christ.

The Counsel of God.

In addition to testifying of repentance and faith, the apostle did not shun to declare all the counsel of God. This embraced both Jew and Gentile. Paul was pure from the blood of all men. For he declared to all the blessing to be found in Christ and the eternal condemnation for those who rejected this way of salvation. We read that at Corinth, "When they opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, 'Your blood be upon your own heads, I am clean; from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.'" Thus, if the Jew refuses the salvation of God it goes out to the Gentiles—God's counsel must stand. And so we read, further on, in Acts xviii., what the Lord says to Paul concerning Corinth, "I have much people in this city."

There are two things presented here—the responsibility of man, and the counsel of God. The endeavour to reconcile these apparently opposing principles has led to endless dispute. The fact is, we arrive at the truth, not by setting one against the other, but by accepting both. We cannot see the exact point where they meet. It is like a chain, of which both ends can be seen, but which passes out of sight in the centre. The chain is really one. Some have looked exclusively from one end, others exclusively from the other. One end, so to speak, begins from God, the other begins from the sinner. Where the dividing line is between the sinner's responsibility and God's sovereignty it is impossible to decide. Both exist, and both must be taken account of. Our privilege is, without troubling ourselves with what really concerns God alone, to look from each end in turn. If we read such scriptures as John iii. 16, Rom. iii. 22, Rev. xxii. 17, we are looking from man's side, but if

we want to look from the other side, we have only to turn to Rom. viii. 29, 30; Eph. i. 4, etc. The first is for sinners, the other is for saints. The first can be proclaimed everywhere, and to every one; the other is for those who become members of the family circle. Paul observed this distinction. He testified to the Jews and to the Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, but, he says, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (ver. 27).

The counsel of God, declared by the apostle, would include what is termed the Mystery, *i.e.*, the Church as the Body of Christ. Both Jew and Gentile found their place in this new organisation, all distinctions, after the flesh, being obliterated. Christ the Head, and all deriving nourishment from Him, being knit together in love. The counsel of God also embraced the special place and character of blessing reserved for believers of this dispensation: Blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; predestinated unto sonship. Also, that God will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; and that we are to share in these "all things." As it is written:—

"In Whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. i. 10).

The gift of the Spirit, so that we are consciously in the place of children and sons, and are builded together for a habitation of God, with all the rights and privileges of saints, and as belonging to the household of God, may also be included.

It must not be forgotten either that God's attitude towards sin, and the true condition of the natural man—dead in trespasses and sins, alienated from the life of God, and an enemy by wicked works, were also declared alongside of the above truths, and at the same time, that the wrath of God is revealed against all unrighteousness, and abides upon all who refuse to believe on the Son. As the apostle writes, "For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience" (Col. iii. 6).

The Gospel of the Grace of God.

What was the gospel of the grace of God which Paul preached? It was that which is peculiar to this dispensation; and is not to be confounded with the gospel of the kingdom referred to by the Lord, in Matt. xxiv. 14. Paul preached the kingdom of God, but not

the *gospel* of the kingdom. The *gospel* of the kingdom has the establishment of the kingdom in manifestation and power as the great burden of its message. The *gospel* the apostle preached was that of the "grace of God." It may be asked, what is the difference? The *gospel* of the "grace of God" is what He is pleased to do, on the ground of what Christ has accomplished, for those who in themselves deserve nothing but wrath and endless misery. Man having been proved to be not only devoid of all righteousness, but an enemy of God, righteousness of God is now declared to all, because all have sinned and come short of His glory, and there is the ministry of reconciliation on the ground that Christ has been made sin, and in Him the believer is made all that God requires. Both Jews and Gentiles are shewn to be "under sin"—equally deserving judgment—every mouth is stopped, and all subject to the judgment of God. But instead of judgment, grace flows out to all "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." "Christ has suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." Christ has ended the state in which man was, in death; He has been made sin, God has glorified Him, and the blessing grace confers is commensurate with that glory. It is the privilege of all who believe to see their old state ended in the Cross, their responsibility met, and every blessing the heart of God delights to bestow become theirs, because of the One Who, in His death, bore their judgment, Himself a sweet savour to God. Sin having been dealt with, God's grace is free to have full exercise, in accord with every attribute of His nature. We are accepted in the Beloved.

The "gospel of the grace of God" being connected with Christ glorified at God's right hand, and we made the righteousness of God in Him, the answer to His having been made sin, it will help us to see the distinction between that and the "gospel of the kingdom," if we state that the latter is connected with His return to earth. We cannot enter into all the circumstances, but it is well known that after the Church's history on earth is closed, there will be a terrible upheaval, everything will be disorganised, the "man of sin" will be revealed, the Jews will have returned to their own land in unbelief; and it is during this period the "gospel of the kingdom" will be preached, announcing the coming King and a reign of righteousness. As the Lord said to His disciples, "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come." The *gospel* of the Kingdom, therefore, has a distinctly Jewish aspect.

The Kingdom of God.

If Paul did not preach the *gospel* of the kingdom, and yet preached the kingdom of God, what was it that he preached? He preached it in its moral aspects. "*The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*" (Rom. xiv. 17). He also declared that "no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Eph. v. 5). He taught them "that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God"; "That if we suffer we shall also reign with him"; and at the same time pointed out that the kingdom of God would be visibly established on earth at the Lord's second coming (see 1 Cor. xv. 24-28; 1 Tim. vi. 14-15; 2 Tim. ii. 12; 2 Thess. i. 5-10; ii. 8).

There can be no doubt St. Paul *referred*, in his preaching, to the Kingdom in manifestation, but this is different from preaching the "*gospel of the Kingdom.*" That was not his gospel. At Thessalonica he was charged with doing "contrary to the decree of Cæsar, saying there is another King, one Jesus." The apostle, we may be sure, did not disobey any decree to which he ought to have submitted, but the foregoing assertion indicates what must have been the line of his ministry, especially when we remember the tenor of his two epistles to the Thessalonians. There he reminds them that they "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, *and to wait for His Son from Heaven.*" This evidently means waiting for Christ to take the kingdom. When some of their number died, they thought that these would miss the kingdom, and St. Paul writes to explain (chap. iv.) how the dead in Christ would be raised first, so that all saints—dead and living—would come with Him when He returns in glory.

There was, undoubtedly, a general expectation of a kingdom amongst the Jews. The angel spoke of it in announcing Christ's birth. During the public ministry of our Lord questions as to it were repeatedly addressed to Him. On one occasion He spake a parable, "because they thought the Kingdom of God should immediately appear." Almost the last question addressed to the Risen Saviour by His own elect circle was, "Wilt Thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel?" Such expectations were justified, and they will yet be realised. That is to say, there will be a Kingdom of God upon earth which will overthrow all other

kingdoms and maintain righteousness and peace throughout the world.

In the meantime is there no such thing as a kingdom of any sort? Undoubtedly there is. But it is a kingdom in mystery, not in manifestation. Its nature is spiritual, and not visible and tangible. Yet whatever *form* the kingdom may take, the idea is always the same. No kingdom can exist without power, without authority and without rule. The present advantages of the kingdom are, that on the side of those belonging to it there is a power to deliver from all the forces of evil—every foe antagonistic to the Christian life can be put down; and instead of being under the authority of darkness, we are “translated into the Kingdom of the Son of His love.” (Cf. 1 Cor. iv. 20; Col. i. 13; Rom. xiv. 17). We thus come under the rule of love, and as we obey that rule and submit ourselves to its blessed influence, “righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost” are our portion. It will thus be seen that what characterises the kingdom to-day is power, and that, the power of the Holy Ghost (Acts i. 8). It was this Kingdom that Paul preached. Yet he ever kept in mind that the kingdom would one day be manifested, and so he spoke of “the crown of righteousness” which would be given to all who “love His appearing.”

Another thing connected with the kingdom, is *suffering*. “That ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer” (2 Thess. i. 5). Of the apostle himself, it was said, “I will shew him how great things he must suffer, for My name’s sake.” We do not take kindly to suffering, but if we are faithful to Christ, in His absence, we cannot escape it. “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy” (1 Peter iv. 12-13).

In conclusion. We have seen how the apostle’s ministry was foursquare, and what it included. Many details might be filled in. But repentance and faith; the gospel of the grace of God; the Kingdom of God; and the whole counsel of God; cover practically the whole matter of his ministry. Happy the servant of Christ, to-day, who does not rest content with any narrower scope, but who can say with the apostle, “I am pure from the blood of all

men. For I have not shunned to declare all the counsel of God." To do this needs courage, and it requires faithfulness. It is necessary to rise superior to all carnal considerations. Let none flinch from insisting upon the lost and ruined state of man, on the one hand; or from unfolding, on the other, all that has been made known of the heart of God as revealed in the Person and work of Christ.

THE CONSECRATION OF THE PRIESTS.

Lev. viii.-ix.

By G. HUCKLESBY.

WE have already seen, in our meditations on the Offerings, that the great truth taught in the Book of Leviticus is "Man's Access to God." The first seven chapters are devoted to *Sacrifice*, shewing that we can only draw near to God on the ground of blood-shedding. The precious blood of Christ becomes the title of the redeemed to enter into the very presence of God in perfect peace. Then in Chapters viii.-ix. we have the subject of *Priesthood*, where we see in type our Great High Priest meeting all the requirements of the Holy Place on our behalf, so that each member of God's priestly family can come to the Throne of Grace with holy boldness and with childlike confidence. In the former, we see the Sacrificial Work upon the Cross set forth, and in the latter, His Intercessory Work before the Throne. The Blood of Christ brings us nigh, and the Priesthood of Christ maintains us in that near position. The Priesthood of our Lord is one of the most prominent of His glorious offices during the present period, and is one of the blessed truths taught in Scripture, and should be of the deepest interest to all those who have exercised faith in His work of Sacrifice at Calvary.

Two Branches of the Subject.

There are two branches of this subject of Priesthood, first, Aaron, the High Priest, and secondly, Aaron's sons, the Priests. In Aaron, we have a type of the Lord Jesus Christ as our Great High Priest before the Eternal Throne, and in Aaron's sons, we have prefigured the whole of God's redeemed family who enter even now in spirit inside the veil. Christ has been made a Priest after the *pattern* of Aaron, being taken from His brethren to meet their every need inside the Sanctuary, but His Priesthood is also after the

order of Melchisedec, concerning whom we read neither of a predecessor nor of a successor. Aaron died, and his office was transferred to his son, but Christ is alive for evermore, and has an untransferable priesthood. Aaron, clad in his garments of glory and beauty, entering into the Tabernacle, foreshadowed the Lord Jesus, Who has gone into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us, and through Him believers have been made kings and priests unto God.

In Leviticus viii. 1-2. Moses was commanded "to take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, and the bullock for the Sin Offering, and two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread, and to gather all the congregation together unto the door of the congregation." God had chosen the nation of Israel out from all the nations of the earth to be unto Himself a holy nation, and out of that nation God elected the tribe of Levi to be nearer to Himself than the other tribes, and from that tribe God separated the family of Aaron and set them apart for the priesthood. They were allowed to enter into the Sanctuary, and to dwell nearer to His Dwelling Place than any of the other families of Israel. Thus, in Aaron, the head of the priestly family and the representative of the redeemed people, we get a glimpse of our Lord Jesus, who glorified not himself to be made a High Priest, but was

Called of God,

as was Aaron. He was taken from among men, and ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he might offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin. As such, He has been made perfect through suffering, and is able from experience, as a Man here below, "to have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way." Then, in ver. 7, we read, "Moses put upon Aaron

The Coat of Fine Linen."

This was the garment worn next to the person of Aaron, and set forth the purity and the inward perfection of the Lord Jesus, as seen by the eye of God. He was inwardly pure as well as outwardly holy, and so specially fitted to undertake our case before a thrice Holy God. Aaron was next girded with

The Linen Girdle.

The girdle is a symbol of service, and the fine linen speaks of righteousness, so we read of Christ, "Righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins." He is Jehovah's "Righteous Servant," the

One Who girded Himself with a towel and began to wash His disciples' feet. He died to make us clean, and He now lives as the Girded High Priest to keep us clean.

The Robe of the Ephod

was next placed on Aaron. This was all of blue, and sets forth the Heavenly Character of Christ's Priesthood. In Heb. vii., we have a full length portrait of our Blessed Lord as He fills this gracious office for His people. All the Old Testament shadows vanish in the presence of His glory. The typical sacrifices and priests all disappear, like the morning stars before the rising sun, as we gaze upon the Glorious Antitype of them all. And here it is expressly stated that "if He were on earth He would not be a priest, seeing that He sprang out of Judah," the Royal Tribe, and not out of Levi, the priestly tribe. But in resurrection, He enters upon this new order of Priesthood, as was prefigured in the priesthood of Melchisedec. As the Risen One, He has passed through the Heavens and gone into Heaven itself. The Aaronic Priesthood existed for about 1,500 years, and terminated at the Cross when Caiaphas rent his priestly robes and God rent the vail of the Temple. All official priesthood now centres in and is exercised by our Great and ever Living Lord Jesus, who appears in the presence of God for us.

The Ephod

came next which was made of blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen, with gold wires interwoven. These various colours are prophetic of our Lord's perfect humanity, and the gold is emblematic of His Divinity. Thus in His High Priestly work we have all the perfections of the former, and all the power of the latter, engaged on our behalf. He has carried humanity to the Throne, and as a Real Man he sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high. His tender love toward us is the same in the unclouded light of the Divine Presence, as it was when for a little while He was shut out of that Presence, being "made sin for us."

"Although ascended feels afresh
What every member bears."

Moses then put upon Aaron

The Girdle of Needlework

which was made of the same kind of materials as the Ephod. This again testifies of His preparedness to act at all times for those for whom He died, and now lives to plead their cause in the High Court of

Heaven. He ever liveth to make intercession for us. He is the girded High Priest, never laying aside the girdle, never slumbering nor sleeping nor growing weary in His intercessory work.

The Breastplate

was then fastened upon Aaron's heart. It was foursquare and adorned with twelve precious stones, and on each gem was written one of the names of the twelve tribes. These names could not be wiped off or wear out, for they were deeply cut in the stone, "graven, as the engraving of a signet." Neither could the costly jewels fall out of the Breastplate, as each stone was embedded in gold, "set in their inclosings," neither could the jewelled Breastplate be removed from the Ephod. It was secured in a twofold manner. First, it was secured to the shoulders (the seat of strength) by two wreathen chains of gold, setting forth a *Divine Bond*; and secondly, it was fastened to the waist by "a Ribband of Blue," telling of a *Heavenly Tie*. And there, in that marvellous position and secured in that perfect manner, each precious stone, bearing its own proper name, shone out before God in its own special colour, and flashed forth in the light of the Sanctuary in its own peculiar lustre. All precious, and yet all so different. I think it was this lovely and costly Breastplate upon the heart of Aaron which was before the mind of Paul when he boldly challenged the whole universe "to separate the Saints from the love of Christ," the heart of our Great High Priest. Thus beholding the type, and knowing the antitype, he utters that shout of triumph, "I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." No power celestial, terrestrial or infernal can ever pluck a single gem from that Breastplate, or separate a single saint from the everlasting, boundless, fathomless love of our Beloved Lord.

In verse 9 we have the account of

The Mitre of Fine Linen

which formed a covering for the head and is a sign of subjection. As the head is the seat of the mind and will, so we learn from this, that every thought of our Lord's mind was in subjection to, and in harmony with, the mind and will of God. As a Man here below, God could, and did, call the attention of heaven and earth to Him, and say, "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased,"

and Christ could, and did, look up and say, "I do always those things which please Him."

The forefront of the Mitre was adorned with

A Plate of Pure Gold

which bore the inscription, "Holiness unto the Lord." Every claim of the Holy Place was met in Aaron, and the God of the Sanctuary could behold him with complacency and delight, and God assured all Israel that they were accepted in him. All were deeply interested, all were faithfully represented, and all were equally accepted. None had a monopoly in Aaron, but as the High Priest he acted for each and all alike. Moses was therefore commanded to gather all Israel that they might see Aaron attired in his official robes, and there learn the rich provision God had made for them inside the Tabernacle. We too are invited to consider the High Priest of our profession, the One of Whom Moses wrote, and Aaron prefigured; the One of Whom David sang, and to Whom all the Prophets witnessed, and as we gaze upon that Glorious Being and see Him crowned with glory and honour, we are assured that He ever lives and pleads for us, and we are accepted in Him.

Aaron's name is also suggestive of Christ in resurrection, it means

"Very High," "Exalted."

So He Who was raised from the dead has been made very high, and exalted a Prince and a Saviour. He has been placed above all principalities and powers, and has a Name which is above every name, and made higher than the heavens. Man put Him upon a tree of shame, but God has placed Him on a Throne of Glory. His enemies said, "Seal the gate of death so that He cannot come out," Angels cried, "Lift up your heads O ye gates, and let the King of Glory come in." Men said, "Let His Name perish," God says, "It shall endure for ever." The Lamb is upon the Throne! The Man of Calvary has become the Man in the Glory. He Who sank so low in the depths of His humiliation, cannot be higher than where He sits enthroned in His exaltation. As the Heir of all things God has placed everything in His hands, and as the Glorified Man all things have been placed beneath His feet. Every eye shall yet see Him, every knee shall yet bow before Him, and every tongue shall yet confess that "Jesus Christ is Lord to the Glory of God the Father."

(To be concluded.)

The Faith and The Flock.

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PRICE—ONE PENNY.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The Value of the Blood.

MR. PIERPONT MORGAN, one of America's richest men, has recently passed away, leaving bequests to the extent of four million pounds.

He thus prefaced his will :—

“ I commit my soul into the hands of my Saviour in full confidence that, having redeemed it and washed it **in His most precious blood**, He will send it faultless before my Heavenly Father. And I entreat my children to maintain and defend, at all hazard and at any cost of personal sacrifice, the blessed doctrine of complete atonement for sin through the blood of Jesus Christ once offered, and through that alone.”

It is a matter of thankfulness to have so clear a testimony from such a prominent and well known man. He was as clear headed in theology as in business. “ The master mind of American finance,” as he has been described, knew as well how to disentangle his belief from all the rubbish of theological speculations, on the one hand, and superstitions, on the other, as he did how to distinguish between a sound investment and a rotten one, in his financial dealings. He sought and found the rock bottom in both cases. He was not ashamed to rest his all upon one thing—the BLOOD. And he was equally bold in confessing it.

It is very beautiful to see that he saw no necessity to add anything to the sacrifice of Christ once offered, and he was assured of its all-sufficiency to send his soul faultless before His God and Father. What a testimony to the value of the Blood of Jesus Christ that “cleanseth from all sin.” Here was one, so rich that even America could hardly produce another more wealthy, turning, as if he were a beggar, to Christ for salvation. How well he realised that though his earthly resources could be told only in millions, all of it could not atone for the soul, and he looks away to the Cross of Calvary and Him Who hung there. Yes, with respect to his soul's salvation, Pierpont Morgan knew that he stood just where the poorest stood. He had learned well the lesson of the thirtieth chapter of Exodus, with respect of the half shekel—“ the rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less ” ; there is only one basis of forgiveness—a God-provided ransom : and that other lesson :

“ Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers ; but with the precious blood of Christ ” (1 Pet. i. 18-19).

May the children of Mr. Morgan, and all others, take heed to his last request : “ *I entreat my children to maintain and defend, at all hazard and at any cost of personal sacrifice, the blessed doctrine of complete atonement for sin through the blood of Jesus Christ once offered, and through that alone.* ” May the voice of this dead *millionaire* reach to the ends of the earth, and be heard and heeded by every generation as long as time shall last.

* * * *

The Church's Need.

WE had occasion last month to call attention to the Church's need. Good men everywhere are bemoaning the lack of power, the paucity of results, and the general declension. In connection with this matter, we endeavoured to trace the evil to its source. With regard to this, some valuable lessons may be learned from the book of Jeremiah. There, again and again, the responsibility for the state of God's people is laid upon the religious leaders of that day—the Priests, the Pastors, and the Prophets. If there is a lack of conversions, it is no good blaming the world, and saying that men are so hard and so unconcerned. The blame does not rest there. The blame rests with God's people. If they were alive and zealous, conversions would be the rule, and not the exception. If the fire burned more warmly within, those outside would catch the glow. Then why is this not the case ? Why are the Children of God so cold ? The responsibility for this rests with the Preachers and Pastors !! “ The priests said not, Where is the Lord ? and they that handle the law knew Me not : the pastors also transgressed against Me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit ” (Jer. ii. 8). It was thus God accounted for the state of His people in a former day.

* * * *

The Indictment.

WHAT a solemn indictment ! Has it any application to-day ? We wish the answer could be in the negative. But faithfulness requires us to say, that, while there are exceptions, now, as then, the present condition of professing Christians is mainly attributable to those who occupy the place of God's ministers.

1. "*The priests said not, Where is the Lord ?*" Are the minds of people distinctly directed to God ? or are they allowed to rest contented with a round of services ? Are our congregations made to feel that those who minister to them are men who really stand in the very presence of God ; men who know what access to God means ; and who are mighty in intercession ? Is it God Who is sought in all things ? Is He kept before the minds of people as the beginning and end of all ? Is He consulted in every matter ?

2. "*They that handle the law knew Me not.*" The one thing they ought to have known they did not know. Everywhere God places the knowledge of Himself before all else. In this same Book of Jeremiah we read, "*Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me.*" The characteristic blessing of the last days will be, "All shall know Me." What ignorance in high places, when it has to be said, "*They that handle the law knew Me not !*" Is it otherwise to-day ? Is not almost every kind of knowledge thought necessary for the pulpit but the right kind ? Men dare to assume positions for which they are totally unfitted. They do in the highest matters what they never would dream of doing, and what would never be tolerated, in other departments of life. A man would be hissed off a platform if he posed as a musician and could not play. Who would be silly enough to apply for a professorship in one of our universities without knowing the subjects upon which he was expected to give instruction ? Yet there are hundreds who undertake to preach upon the most vital themes, without first having received a message. Hundreds who, to earn a living, profess to teach others Christianity, and all the time have not learned it for themselves : hundreds who stand up in the name of God, and, yet, do not know God. It has to be said again, "*They that handle the law knew Me not.*"

3. "*The pastors also transgressed against Me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit.*" This last clause is eminently characteristic of the present time. "*Things that do not profit.*" For the last twenty years, especially, the Church has been posing as the entertainer of the people. Billiards, dancing, cards, and other amusements have all been requisitioned. We have not heard the pastors and prophets lifting up their voice against it. Nay, they have been the leaders in it all. Only here and there has a faithful man raised any protest. Here is a description, from one such, of the state of things in his neighbourhood. "Just now

in our town among the — chapels is an epidemic of theatrical or variety entertainments, and I felt I must speak, and I did. This is our list:—

At one chapel—

“ **A Grand Operetta** ” (a local preacher at the head of Orchestra).

At another—**A play** : “ **The Silver Wedding.** ”

At a third—“ **Pierrots.** ”

At a fourth—“ **Riverside Troupe.** ”

At a fifth—“ **Fancy Dress Carnival.** ”

and not a single Prayer Meeting, worth the name, in the town.”

He adds: “ With a community consumed with a love of pleasure, my stand may bring unpopularity—there may be a fight—and I shall be glad if you will pray that I may have wisdom, love and courage.”

It is a matter for thankfulness that, at last, some pastors and prophets are awakening to the fact that they have “ **walked after things that do not profit.** ” This is how someone writes to a religious weekly quite recently:—

“ Ministers are finding out the futility of all these enterprises of a merely social and largely materialistic and worldly character, which are seen to be sapping the Church of its spiritual element and failing to provide that religious atmosphere and nourishment without which no Church can hope to exist.” He describes how churches “ were turned into buildings for social entertainment, and made use of for purposes which are usually discharged by the restaurant and music-hall. Week after week gatherings took place, and still continue to be held, of young people in church halls in which dancing is freely indulged in It is now being seen that in many respects they (the Churches) are largely helpless (to reach the world outside), and the more reflective are convinced that they are themselves to blame. They have become as worldly as the world around them, in so far as they have been catering to the desire for more pleasure, and failing to keep within their walls the atmosphere of worship and a devout and consecrated life.”

Is not our indictment proved up to the hilt? The Pastors and Prophets have walked after things that do not profit. God has not been sought, and He has been to a great extent unknown. That religious leaders are largely responsible for the deplorable state of things in the Churches is proved in another way. The people are largely influenced by their leaders. Wherever there stands up a man who does not fear to proclaim the truth, and whose life and walk is governed by what he preaches, there, as a

rule (we know there are exceptions) will be found a company of people corresponding in some measure to what they hear and see. For every one such, and there are more than we sometimes think, we can, and do, thank God. May He increase their number. Our remarks are not intended to apply to such, we value them too highly; we refer only to the general mass; and to the larger proportion of these, we are convinced, the words of the Lord through His servant Jeremiah apply as truly as they did to those to whom they were first addressed.

FURTHER RECOLLECTIONS.

By ALFRED H. BURTON.

IT was in the spring of 1874 that the family moved to the East Coast. The medical advisor had ordered this change, and a suitable house having been found about a mile from the little village of D—— we were soon comfortably installed.

Preaching operations soon commenced, and all the villages in the neighbourhood were visited for open-air work. My first bills were printed, headed,

“Open-Air Services,”

and with paste-pot and brush, I used to scour the district. My first hymn sheet also was printed, copies of which I still possess, consisting of four hymns:—

1. We know there's a bright and a glorious home.
2. Call them in.
3. Why 'neath the load of your sins do ye toil?
4. Behold the Saviour at the door.

Soon the lanes and fields were resounding with these hymns, quickly taken up by the children.

A dear christian man, Mr. R., quite recently gone home to the Lord, resided at L., about seven miles off. My first visit to his house seems as vivid as though it were yesterday. He threw himself heartily into the work, and many a mile have I driven behind his horse to gospel meetings.

The first occasion that I can recall was to the little country town of Yoxford. I had secured the Assembly Room in the yard of the Three Tuns, and had gone round the place with books and

invitations. My faith was sorely tried, for on announcing my intentions at home, I was told that nobody would attend; the yard was just opposite the Church, and the people would be afraid to be seen going! Added to this, the rain came down in torrents, and as I drove along with my dear friend, Mr. R., oh! how I prayed that the weather might improve. Suddenly, the clouds rolled away, and the sun shone forth brilliantly.

As we drove into the yard, a group of men were standing at the door. At any rate, I thought, there are a few for our meeting—but they were the overflow! The place was already packed to the doors, and I can see dear Mr. R. now standing pushed up into the right hand corner.

There was great interest at Yoxford, but I saw no results at the time. Indeed it was not for many years after that I heard of any definite conversions at that place. God taught me a great lesson thus early in my work.

“So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase” (1 Cor. iii. 7).

In the villages all around Yoxford many souls were saved, but there, though the interest was great, nothing was seen *at the time*. I used to pray for Yoxford as much as for the other places; I used to try and preach as simply and as earnestly there as elsewhere. Why then, this difference? God was saying to me, “You are *nothing*.” “Nothing!” what a lesson! How difficult to learn, how easy to forget.

The Early Stages of the Work in Suffolk.

During the early stages of the work in Suffolk, I had the help and fellowship of a young man about my own age, and together we used to visit the villages both publicly and from house to house.

About a couple of miles from our house was a large village, called Westleton, and on the green we used to stand with our backs to a shed, which still remains, with logs of timber close by on which the older part of our congregation used to sit. The clergyman of the village, a dear christian man, was a regular attendant. A remarkable work of God’s Spirit took place in the village. Many of the converts are now with the Lord, but it was my joy, not long since, to preach on the same familiar spot and to find a grandson of one that had then received blessing, not only converted, but a preacher of the Gospel!

The season was advancing, and the weather getting too cold for open-air work. Where should we go next? There was much prayerful exercise of heart as to this.

The last Sunday night on Westleton Green, a woman came to me, saying, "Why do you not have some meetings at Dunwich? You pass by the village at your doors, and we all want some meetings."

The following Friday found the Dunwich school-house crowded. Where the people came from was a mystery. The work went on for two or three weeks before any result was seen. Every night I used to invite anxious souls to remain, and then would go to the door and have a word personally with each one going out. This gave offence to some, but was acknowledged by others in the years that followed to have been the means of leading them to see the personal application of the message.

At last the break came. My fellow-labourer had gone, and I was single-handed. I had gone to the door as usual, and, thinking that all had left, I returned to put out the lights. About a dozen people had remained behind. Being young and inexperienced, I scarcely knew what to do, so after a word of prayer and exhortation, we parted for the night.

The next meeting, fully thirty people remained, and sobs were to be heard all over the room. I spoke a few more words to them all together, then we all went down on our knees. Just as we were about to rise, a woman's voice broke forth praising and blessing God for the answer to her many years' prayers. This was maid to Lady—who had just returned with her mistress and found this work of grace proceeding. That night several souls passed from death unto life. It was the commencement of the wave of blessing which swept over the village and surrounding country. Not a day passed but fresh souls were brought to the Lord, not only at the meetings, but in their own cottages. A dear lady, who resided with us, and who had been converted in our Irish home during the memorable revival that visited us, was marvellously used in these cottage visitations. Oh, how she endeared herself to the hearts of those dear people! I verily believe they would have laid down their lives for her. She now rests from her labours, along with many to whom she was used at that time—and many a gem will shine in her crown from Ireland, Scotland, England and the Continent to be cast at her blessed Saviour's feet in that day when sowers and reapers shall rejoice together.

A Story of Conversion.

A word as to her own conversion. She had been brought up as a rigid Presbyterian. There was nothing emotional about her religion, sternly doctrinal and dry as dust was her theology. She was righteous in her own eyes, and thought that heaven was as sure for her as the doctrine of predestination could make it. When the revival broke out in Ireland, she despised those who came under its influence, and used to make fun of those in the house who became troubled about their souls. So much was this the case that she earned for herself the nickname of "Saul," the persecutor! The name remained long after she herself was converted.

A group of friends were staying at D— Castle in Co. Kerry, where a wonderful movement was taking place. My mother had by this time been converted, and many in this house were likewise rejoicing in Christ. Sitting round the fire in the stately hall, the subject of conversation soon turned, as was usual in those days, to the wonders that were being wrought in the land. Some disparaging remarks were made by Miss H., when, to everybody's surprise, Mr. G. T. turned upon her and in the most withering manner, said, "You—you are not a Christian at all. You are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity; you don't understand the grace of God." Miss H. turned as white as a sheet, rose from her seat, and went straight to her room, where she remained for two days, passing through an agony of conviction. She slipped a bit of paper under the door on which she had written the words, "Pray for me"; and soon God answered the prayers, and she, too, was rejoicing in Christ. A dry head belief in the doctrines of Christianity left her hard, cold and self-righteous. A sight of herself at the Cross, and a vision of Christ's love there dying for her, broke her to pieces, and brought her as a captive in the chains of love to embrace her Saviour's feet.

The History of a Backslider.

I have mentioned Mr. G. T. His, indeed, was a remarkable case. As quite a young man he had been converted, but had turned back again to the world, and in this backslidden state, he was on a visit in our Irish home. That house had been the centre of gaiety in the county—balls, hunting, theatricals, etc., etc., were the constant occupation, and my mother was prime mover in it all. Then came the visit of the late Mr. Grattan Guinness to the neighbourhood, fresh from the marvellous scenes of revival in Dublin

and the North. It was an address of his in the hall at —Park, the residence of the late Right Hon. —, that was used of God to begin the work in her soul. For the first time in her life, she realised that there was something better to live for than the passing pleasures and frivolities of the world. But deeper lessons yet had to be learnt, and as the light of God shone in upon her conscience, the great question of sin began to trouble her. It was the agony through which she passed at this time that was witnessed by Mr. G. T. In his head he knew the gospel remedy, though in heart he had got away from Christ. But now he began to tell this stricken soul the wonderful story of Calvary, and as he spoke to her of the Saviour's love and of the value in God's sight of His atoning sacrifice, peace came to her conscience, and restoration to his own soul!

For some time he remained in the joy of God's salvation, and during this while, in the early sixties, he was used in much blessing to others, many of whom are now with the Lord, and some few still "journeying unto the place" which is prepared for them on high.

But again the world proved too strong for him, and for forty years he wandered away and plunged deeply into its "swirl," as he used to call it. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, and once again he was restored to the Lord. His life was nearing its end, and most of the Christians whom he had known in the sixties, and who had started their pilgrimage together with him, had gone to their bright reward. There was something of sadness at the remembrance of the past, as well as joy at the rich grace of God in his restoration. But the end was near. I used to visit him almost every day. I had to go to the country one week end, and was engaged to preach the gospel in a Kentish town. I went to say "Good-bye," feeling uncertain whether he would be alive on my return. A look of sadness passed over his face, and I tried to cheer him by saying, "You will soon be with the Lord." "Yes," he replied. "There will be fulness of joy," I continued. Slowly he answered, "I don't know." "Oh," but I said, "it must be." "I know" said the feeble voice, "it is all peace through the precious blood of Christ, but—I don't like the thought of walking down the street of gold—and—somebody pointing the finger—and saying—'look at Demas.'"

It was more than I could bear, and with difficulty could I restrain the tears as I looked at my childhood's friend—my dear

mother's messenger of peace—and thought of the many now with the Lord that he had been instrumental in helping in those days of spiritual awakening—and then thought of the wasted life, the forty years of backsliding. But here the curtain must drop, and if this sad page of a soul's history has been in measure opened on this side of the glory, it is but to urge upon both writer and reader the need of a close walk with God and a humble sense of our own weakness and helplessness unless kept by God's power.

“Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”
(1 Cor. x. 11).

SALVATION AND SERVICE.

By WILLIAM JEATER.

THERE are two ideas that were never far from the mind of the Apostle Paul, and were never far from each other in his mind—Salvation and Service. It may be said without much exaggeration that he never spoke of the first without the second. In his conception, a man was saved to serve. Service was his life. He would have been aghast at the unhappy distinction that is made in the present day between Christians and “Christian workers,” as though, somehow, it rested with us whether we would or would not take up the yoke of Christ's service and gladly acknowledge Him Lord as well as Saviour. The apostle gloried in the service to which he had been called. He could, when occasion demanded, “Stand upon the order of his going,” assert his apostleship, and declare that he was not a whit behind the chiefest of the apostolic band. But the description that appealed to his own heart was that of “servant,” or, better still, “bond-servant,” or even “slave.” “The bond-servant of Jesus Christ.”

A volume of sermons and addresses by one of the most evangelical of the English Bishops recently came into the writer's hands; on the cover was stamped in gold the “arms” of the diocese; the most prominent objects in the “arms” were the crossed keys—the symbol of episcopal authority. If one is allowed to indulge so quaint a conceit as that of a coat of arms being borne by the apostle Paul, one imagines it would be something very different—perhaps an ox, the symbol of service, bearing a yoke, which might well be shown in gold, and underneath it the motto, which he would

bear humbly, yet as proudly as any Prince of Wales, "Ich dien"—I serve.

First, Salvation ; then Service.

The order of the two ideas is, one may say, fixed. First, salvation ; then service. There is a hint of the order in the two questions which Paul—or Saul—put when he was arrested on the Damascus Road by the heavenly vision. "Who art Thou, Lord?" The answer to this, truly grasped by the soul, is salvation. "What wilt Thou have me to do?" This, though it primarily referred to the action of the moment, nevertheless gave the key-note to the apostle's subsequent life. And so, in the first epistle written by him—namely, to those who had heard and believed in Thessalonica—he recalls how they had turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God. In his last epistle, to his son in the faith, Timothy, he makes radiant confession of the saving mercy of God—"Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling"—before he passes on to speak of what is needed in the way of purity and holiness on the part of everyone who would be "meet for the Master's use." And midway between these two letters there lies the Epistle to the Romans, with its detailed statements concerning the great salvation he had to declare, followed by the pathetic pleading, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Here, it is true, the word and thought is not of bond service, but of such service as was rendered in tabernacle and temple—service in the worship of God.

The Meaning of Salvation.

But what did the apostle mean by "salvation" and "being saved"? Too often in evangelistic preaching and in popular hymns the thought of salvation is limited to deliverance from the penalty of sin, and to the assurance of heaven by-and-by. There was a great deal more than this in the Spirit-taught mind of the apostle. Indeed, to attempt a full exposition of the word, as he used it, would entail such a gathering together of different lines of truth as is quite out of the question in this paper. But the following line of thought may be suggestive and helpful.

The word itself, as a word, was no new one to the writers and speakers of the New Testament. The Pagan Greek had the name of "Saviour" as a designation of some or one of his gods, and "salvation"

was a word in current use in matters of everyday life. It meant only such things as safety in travelling, or the achievement of success in some enterprise. It had no higher meaning. When the Jews were dispersed throughout the Greek-speaking world, they adopted the Greek language, and often ennobled it (as missionaries do in the case of native languages in the present day) when they put the songs and the thoughts of Zion into speech that had had no wider horizon than this world and this life. And when the Jews of Northern Egypt came to make the famous Septuagint translation of the Old Testament (about 350 B.C.) for the benefit of their countrymen to whom Hebrew was a dead language, the word "salvation" and its related forms not infrequently moved along the level of mundane thoughts, and dealt with the common needs of everyday life. A few passages will help us to measure the content of the word. When Jacob made his "bargain" with God at Bethel, the translators make him say that if the Lord would only bring him back *with salvation*, then Jehovah should be his God. The meaning is simply that of *safety* or *safe-conduct*. When Samson, delivered from the Philistines, is ready to perish with thirst, he cries: "Thou hast been well-pleased to grant *this great salvation* . . . but now I die." Here it is simply *deliverance*. When, in David's reign, the rebellion of Absalom was overthrown, upon the news of the death of the rebel son "*the salvation* was turned into mourning." Here it is *victory*.

The Septuagint translation formed the base of the Greek vocabulary of the New Testament, and in the New Testament we therefore meet with the same physical, non-spiritual sense of the word. When Jairus besought the Lord to come to his daughter, it was that He would lay His hand upon her, that she might be *saved*. Quite accurately the Authorised Version says *healed*. Before the shipwreck off Melita (Malta), Paul besought the ship's company to eat bread, adding, "This is for your *salvation*," *i.e.*, your *health*.

Thus it will be seen that in speaking of purely temporal matters, the word embraces the thoughts of deliverance, healing, health, safe conduct and victory. A truly noble word! And what has happened is that this word, with its wealth of meaning, has been transferred to the spiritual sphere, and has been made a vehicle by which the abounding grace of God finds verbal expression. As the sense of moral and spiritual ill deepened—as the darkness of

sin became more marked in the growing brightness of the revelation of God and of His love—as the Cross told, as nothing else could do, both what sin is and what God's love is, the word took upon it an intenser meaning, so that it became by implication both a confession, humble and contrite, of our need and our guilt, and a song of praise and thanksgiving to Him to Whom salvation belongs.

It is because of this full and complex character of the word that the point of view of St. Paul shifts from time to time. With him salvation is of the past, the present and the future. From one point of view it was an act accomplished in the past of his experience, when he found, or rather was found of, God. From another standpoint, it was to be consummated in the future when, as he writes to Timothy, he should be saved [A.V. "preserved"] unto the Lord's heavenly kingdom. But neither the past nor the future obscured the then present, for salvation meant a *present* relation to Christ—a *present* cleansing and ennobling of life—a *present* service. It was not merely a blessed incident of the past, that might become dim with the lapse of years, nor a hope for which he waited, the glory of a future life and another world. It was an enjoyed possession, in which he was Christ's and Christ was his, with all the possibilities and assurances that possession gave of spiritual health, deliverance, safe-conduct and victory. For Paul, life was no path of flowers; in fuller measure than falls to the lot of most men he shared his Master's portion in having to face "the contradiction of sinners"; there were times when the world, the Jew and the Church alike seemed to be against him—times when his more personal conditions, such as his consciousness of infirmity, and his "thorn in the flesh," made necessary a present sense of safe-conduct and of assured victory. This ever was his, through his abiding and unbroken relation to Christ, Who not only had saved, but also would save to the uttermost.

The Mastership of Christ.

Yes, it must be repeated, this salvation, for the Apostle, intensely personal though it was (as he indicates in such a phrase as "the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me"), did not end with his own blissful "assurance." The love he received awoke an answering love in his own heart, and it is a necessity of love that it shall find expression. This expression he found in the "labours more abundant" that make his life and endeavours such

a thrilling story. His whole life, not merely what may be called his apostolic labours, had that word "service" written upon it. The Mastership of Christ was a constant and a compelling thought.

So is it to every soul that realises in some measure what the love is that has brought him salvation. Feeble that realisation must be in the nature of things, for the height and depth of the love is infinite, and our human capacity fails to take its measure, just as the longest log-line fails to take the depth of the Atlantic or the Pacific. But where it is known at all, the heart must find expression not only in words of thanksgiving and praise—though these have their divine place—but in labours wrought and in sacrifices made. If regrets can find their way into Paradise, one man at least is there, the brightness of whose joy has been shadowed—the robber on the cross. His heart he gave, his only free member, as an ancient Father points out, but neither could his hands labour, nor his feet walk, in his Saviour's service. The joy of service never was his. But for the Christian in normal conditions this need not and cannot be. And the true heart finds infinite joy, not only in the Saviourhood of Christ, but in His Mastership. When George Herbert, highly-born and highly accomplished, entered upon his duties as Vicar of Bemerton, he resolved that whenever he spoke of Jesus, he would add the words, "My Master." In a little poem written later, called *The Odour*, he bears witness to the fragrance of the Name.

How sweetly doth *My Master* sound! *My Master*!
 As Amber-grease leaves a rich scent
 Unto the taster,
 So do these words a sweet content,
 An orientall fragrancie, *My Master*!

It should be remembered that the service we may render is not limited to what are called "religious" labours, such as preaching, teaching or any of the manifold activities that are specially connected with the Church of God. The same George Herbert rightly says that household duties and common tasks may be beautified if brought within the range of the phrase, "For Thy sake." Better still is the Lord's own assurance that the cup of cold water, the feeding of the hungry, the visit to the solitary and the sick, though these things be done to the least among His brethren, are acts that He regards as done to Him.

That is the supreme test, both of life and of labour. Our work will become pitiful toil, our activities will degenerate into unfruitful

fussiness, if through it all there does not run, like a golden thread, the knowledge and the remembrance of the great salvation that is ours, and the sense of personal service to Him Who, the Bringer of Salvation, is also our Master and our Lord. In the most devoted service we shall indeed be conscious of much short-coming, and of elements that weaken and taint it. But with integrity of purpose there will be joy of heart, and the sweet words of a more recent singer—Frances Ridley Havergal—we can make our own:—

Jesus, Master, Whom I serve,
 Though so feebly and so ill,
 Strengthen hand and heart and nerve,
 All Thy bidding to fulfil;
 Open Thou mine eyes to see
 All the work Thou hast for me.

Lord, Thou needest not, I know,
 Service such as I afford,
 Yet I long to prove and show
 Full allegiance to my Lord;
 Thou an honour art to me;
 Let me be a praise to Thee.

Jesus, Master, wilt Thou use
 One who owes Thee more than all?
 As Thou wilt! I would not choose;
 Only let me hear Thy call.
 Jesus, let me always be,
 In Thy service, glad and free!

DEEP UNTO DEEP.

Ps. xlii. 7. Heb. xii. 11.

Yes, "God is love," 'tis this I have been proving
 Beneath the pressure of His tender hand,
 The while my trembling feet are slowly moving
 Nearer and nearer to the dear Homeland.

Backward I look, and see the shadows gleaming,
 See but the golden side to every cloud,
 Lit with the love of Jesus, tender beaming,
 Gone are the mists that did my feet enshroud.

Striving to pierce the shadows still before me,
 Nought can I see to cheer my weary heart;
Faith, only *faith*, beholds the coming glory,
 Bidding me rest, and anxious fears depart.

Oh He hath led me well, and I adore Him,
 Fain would I praise Him with my latest breath;
 Gladly my soul would cast herself before Him,
 Let Him be magnified in life or death.

—ANNA WOODCOCK.

GOSPEL WORK IN THIS DAY.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

IN order of importance—

1. **Sunday School.**
2. **Tract Distribution.**
3. **Open-air Preaching.**
4. **Indoor Preaching.**

The Gospel has its spring in the heart of God. Its theme is Christ ; as Rom. i. 1-3 tells us, it is God's good news concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Its object is to deliver men from the consequences of their offences, and from the whole condition in which men are found by nature as children of Adam, in order that they may be brought into present association with the triumphant Second Man, the Lord Jesus, and ultimately share His glory for ever.

What delivered soul is there who does not delight to have some part, however humble, in God's grand enterprise of grace ? Angels might well envy us the honour. To be permitted to assist in the spreading abroad of the name of Jesus is one of the greatest privileges granted to mortal man. Not only do we love to play our own little part in this wonderful service, but we rejoice to hear of the triumphs of divine grace, wherever they may be achieved. Barnabas shewed a fine Christian spirit when he visited Antioch in order to enquire into the reported good work in that city. The Spirit says : " When he came, and had seen the Grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord " (Acts xi. 23). The Lord grant us all more of this divine large-heartedness in this day of cold sectarianism and carping criticism.

My object in penning this paper is to draw the attention of my brethren in Christ to the altered conditions under which we carry on the work of the Gospel to-day as compared with twenty-five or thirty years ago. My remarks must be understood to apply especially to the British Isles. The foreign field (where changes also have taken place, in some instances of a most blessed character) is not in my mind at this moment.

Many of us remember the time when earnest effort would fill a hall almost anywhere with the right sort of people to whom to

preach the glad tidings ; while a tent was invariably more successful in reaching the people than public halls. But in most localities, this is no longer the case. Many an earnest preacher is distressed with the thought that his appeals are being addressed to congregations made up almost exclusively of believers. It is not only the case that this is true where simple (perhaps primitive) methods are employed, such as the writer would approve ; but workers who adopt measures such as the writer could not approve, give the same report as to non-success in reaching the openly careless mass.

Even an open-air meeting no longer takes as once it did. Those whose ears and hearts the labourers would fain reach stand afar off in absolute indifference, the majority of those who draw up being converted people who rejoice to hear the glad story of redeeming grace published at the street corner. Though this indifference is not so marked in the villages as in the towns, it is fast spreading there also.

I do not write to discourage, but rather to help, those who feel the altered condition of things. I would suggest to my brethren that as matters now stand the relative importance of the various branches of our work, stands thus :—

1. The Sunday School. Even in this department "the Churches" are wailing greatly, all recording decline in numbers. But it is still possible to get hold of a fair proportion of the rising generation, and what more interesting than to see hundreds of budding youths and maidens listening to the Gospel of Christ ? Oh, ye elder brethren, leaders in the assemblies of God's saints, be not so foolish as to regard the work of the Sunday School as a mere agreeable pastime for the younger members of your companies. Get your eyes open to the fact that those who thus labour are engaged in the most important of all the branches of Gospel service at present open to us. By wise counsel and loving help encourage the labourers to the utmost of your power.

2. Next to the Sunday School in order of importance, I would suggest the scattering abroad of printed matter. A generation ago, when we went forth distributing tracts, we were often tried with the reply, "I cannot read, sir." But this is no longer the case. The State has educated the people, and this is, in consequence, a reading age. Alas, for the rubbish with which men and women too often fill their minds ! But the fact that everyone can read opens

to the servants of Christ a sphere of great usefulness. The devil's agents are making use of the new situation. The land is being deluged with Millennial-Dawnist, Mormon, Socialist and other baneful literature. The writer has personally visited many thousands of homes with Gospel books, and thankfully records that the refusals are scarcely one per cent., in most localities. The man who preaches in a public building on a Sunday evening may possibly have less than thirty unconverted people in his audience, but the man who spends Saturday evening abroad with Gospel literature may conceivably reach several hundred minds with the story of Christ. Let us, then, do our utmost in this way.

3. I put open-air preaching next in order of usefulness, and I put it thus low down for the reason already stated. While it is far more useful, and more Scriptural, an agency than the indoor Gospel service, open-air preaching no longer gains the ear of the people as once it did. Perhaps the button-holing of individuals and groups of idlers at street corners and in market places would be more efficacious in some instances than a got-up meeting, with hymn-singing, reading, etc. But in any case, let us turn out. The people are outside, not inside. As a preacher once said: "It is no use fishing in a fish-shop."

4. On the indoor Gospel service I need say but little. It has its value, and it yields its fruits for eternity; but no one can fairly call it the most useful branch of Gospel effort. It has its advantages in that the preacher is able to open up the great truths and principles of the Gospel, and in this way believers are established, and unbelievers are at times laid hold of for Christ.

If we judged by the sight of our eyes at the present time, we might be disposed to think that Satan is having things all his own way. But this can never be. God has His purposes of love, and will yet carry them out to the full for the glory of His Son, whatever the appearances. We are on the side of victory, and God will make this abundantly manifest in a day that is not far off.

"We dwell in the land of unwall'd villages ever liable to invasion. We can only count on Him Who is a wall of fire round about us, and glory in our midst. O that we might realise it so, despite of circumstances."

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY:

AS A SERVANT.

By R. E.

Various Characteristics.

HAVING considered the greatness of the Apostle's mission, and the manner, method, and matter of his ministry, let us come to a few details. His autobiographical references furnish us with many interesting and instructive references to his service.

1. He valued prayer. Constantly does he mention his prayers for his converts and for all saints ; and he asked for theirs in return. In the epistle to the Ephesians (chaps. i. and iii.) we seem to have two specimens of his prayers. It is not a little remarkable that these occur in the epistle which unfolds the highest truth. Whatever else this fact may teach us, we may surely learn from it that only truth held in communion with God is of much service to us. The higher this teacher of the Gentiles carried his hearers, the more he prayed for them. This fact surely conveys to us the lesson likewise that the more we know the more we need to pray.

The language in which he introduces the prayer of chapter i. is as follows : "*Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, **cease not** to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers,*" and then he refers to the subject of them : that they might know the hope of God's calling, and the exceeding greatness of His power toward those who believe. It all has special reference to the glory given to Christ in fulfilment of God's counsels before the foundation of the world, and our part with Him.

The second prayer which we have mentioned has reference to the same purpose. But it is not a repetition. The one refers to the power of God *toward* us, the same as that which He wrought in Christ ; the other to the power *in* us, that the Christ, Who is the centre of all, may dwell in our hearts by faith. For this we need to be strengthened with might by the Father's Spirit in the inner man.

How these two prayers teach us that only by prayer can such truths be grasped and understood. Not only is it necessary to

read our Bibles, but to pray over them, that the truth therein contained may become inwrought. Not only do we need to listen to men of God unfolding these subjects in ministry, but to pray after we have heard, that we may not hear in vain. This is why so many sermons and addresses are listened to with little result ; we are not sufficiently in earnest to fall on our knees when we get home and ask that what we have heard may pass beyond our ears, and reach our hearts and lives.

Then, having prayed these two prayers, the Apostle, before closing this epistle, asks those to whom he writes to pray for him. After exhorting them to prayer and to pray for all saints, he adds, "*And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel.*" To the Philippians he writes, "Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy." To the Colossians, "Praying always for you." And at the close, "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. Withal praying also for us." And so in almost every epistle he wrote. In this way he recognised the need of constant dependence upon God. To have been called to high service ; to have received a special commission and a special revelation ; to be gifted beyond all other men—these things were not in themselves enough : nor could he rest in past labours and achievements ; he needed the present grace of God, and this came to him only through his own supplications, and the prayers of others on his behalf. He was but a vessel, empty and weak in himself ; God was the author of all the blessing, and the bestower of the necessary power. Again and again this thought finds expression in his writings. "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling," he writes to the Corinthians. And again, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." "I will not dare to speak," he says in writing to the saints in Rome, "of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me." "He that wrought effectually in Peter," he says to the Galatians, ". . . the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles." And to the Colossians : "Where unto I also labour, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily." Is it any wonder the Apostle, remembering all this, and that, though he might plant and Apollos water, it was God alone Who gave the increase, ever sought to link up the prayers of believers with his work and every service he undertook, as when

he writes, " Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me. That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judæa, and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints ; that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed ? " (Rom. xv. 30-32).

May we not pause and ask ourselves two questions, we who seek to serve Christ to-day ? (1) Whether we have such a sense as the Apostle had of the need of prayer ; and (2) have we as deep a conviction that God must work in us and through us if any good is to be achieved ? These two things are intimately related. The deeper the impression, that God alone can make us able ministers—not study, nor eloquence, nor literary attainments, nor power of thought, though these things may have their place ; that the utterance must come from His Spirit if there are to be lasting results, that He must teach us, and not man, if we are rightly to know anything of His truth—the more we shall be on our knees waiting upon Him, until we go forth equipped by Him Who alone can make our ministry of any avail.

Prayer, then, is our great resource. And would it not be well for us, if such statements as we have quoted, from the pen of our great Apostle, were often on our minds. " He that wrought effectually in Peter the same was mighty in me." " His working which worketh in me mightily." He " revealed His Son in me that I might preach Him." If we were more conscious of the underlying truth of these words, how much more conscious we should be of our own emptiness and incapacity, and, as a consequence of this, and of the prayer it would induce, how much more our preaching would be " in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

2. St. Paul concentrated his preaching upon one theme. He preached Christ. This had many phases, of course, for Christ is the truth—the sum and substance of it all. But it was always Christ. " *The gospel of God,*" to him, was " *concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*" He went everywhere " in the fulness of the blessing of the Christ." " We preach **Christ Crucified.**" " For we preach not ourselves, but **Christ Jesus the Lord.**" " That I might preach **Him.**" " **Whom** we preach." These phrases, culled almost at random from his epistles, reveal the concentration we

speak of. This is the reason his preaching produced such a great effect, and led to such permanent results. And from the Acts we learn that the other Apostles preached in the same way: "*They ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.*" Such preaching will always possess a fulness, a many-sidedness and a power that cannot fail to be effective. The preaching of what is true, is not enough. The truth may be so divorced from the One Who is the truth that it becomes a mere skeleton, without warmth or vitality. Such preaching may satisfy the mind, but it does not truly touch the heart and transform the life. But when a soul receives Christ it receives all truth and becomes possessed of every blessing. Acquaintance with a Person, great and glorious, full of love, and completely able to save, is the secret of a changed life; and the soul that knows Him finds a fullness of satisfaction that leaves nothing to be desired. All that Christ has done becomes ours the moment we believe **in Him**; and it cannot be too strongly or frequently urged upon people, that, they come to the work through the Person, and not to the Person through the work. No sinner has any right to anything the Saviour has done until he believes on that Saviour. This distinction means all the difference in the world. The one kind of preaching conveys the idea of something having been done to afford relief, and people are led to accept the benefit without thinking much of the Benefactor; the other introduces us to the Person Himself, Who tells us that all He did is for our acceptance, that He did it all in love—a love He wishes us to know, and this is the beginning of a life-long friendship, and ever-growing intimacy.

3. Some of St. Paul's reasons for preaching the Gospel.

"Necessity is laid upon me," he says. He was not a tourist, visiting places of interest and preaching the gospel by the way. He was something more than a philanthropist, seeking to do good to his fellow men; or a philosopher, whose aim was to instruct. There was a power, quite apart from himself, that urged him forward—an irresistible impulse, born in him from above, whose source was outside himself, but which guided and governed him, and carried him along. He would have made these words his own, written long after by another devoted servant:—

"Lord, let me live for Thee alone,
My life be only this—
To serve Thee here on earth unknown,
Then share Thy heavenly bliss."

A second reason was expressed in the words, "*Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord we persuade men.*" He was not unconscious of the doom of sin. He was aware of a Judgment Day. "It is appointed unto men once to die, and *after this the Judgment.*" The fear of God had taken possession of him, and he sought to awaken the consciences of sinners and turn them from their evil ways. It is sometimes asserted that St. Paul never mentions hell. But he uses words equally terrible. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Rom. i. 18). "Punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. i. 9). "The day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." "Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil" (Rom. ii. 5 and 8-9). Such are some of his expressions in which he conveys to us some idea of the terrible doom of sin. He knew nothing of a God too lenient to punish; nor did he entertain those lax views of sin that lead people to treat it as an infirmity. In the presence of God he had learned its awful nature: its effect upon character, and the eternal retribution it involved. Only from God could this have been learned, for the age in which he lived was one of the worst; and if from God, then how solemn; it is a divine determination from which there can be no escape. Is it any wonder he writes to Timothy; and they are almost the last inspired words we have from his pen:—

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His Kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." (2 Tim. iv. 1-3.)

But the same one could also say, and this furnishes us with another reason why he preached—"*The love of Christ constraineth us.*" The Apostle not only knew God's hatred of sin, but His love to the sinner. Christ had come into a scene of death, where all were dead, and had expressed the love of God. "He died for all," became, henceforth, the evangel of this servant of His. To men, in whom no pulsation Godward existed, a love was told by death, the strongest proof of love. "The love of Christ"; "He died for all"; what a message! It was this that a dying world heard. Heard from the lips of a man who had himself tasted that love.

And, lastly, the Apostle never forgot Who it was that had sent him and what he had received. The Lord Who had met him in the way and called him, also said of him, "He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My Name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the Children of Israel." And this was his commission, given us in his own words, and which he never forgot: "*I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee. Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto Whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me*" (Acts xxvi. 16-18).

Extract from Lectures Introductory to the Historical Books
(pp. 410, 411).

By the late W. KELLY.

"Is it not important to see, that the sense of our failure as well as what we are is never meant to interfere with the brightness of our confidence in the Lord? Conscience must be exercised unhinderedly; and so must faith also. Grace provides for both in the believer's heart. It is excellent thus to look onward, the eye filled with the glory of the Lord Jesus, and the heart resting on His grace.

"But there should also be the unsparing judgment of ourselves in the light, and consequently due and suited confession. Where this is there will be the lowliness that becomes men who have no standing place but in grace. God forbid that this should be wanting in any Christian. It is hard to preserve the balance of truth; but at least it is well to desire it. Let us beware of having the appearance of oneness. To be cast down with the constant sense of shame because of what we are, to hang our heads as bulrushes, is a poor testimony to the love of Christ, and to the victory God gives us through Him, but it is a worse state where the recognition of His grace is misused to enfeeble conscience, and destroy sensibility as to sin, above all as to our own sins."

The conclusion of "The Consecration of the Priests" is unavoidably held over until our next issue.

The Faith and The Flock.

Vol. V.—No. 7.

JULY, 1913.

PRICE—ONE PENNY.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The Value of a Tract.

LAST month we published an article suggesting the relative values of different departments of Christian Service at the present day.

The writer of the article placed Sunday School work at the head of the list, and second to this, Tract distribution. The value of a tract, and its far reaching influence, has often been exemplified, but perhaps never more strikingly than in the following instance. As John Hambleton was travelling one day between Manchester and Rochdale he gave a tract to a cotton-broker. The gentleman was unconverted, but he gave this servant of Christ an invitation to his home, which proved the means of his salvation. He was eventually the means of inducing Richard Weaver to devote himself entirely to preaching. Through the preaching of Richard Weaver, Harry Moorhouse was converted, and through Moorhouse's influence the ministry of D. L. Moody was completely changed and his usefulness increased a hundredfold. Is there not a connection between the hundreds brought to Christ through the preaching of these three evangelists and the tract given away in the railway carriage?

It has also been mentioned lately that six or seven hundred French soldiers were won for Christ through the giving of a single copy of the Gospel of John to a particular soldier.

And this kind of service, so potent for good, so unlimited in its possibilities, is within the reach of nearly everyone. Yet how few engage in it! Will not some who read of these incidents take courage, and spend a little money and time in this work? There are thousands of needy souls all around us, and lying on the publishers' shelves are thousands of well written tracts adapted to the need, but useless where they are; who will take the trouble to bring the two together? No one can tell where the influence of a good book, however small it may be, will end.

The time was when Jordan was looked upon as figuring only literal decease, and many of us remember how we, with our fathers, enjoyed such hymns as—

Could we but stand where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er ;
Not Jordan's stream, nor Death's cold flood,
Could fright us from the shore.

But questions arose as to whether this could be the full intent of the Scripture, for we noted that, far from introducing Israel to such a peaceful scene as we always assumed Heaven to be, it introduced them to constant conflict. But this was further seen to be in exact harmony with the burden of the Epistle to the Ephesians, in which, after being quickened out of death with Christ, we wrestle with wicked spirits in the heavenlies.

But true as this is, the other interpretation must not be dismissed as all false. It is equally true in one point of view, and perhaps we have lost somewhat by neglecting that point.

Let us then take Jordan as representing the end of our earthly pilgrimage ; it is surely well-fitted to do so, for it flows out of the Sea of Galilee—that lovely sheet of water surrounded by prosperous cities and villages, teeming with life, in its fish below the surface, and flocks of birds above. Surely it was not an inapt figure of natural life. From this there was but one exit, Jordan or Death, and this river ceased not to flow till it entered that other mysterious sea now called “ The Dead.” Salt and bitter the waters here, with no exit—no escape ; lying ever under the burning rays of the eastern sun. Closely connected, too, with those cities of the plain that are “ suffering the vengeance of *eternal fire*,” is it not an equally apt picture of The Lake of Fire, the Second Death ?

Now note that in connection with this passage of Jordan there are just two places mentioned in the narrative in Joshua, and it is the contrasts that these present that we will consider for our edification. The first is the place where was The Ark, and the other “ The City Adam that is beside Zaretan,” or Zartan—the words are the same.

Look at the first. There in the middle of the river bed is The Ark. Who can that figure but the Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom every beauty in the works, every beauty in the Word, of God speaks? Like Life in its very essence and power, the waters of Death flee from before it. “ *Jordan was driven back* ”—“ *What ailed thee thou*

Jordan that thou wast driven back?”—’tis the “*Presence of the God of Jacob!*” (Ps. cxiv.) Note it well, “*God of Jacob*”—of poor, crooked, scheming, failing *Jacob*.

But look closely at the scene ; there is *no water at all anywhere*. Not a little child gets its feet wet in crossing. The people cannot *taste* of it even if they would ; nor do they even “*see*” it. I have seen many pictures of this Passage of Jordan, but I have never yet seen one that was correct according to the plain word of Scripture. All show the waters cut off on the south side, and that is right enough, but all show a wall of waters on the north. But this is clearly unjustified, for it is written that the waters “*rose up upon a heap very far off by (not from) the city Adam, or “at Adam” as in the R.V.* What would be the force, or point, of telling us that they stood at a long distance away from a city that had not been named? But that these waters of Death stood a long distance away from those elect pilgrims who were sheltered by the Ark, even as far off as “*by the city Adam*”—that is intelligible and pregnant with divine and blessed significance.

For the names of these cities are not told us without purpose, and not one of them can be simpler of interpretation, or clearer as to its application than *Adam*. It is the very name of the *first man*—the fallen man, who is by nature always “*very far off*” from the path of faith ; he knows not the secret of a safe passage of Jordan, for is it not written : “*The way of Peace have they not known?*”

But Adam was “*beside Zaretan.*” Can we have any question as to what kind of a message this would bring to Hebrew ears where its two well defined syllables were words of common use : *Zar* being constantly translated “*enemy,*” and *Tan* “*Serpent,*” as in Exodus vii. 19* or “*Dragon*” as in Isaiah xxvii. 1.*

Here then we have a city with a most ominous and threatening name standing over against Adam. The “*Serpent Foe*” or “*our enemy the old serpent,*” or “*the Dragon*” ever opposing man’s blessing, surely we may say. Yet it is the *city Adam*. Adam has settled down in unconscious quiet “*beside his enemy, the Serpent!*” Does not that tell out the true story of Adam, man by his first birth? Has not man really built his city, and become a

*The exact word here is *tannin*, but the meaning is quite the same.

dweller upon earth, where Satan's throne is (Rev. ii.) ; and what is that but " beside *Zar-Tan* ? "

But this city *Zartan* enables us to get some idea of the distance of Adam from the Ark on that day, for we afterwards find it clearly spoken of as on the border of Ephraim and Manasseh (1 Kings iv. 12 ; 1 Chron. vii. 29, 30), so that it has been believed to be 20 or 30 miles away—at all events, quite far enough to be out of sight. And do we not thus get a very beautiful prophetic picture of our Lord's most blessed words : " Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall never SEE death ? " The waters of death do not even threaten the Ark. Oh, happy people who cross under its shelter !

But let us suppose some stragglers from Israel had " gone out of the way," or " turned to their own way," and found themselves that day at Adam, what would have presented itself to them ? A mighty heap of waters, surging and chafing in a rocky defile. The waves, turned back by some invisible barrier, tossing their angry heads on high, their noise stunning the ear and confusing the senses—deep, deep, and utterly impassable. Added to all is a strong foe that opposes their crossing, for straight across on the other side is *Zarthan*. In what bondage through fear of Jordan they would be !

Aye, and so if anyone attempts to cross Death, the penalty for sin, " by Adam "—that is, by his own strength, or good works, or religion, or anything of the first man, Adam ; there and then will he too find those judgment-waters of Death piled high upon a heap, with no bottom or resting place for his feet, and, near by, him who has the power of Death ready and able to oppose his entry into blessedness *that way*. Cain was the first who tried it, and gave it his own name, " the way of Cain," but he has not been the last ; no, indeed, not the last.

The Ark stays long, ever keeping back those waters, but not forever. The last Israelite has safely passed ; see, it is a little child, toddling to keep up with its parent. Surely the Ark will not wait for such. Yes, not till the last and youngest believer is saved forever does the Ark come up—then, what a scene ! Hark to the roar of the coming flood ; and had any attempted to cross " by Adam " their forms might be seen as they were borne along—the dead small and great. And where are they going ?

To *their own place*, the Salt Sea, the Sea of a Judgment figured both by "salt," and "fire." Oh solemn end—the "terror of the Lord" indeed (2 Cor. v.)—of all who have not Christ, the Son of God, for their life! Where could the dead go but to *Death*. So, too, it is written, "I saw the dead small and great stand before God—and the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man according to their works. And Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the Second Death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

But let us close with happier thoughts: leave Adam with his settled city, and look once more upon the other scene, the Ark and the pilgrims.

First, consider a precious little word that shall not diminish our thankfulness: "the priests that bore the Ark stood *firm*." That is put there to speak to our hearts of the present security of those sheltered by the Ark. Nothing could move the Ark. It was *firm*. All the power of Jordan could not move, nor affect it. The power of life in the Ark overcame the power of death in the Jordan. So our blessed Lord: never more shall death affect Him: He "stands firm," having "the keys of Hades and of Death."

Now again note carefully, and with added thankfulness, that the waters of Jordan would have to sweep away the Ark before they could touch one Israelite. He might be lame; painfully going on his crutches, like some of us spiritually—never mind, he is uncomfortable it is true, but he is just as safe behind the Ark as if he were the stalwart Caleb himself. He might be so short-sighted as hardly to be able to *see* the Ark, as some of us spiritually,—never mind, the Ark is there all the same and *that* is his security. He might be very feeble, and go across with trembling,—never mind, that would rob him of much of his comfort and the Ark of much of its honour; still it is not his courage, but the Ark that keeps back the floods of Jordan. So beloved, may not we—lame, short-sighted, feeble and wretchedly timid as we often are—still joyfully sing, "Christ must be Himself swept away before the feeblest one that is dependent on Him can be lost," or,

Jordan shall surely be safely crossed,
Since *Christ* stands "*firm*," I cannot be lost.

My dear reader, whose eye is now reading these words, cross Jordan we must ;—from that there is no possible escape—in some way, at some time, by some place. The *time* is not in our hands, but it is for us to choose the *place*. If you have only the life that comes from Adam ; or, to use the figure we have been considering, live in the city Adam, then you will enter Jordan there, with one only possible result. Oh, let us substitute Christ, or the Ark, for Adam, or self ; come to Him for the new life He freely gives, and Death and Judgment shall never, *never*, NEVER touch that.

Where will you cross Jordan ; by Adam or the Ark ?

YESTERDAY.

“ Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day and for ever ” (Heb. xiii. 8).

“ One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day ” (2 Peter iii. 8).

'Tis but as yesterday
That Jesus died,
And on the Cross for me
Was crucified.
'Tis but as yesterday
He in the grave was lain
But the dark sepulchre
Could not Him detain.
'Tis but as yesterday
He rose again,
And to the faithful few
Appeared—did not remain :
'Tis but as yesterday
That he ascended high
And is at God's right hand
No more to die.
'Tis but as yesterday
A work was done,
The efficacy of which
Outlasts the sun.
'Tis but as yesterday :—
But oh ! to-day
Whoever will may come,
And come, may stay.—F. J. J

“ In the Lord's Table we see not only the remembrance of His death, but the results of it—Life, Unity and Glory—' till He come.' It is a communion essentially, and testimony only *as a consequence.*”

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY : AS A SERVANT.

By R. E.

Various Characteristics (Continued).

4. His solicitude for the welfare of his converts. In every way the Apostle sought the highest good of those who received his message. It was their benefit that was ever before him, and not his own importance. Here is an autobiographical reference which admits us into the inner sanctuary of the Apostle's heart :—

“ But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak ; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness ; God is witness ; nor of men sought we glory, neither of you nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the Apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children ; so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us ” (1 Thess. ii. 4-8).

From this statement—one of surpassing moral beauty and sublimity—we see that this servant of the Lord was pure from all self-interest. Could there be higher motives? Could there be nobler ends? Could there be greater disinterestedness in attaining them? He realised that he had been put in trust with something which was for the benefit of others, and in the carrying out of this commission self became obliterated. He might have been tempted to magnify the fact of his Apostleship, but he did not thus give prominence to his office. He had every opportunity, and every excuse, for doing it, had he so desired. With a noble generosity and self forgetfulness he rather pursued a course that tended, in some respects, to lower him in the eyes of those to whom he ministered ; for he goes on to say :—“ For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable to any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.” He lived before God alone, asking only what would please him, and never shaping his course to win applause from men. “ Not as pleasing men,” he says, “ but God *which trieth our hearts.*”

Nor was there any cloke of covetousness. He called God to witness that he never sought to enrich himself. In this matter there are many to day might learn a lesson from him. What a

pitiable sight it is to see men becoming rich out of service others do for God. They grow fat through the labours of others, and through what is intended for the spiritual benefit of God's people. The gifts God has given to His Church are made use of by some as means for amassing wealth. And servants of God and their writings are regarded simply from a commercial point of view. There can be no objection to people making a living, but beyond this savours of the House of God being made a house of merchandise.

How different the spirit of the Apostle. He did not seek glory. "We were not burdensome," he says, "we were gentle among you, as a nurse we cherished you, and as a father we charged you." How much these words express:—

"Being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us."

How far removed is all this from mere perfunctory service—from mere professionalism; those whom St. Paul won for Christ became the objects of his tenderest solicitude. How this helps us to understand this further autobiographical reference:—

"But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire."

The solicitude of the Apostle appears also in another personal reference he makes in this same epistle to the Thessalonians:—

"Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone; and sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God and our fellowlabourer in the Gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith; that no man should be moved by these afflictions; for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith."

He had been driven from Thessalonica and then from Berea through the persecution of the Jews. No wonder he says, "the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost," for they were the chief opposers of the gospel. Nor can we be surprised that, in consequence, the power and activity of Satan appeared an ever present reality. Satan had sought to hinder the work by crushing the

servant. Under all the pressure, the feeling became uppermost that he would like to be left alone. But he was chiefly concerned lest all this tribulation, through which he was called to pass, should tend to discourage these Thessalonian converts, only some few weeks old ; and be used by the tempter to destroy his work. Few like to embrace an unpopular cause, and everywhere the Apostle and his work were being spoken against and opposed. Thus a double sorrow became the portion of his soul. Not only had he to endure afflictions, but he knew not what effect they, coupled with his absence, might have upon those who were dearer than his own life. And so he sent Timothy to establish and comfort them, preferring to remain alone at Athens, if only his beloved converts might receive a further blessing.

So completely were the Apostle's exercises linked up with the prosperity of his labours for the Lord ; so entirely was his soul given up to the work ; so absolutely did the gospel, entrusted to him, absorb his energies ; and such control had the Spirit of God over him, that these autobiographical references, instead of being mere passing effusions of the hour, were deemed worthy to be enshrined for ever in the divine record. His labours ; his sufferings ; his anxieties ; his feelings, have thus become for ever associated with the gospel itself, and afford a fitting sequel to what the Lord Himself said when He associated the service of another with the same Gospel : "*Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.*" This is true, to an even greater degree, of Paul.

5. The Apostle's testimony by word of mouth was always backed up by his life. There was no discord between his preaching and his practical conduct. Each was enforced by the other. Hear what he says to the Corinthians, amongst whom he laboured for eighteen months :—

"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to youward."

Hear him again :—

"But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully ; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

So completely were his thoughts and actions controlled by what he preached that he can say : “ *If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.*” As we have said before, he not only preached Christ, but for him to live was Christ, and so completely did Christ efface Paul that he could say : “ *For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.*” He was thus able (to use his own words) “ to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

It is all summed up in an autobiographical record, contained in the sixth chapter of his second epistle to the Corinthians, and which, surely, is unique. Throughout all time, who that ever attempted to sum up his own characteristics, could give such an epitome as this ? :—

“ Giving no offence in anything that the ministry be not blamed ; but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in strifes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings ; by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand, and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report ; as deceivers, and yet true ; as unknown, and yet well known ; as dying, and, behold we live ; as chastened, and not killed ; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing ; as poor, yet making many rich ; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.”

How often during the centuries the ministry has been blamed, and the ministers of God have not commended themselves. It is ever Satan’s aim to bring the gospel into disrepute, and his most successful way of doing so is through the inconsistencies and foibles of its advocates. At least one man could leave a record that he never gave the enemy the least point of attack.

And what a range is covered by the foregoing enumeration. His credentials include the first and last qualification of an Apostle and a minister of God—patience ; then every kind of suffering and distress ; self-denial ; purity ; the Holy Ghost ; and not least, love ; and all this accompanied by every kind of experience, not omitting evil report. May we not exclaim, what has not the gospel enabled a man to endure ? What has it not done for him and *through* him ? He might well write to these Corinthians, “ Ye are not straitened in us ” ; and again “ Receive us ; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man.”

6. The Apostle emphatically believed that the truth he proclaimed would never be superseded. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." The reason why there can be no new truth is because there can be no new Christ. If men really knew Christ, and preached Him, they would never dream that they wanted anything new. St. Paul often spoke of the time when sound doctrine would no longer be endured, but he took the opportunity of telling his hearers to insist upon what they already had received. Men would arise speaking perverse things. What was the remedy? "Therefore watch, and remember." Remember! Not be on the look out for some fresh revelation. And he adds, "I commend you to God *and the word of His grace.*" As well suggest that we want a new God, as new truth. God and the word of His grace stand together; and the one is as unchangeable as the other. As there is only one God, so there is only one gospel to-day, because it proceeds from God.

That the above was the Apostle's view is evident from his words to Timothy: "*And the things that thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*"

Again:—

"Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them."

He then refers to the Scriptures as the repository of truth, and indicates that the man of God has no other source to which he can turn. They can make him "perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." In view of this, he charges Timothy to "Preach the word," and warns him that the time would come when there would arise teachers who should turn away the ears of people from the truth (2 Tim. iii. 14-17; iv. 1-4). What need to-day to remember his injunction, "Hold fast the form of sound words."

Hezekiah did not invite "all Israel" to come to the house of the Lord until he had "brought out" "all the uncleanness" out of the temple of the Lord, and had "made atonement for all Israel," and had "the service of the House of the Lord set in order" (2 Chron. xxix. 16-24 and xxx. 1.).

He is a very good example for believers.

GOD'S GREAT PLAN.

Romans viii., 28-39.

By WALTER SCOTT.

God's Great Plan (ver. 28).

LIGHT and darkness, cloud and sunshine, tears and laughter are strangely intermixed in each individual life-history. Life seems a riddle, and full of contradictions. It is like a tangled web: who can unravel its twisted threads? Life is like a winding path without end or outlet.

We stood in the midst of one of Scotland's finest gardens, but were unable to trace the plan in which the beautiful garden and its walks were laid out, which had called forth the admiration of the late gracious Sovereign of these realms. We got up on one of the terraces of the castle and looked *down* upon the scene of rare beauty. We then fixed our eyes on the centre, and from thence traced out the plan on which the garden was arranged. It was clear to us as we looked upon it from the heights. The admirable skill with which the whole was planned, filled us with delight.

We sat down and pondered over Romans viii. 28: "All things work together for good." All death and sickness; all poverty and disappointment; all trial and difficulty "work together." They each and all contribute to God's great and good end. Each separate trial works for that purpose; it has its place in God's great plan. The why? and wherefore? press in upon the agonized soul. Why this isolation? Why this long-continued trial? Why is the servant, so useful, removed in the midst of abundant labour? Why the delicate wife and mother left alone to meet life's struggle? Why the desolate orphan left to battle unaided? Why all this and a thousand and one untoward events—all seemingly against us? How can life's complications be explained with the Divine statement that "God is love"? The problems of life are only solved, its contrarieties reconciled, and the why and wherefore fully answered as we get into the holy calm of heaven. Enter the sanctuary of God (Ps. lxxiii. 17). Now you are far beyond mist and earth-born cloud, and can look down from God's standpoint upon the earth—the theatre and scene where each is playing his and her part (Ps. cii. 19). There

only can you learn how every, even the most trivial, circumstance of life fits into God's great and magnificent plan of eternal good. Look from heaven's terrace, fix your eye on the centre—the heart of God—see how everything—every trial, every difficulty—radiates from that centre. Do not allow the sorrows of life to break up the heart's sure confidence in God. Confide in Him. Put your fevered hand in His. He knows the way He taketh. It is all light to Him. The day of explanation is near. The why and wherefore are about to be answered. But let no careless soul shelter himself under this precious word of comfort and strength. Those, and those only, who "love God" can truly avail themselves of it—and are called "according to purpose."

From Counsel to Glory (vers. 29-30).

Here we have a Divine chain of five golden links stretching from eternity to eternity. The first link is *foreknowledge*. Every heir of glory was foreknown in his person, life and character. The second link is *predestination*, and refers in its fulness to the ultimate purpose of God, which is to conform us to the image of His Son in glory. The third link, *calling*, the first step in time to the accomplishment of God's grand and mighty purpose. The fourth link, *justification*. Who but God can justify? Man can pardon and condone guilt, but God, in righteousness and grace, in perfect consistency with His character, has cleared us from guilt and every charge. There remains, therefore, but the last link in the Divine chain which spans the gulf of time, and that is *glory*. As all this is God's purpose, though not as yet accomplished, it is said, "them He also glorified." The end is sure. The purpose cannot fail, for it rests in God. Our state, which connects itself with sanctification, is here entirely omitted. It is God for us from eternity to eternity. No power on earth or hell can frustrate the Divine will. Opposing powers and forces may hurl themselves against this rock—eternal—God's purpose—but it will be to their own destruction. Divine sovereignty is a magnificent resting place for weak faith. The tried and troubled had better anchor their soul to this rock. If your thoughts are narrow and contracted, your feelings and experiences unworthy of such a God Who has loved you and saved you, do not be cast down. Let God's magnificent range of blessing fill your soul's vision. Such a sight will take you out of your littleness, until you are lost in God's grandeurs. "Hallelujah! Praise ye the Lord."

Our Riches (ver. 32).

Our boundless wealth can suffer no diminution. It is stored up in the heavens (Eph. i. 3). Ours are enduring riches. They never take to themselves wings, nor can the bank ever fail. A rough inventory of our riches is stated by the Apostle in 1 Cor. iii. 21-23. The spiritual (Eph. i. 3) and temporal (1 Cor. iii. 22) constitute the sum of our wealth. We have also an inheritance which, for grandeur and extent, is positively unequalled (Eph. i. 10-11); to which is added corresponding title and dignity (Rom. viii. 17; Rev. i. 6; 1 Cor. vi. 2-3). We are not wealthy commoners, nor are we peers of the kingdom. We are of the blood-royal of heaven (Rev. iv.). Some of earth's aristocracy proudly boast of a distinguished lineage, but we are of God (1 Cor. i. 30), the companions of Christ glorified (Heb. i. 9), waited upon by God's angels (Heb. i. 14) and soon to be displayed in God-given coronation robes as the bride of the Lamb (Rev. xix. 7, 8; xxi. 11). How and when was all this wealth of position and riches bestowed? "How shall He not *with Him* freely give us all things?" When God in the greatness of His love spared not His Son, there could be no limit to the accompanying gift. Our fortune came with Him, and all was *freely* given. O, what a God He is! The love which spared not His own Son and gave with Him all that love could give is the best part of it all. Were every demonstration of God's love in daily life taken from us, the poor desolate heart should, like the ivy, cling to the love itself. Can you joy in God if the trees are fruitless and the stalls are empty? "Yea," saith the prophet; "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Hab. iii. 17-18).

Faith's Challenges (vers. 33-39).

These are bold challenges. In this chapter faith with outspread wings has taken its lofty flight to God Himself, and then her wings are folded, and there she rests. God in His work and love has become the soul's bold boast. In God we triumph. The first challenge is, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" God will neither listen to charge nor see sin on His people. We are *God's* elect, and hence he who prefers a charge to Him against any of His elect and justified people enters upon a controversy with God. No doubt, many and true charges could be brought against every one of God's elect. But He has justified each "from all

things." God alone has the right to condemn, but He has justified. Who, then, dare arraign the sovereign right of God to justify whom He will? It is a serious and grave matter to meddle with even the least of God's elect. Better far to leave Him to settle matters with His people. The second challenge is, "Who is he that condemneth?" Can man, angel or demon condemn him whom God has justified? "Who is he that condemneth?"—God? *Impossible*, for He has justified. "Who is he that condemneth?"—Christ? *Impossible*, for He has died for us, risen for us, and intercedes on our behalf at God's right hand. If, therefore, God will not condemn, for He has justified us, and if Christ will not, for He has died for us, who else can, will or dare? We can well throw out the bold and triumphant challenge to heaven, earth and hell, "Who is he that condemneth?" The third challenge is, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Earth's circumstances and trials are marshalled in their character, their strength and number. Life's sorrows and difficulties *may* weaken our love to Christ, *may* relax our grip of that love; but Christ's love to us is a rock against which storm and tempest may dash and roar, yet the love abides unshaken, immovable, firm and sure. The things enumerated: tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, death and slaughter cannot, no cannot, separate us from Christ's unchanging love; for "having loved His own which were in the world, *He loved them to the end*" (John xiii. 1); but His love will separate us from every trial, and His holiness from every speck, and out of them all we shall triumphantly emerge "more than conquerors." The moment of love's triumph is nigh at hand.

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." A grand conclusion to a grand chapter. Creature difficulty cannot separate from *Christ's* love—Divine love in its unchangeable tenderness. Creature power cannot separate from *God's* love—Divine love in its everlasting strength. To His Name be glory for ever!

God did not "deliver" David into Saul's hand (1 Sam. xxiii. 14); but He "delivered" Saul into David's hand (1 Sam. xxiv. 10).

A FOURFOLD BLESSING.

(1) **Saved.** (2) **Blessed.** (3) **Fed.** (4) **Lifted up.**

PSALM xxviii. 9.

By WM. BOUSFIELD, Sutton Coldfield.

THE testimony we bear in the Glad Tidings should be the result of real soul experience and communion with God, as well as an exposition or declaration, however clear and earnest, of the truths of the Gospel.

The want of this is the secret of the lack of power in our Gospel Meetings. So much depends on our attitude and spirit in bringing the Glad Tidings to those whom we seek to reach.

Do we come—

With Points, or with Power ?

With an Essay, or a Message ?

With cold Formality, or Burning Zeal ?

With a "Take it or leave it," or with the Constraint of Love ?

With the word of Threatening, or the earnest loving Appeal ?

These are solemn questions, and must be answered in the light of God's presence, if we are to have the results in the Gospel we are so longing for.

Thank God, the Gospel is still the power of God (dynamic in its force) unto salvation.

He has committed to His people the proclamation of His Glad Tidings, and the grave responsibility is upon us, not only to say "Here am I, send me," but that we may be suited vessels for the Master's use.

In this 28th Psalm we find David passing through the deep waters of affliction and distress of soul, and crying to the Lord, "My rock," for help and deliverance from all his enemies.

In the sixth verse, he has the consciousness that God has heard him. In the seventh verse, his heart goes out to God in happy, holy confidence, resulting in his heart "greatly rejoicing," and in a burst of song to his deliverer.

All this is the needed preliminary, and leads up to the consummation of the 8th and 9th verses.

Now "my" changes to "their," having passed through all this deep exercise of soul himself and having proved the delivering hand of God on his *own* behalf, he can take into the compass of his affections and thoughts the wide circle of "His anointed," "Thy people," "Thine inheritance," and so, in the ninth verse, he expresses the desire for a very fulness of blessing for *others*. It is fourfold.

Blessing No. 1.

"Save Thy people." Note the emphasis on "Thy people." Save them! Indeed He will, right through to the end, and in absolute triumph. *His*, at such a cost, and not save them! Impossible! *His* by purchase; *His* by divine right; *His* by the gift of the Father; *His* for ever.

Yes, thank God, he

(1) *Saves* us from the *penalty* of sin—Past.

(2) He *saves* us from the *power* and the *love* of sin—Present.

(3) He will save us from the *presence* of sin—Future.

Oh, that all the redeemed of the Lord might know the completeness of the Salvation of God.

Blessing No. 2.

"Bless thine inheritance." The beloved Apostle Paul prays that the Ephesian saints might know "*the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the Saints*" (Eph. i. 18).

I wonder how much of this we have grasped. We can easily understand what *we* get, but oh, 'tis like a second conversion when we realize what *God* gets for Himself in the results of the grand work of the redemption of man. If "His people" are His portion, they are a joy and satisfaction to His own heart of love; so much so, that He can say in Zephaniah ii., "He will joy over thee with singing, He will be silent (marg:) in His love." Surely "*His inheritance*" is for the display of His wisdom, power and glory, in the day of manifestation.

In a restored Israel all this will be seen, but in a still more wonderful way in the Church, for *in*, or *by*, "the Church shall be made known the manifold wisdom of God." Yes, "blessed indeed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places."

When God gave instructions for the blessing of Israel, He gave a formula. He did not leave it for the high priest to bless the people in general terms; no, he might have come immeasurably

short in his conception of God's standard of blessing ; and hence, the word is, " On this wise you shall bless the Children of Israel, saying unto them—

The Lord bless thee and keep thee, The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee ; The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace."

Then follows that magnificent divine promise in the 27th verse :

" And they shall put My name upon the Children of Israel and I will bless them."

Praise God, he blesses us, not according to our thoughts or our desserts, but according to His own heart of love.

Blessing No. 3.

" Feed them also."

In most Reference Bibles there is an alternative word for " feed," namely, " rule." The same thing occurs in the Gospel of Matthew, chap. ii. ver. 6. " That shall *rule* my people," with a marginal note " or feed," only here the words are reversed.

Sheep, not under the guiding hand of the shepherd or obedient to his voice, cannot be led into the " green pastures " or beside the " still waters."

He "*maketh* me to lie down." "*He leadeth* me " (Psalm xxiii.). Here is " rule." " The green pastures " is where we " feed."

What a blessed provision God has made for the sustainment of the spiritual life and the nourishment of the divine nature, so that we may " grow thereby."

It is only as we are subject to Him and live daily in the acknowledgment of His guiding hand that we shall be spiritually strong and quit ourselves like men.

Blessing No. 4.

" Lift them up for ever." This is a much needed blessing for the Children of God to-day. I come in contact with a great many Christian men and women. I am sorry to find, in many cases, that depression and sadness is the key-note of their lives ; alas, we know so little of the *joy-life* ; our lives are too often on the lower plane. In a money and pleasure-loving age we need to get above the aims and pleasures of this sordid, selfish generation, and to live on the higher plane of the true spiritual life of pure holy joy. The Holy Spirit is never the author of depression or unhappiness ; that is the work of the enemy.

The Spirit of God would lead us to say, " Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name (Psalm ciii.). " Shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart " (Psalm xxxii.).

Much do we indeed need to be " lifted up," and to find the joy of the Lord to be our strength.

Presently we shall be lifted up in another sense, when we are " caught up " together in the clouds to meet the Lord, and to be for ever with Him.

The other day, a boy went out to fly his kite, with every yard of string out. After a while, a fog settled down and completely hid the kite from view. But the boy held on. Presently, a gentleman came along and said to the boy, " How do you know your kite is up there ? "

" Oh," said the boy, (1) " I saw it go up " ; (2) " I am holding on at this end " ; (3) " I can feel it pulling now."

So we have divine testimony to the fact that our Lord has " gone up " into heaven, and, through mercy, we are holding on at this end, and many are to-day feeling the pull of the One up there. Presently He will come again, and then we shall indeed be " lifted up for ever."

THE CONSECRATION OF THE PRIESTS.

(Concluded).

Lev. viii.-ix.

By G. HUCKLESBY.

II.

HAVING considered Aaron, the head of the priestly house, as a type of Christ, let us now look at Aaron's sons, the members of that priestly house, as a type of the Church of God. It was their relationship to Aaron which entitled his sons to their high and holy privilege. Birth gave them an indisputable right to the priestly office: so the new birth is absolutely essential in order to become priests to God. The priestly privilege of the child of God flows out of his union with Christ. It is a priesthood communicated to him by his union with his risen and glorified Lord. The sons of Aaron were separated from the people, and they stood in a special relationship to God, entering into the Tabernacle and dwelling

around the Sanctuary, which an ordinary Israelite durst not, within certain limits, come near. They were God's special portion, His peculiar possession. They were the Lord's inheritance, even as the Lord was their inheritance. So the Apostle Peter says,

"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar (or purchased) people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."

This is true of every member of God's redeemed family. Each one is washed in the same precious blood, clothed with the same pure and spotless righteousness, anointed by the same Holy Spirit, a member of that New Creation of which Christ is the Head, and Whom our Great High Priest is "not ashamed to call brethren." All are appointed and anointed by God. There is no validity in priesthood if it be not God-chosen and Divinely-ordained. Korah, Dathan and Abiram might lay claim to the office, but their claim was entirely disowned by God, Who could only admit and accept the sons of Aaron. Jehovah had elected that family out of all the families of that elect nation to thus draw nigh unto Himself as priests. So the Church of God to-day is an election of individuals from Jews and from Gentiles, redeemed from every kindred and tongue and people and nation. Each one has been called by grace, cleansed by blood, clothed with the priestly robes of righteousness and salvation, and all consecrated by the same spirit, and can thus equally draw near unto God.

In Lev. viii. 6, we read:—

"And Moses brought Aaron and his sons and washed them with water."

They were first washed with water, and bathed. This significant act was never repeated. Day by day they were commanded to wash their hands and feet at the Brazen Laver, because their feet came in contact with the desert sands, and their hands would be defiled with their very priestly service at the Brazen Altar, etc. Hence God's gracious provision for them in the Laver, and the Divine command, "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat." The Blood at the Altar gave them a legal title to enter the Sanctuary, and the water in the Laver gave them a moral fitness to enjoy communion with a thrice Holy God within.

In ver. 13 we read that

Coats

were put upon them. And observe, they did not put them on themselves, all was done for them. It was the work of Moses as

God's representative. The Father directed the servants to put the best robe on the returning Prodigal, and faith still says, "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." Christ was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

They were then girded with

Girdles

telling of their privilege and preparedness for service. We, too, are exhorted "to put on the girdle of truth," and "to gird up our minds," and so be ever ready to perform our priestly functions. To be like Him Who said, "I must work while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work." We are not saved by serving, but we are saved to serve. "I serve," is the motto of the Prince of Wales, and this should be the motto of every member of the Blood Royal Family of Heaven.*

Then they had

Bonnets

put upon their heads, a symbol of subjection. They had to ascertain the mind of God, and implicitly obey all His commands. The Apostle Paul began his Christian career by asking the question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And he took for his life motto, "Whose I am, and Whom I serve," implying absolute surrender to God, and whole-hearted service for Him. "To obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams." God greatly values our childlike submission to His will and obedience to His word.

The Sin Offering

was then brought, as in ver. 14, and they laid their hands upon the head of the bullock. The animal was then slain and some of the blood was put upon the Altar, the remainder poured out at the bottom of the Altar. They could only stand before God or render service to Him on the ground of substitution. The blood put upon the horns of the Altar met the claims of the God of the Altar, and the blood poured out at the bottom met the need of those who stood before it.

This was followed in ver. 18 by

The Ram for the Burnt Offering

being brought, and once more they laid their hands upon its head, then it was also killed, &c. From this we learn their acceptance

* There is a distinction, however, between priestly and Levitical service.—(Ed.).

before God, and as such were permitted to tread His Courts. Thus we read of God's people in Eph. i. 6, "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." We are accepted by God in all the acceptability of His own dear Son, Who gave Himself for an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour."

Moses then took

The Ram of Consecration.

The blood of which was put upon the tip of their right ear, the thumb of their right hand, and the first toe of their right foot. Here we see their entire separation unto the Lord for priestly service. The whole person from head to foot was set apart for God. Every power of body and of mind belonged to Him by blood. The ear was to be open to hear His voice, the hand ready to do His will, and the foot to be swift to run the way of His Commandments.

The various parts of the Wave Offering were then placed by Moses on

Their Hands,

(ver. 27), and this set forth a complete view of Christ, as seen by God in all His Divine Perfection. This was waved before the Lord, and then Moses took it from their hands and laid it upon the altar to be offered, a sweet savour unto the Lord. The word "consecrate" means, to "fill the hands," and this is still the privilege of God's priestly house. The One to Whom we owe everything should fill the vision with His graces, ravish the heart with His love, and fill the hands, lips and lives with His witness and praise. It must be no longer, "Nothing in my hands I bring," but "something," yea, "Everything in my hands I bring," because the One I present to God is "all and in all" to God.

Moses took

The Anointing Oil,

(ver. 30), and sprinkled it upon Aaron and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments, and sanctified Aaron and his garments, and his sons, and their garments with him. All was now solemnly sanctified to God by the holy anointing oil, a type of the Holy Spirit, Who has come and taken possession of the blood-purchased property. There is to be no subtle distinction between the *sacred* life and the *secular* life, our very surroundings and everyday habits must be sacred unto the Lord. The third chapter of Colossians, which unfolds the risen life of the Christian, begins in the heavenlies

and ends in the kitchen. Our whole life must be all of one character, and so become a sweet savour of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. Eating and drinking may be to His praise, and every word and deed should redound to His glory. Our bodies are the Temples of the Holy Spirit, Who sees all we do, hears all we say and sing, and knows our every thought, and will take control of these, if we will allow Him, so that, before ever they are expressed in word or deed, they may be brought in obedience to Christ. Thus we are enabled "to glorify God in our spirits and in our bodies which are God's,"

This is followed in ver. 31 with the high honour of feasting for seven days on the same holy things which had been offered unto the Lord. A whole week was thus spent in keeping high feast with their God, enjoying the rest of Jehovah's Sanctuary, and finding satisfaction in the fatness of His House.

Chapter ix. brings before us

The Manifested Glory of the Lord.

When Aaron had finished the work of Sacrifice and had blessed the people, pronouncing the Priestly Benediction upon them, Moses and Aaron went into the Tabernacle to appear before the Lord there, meanwhile, all Israel was waiting and watching for their re-appearing, which in due course took place, when Aaron again blessed the people, and then "the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people." Even so will it be, ere long, with our great High Priest. He Who finished the work of sacrifice at Calvary is seen as the Risen One in Luke xxiv., blessing His people, and it came to pass that while He blessed them He was carried up into heaven. His disciples witnessed His Ascension. They saw His pierced hands uplifted, and heard His words of gracious benediction, and as He blessed them He was taken up, and as the Tabernacle curtain hid Aaron from Israel's gaze, so the cloud hid Christ from their vision. But while looking up, two men in white apparel appeared and assured them that "this same Jesus should so come in like manner as they had seen Him go into heaven." For this blessed hope we are called to look and long, for as certainly as He went away blessing will He return bringing fulness of blessing with Him.

"Although a while He be
 Hid from the eyes of men,
 His people look to see
 Their Great High Priest again ;
 In brightest glory He will come
 And take His waiting people Home.

The Faith and The Flock.

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AUGUST, 1913.

PRICE—ONE PENNY.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The Lust for Pleasure.

A REMARKABLE article appeared in a daily newspaper recently, headed, "What is the matter with London Society?" It began by pointing out that many things remain as they were a generation or two ago. But the society which then existed is gone. A new condition of things has arisen. The interests that once drew people together do so no longer. Two things have contributed to this change. The increase of wealth and the mad craze for pleasure. According to the writer of this article—a lady—money and amusements now dominate everything.

We make one quotation, merely to show what "lovers of pleasures" people have become. After referring to the salons where politicians of all shades used to assemble, and others frequented by authors and men of culture, as being no more, the writer proceeds: "The 'circles' are broken up, though the houses and mansions still stand. It is not that it is no longer possible to have a salon; it is that it is no longer worth while. The few who will spare time to 'look in' for a brief minute have no longer the patience to stop and converse or listen to the most brilliant of conversationalists. Across the road the latest music hall celebrity has been engaged at a fabulous cost to entertain an audience continually fitting in and out. Further down the street the best band to be obtained for the money is striking up, the walls are literally lined with roses, the supper has been prepared by a celebrated cook, a fortune has been poured out to attract within its doors guests whose names the hostess has only read of in the social chronicles of the day, and who may not, even with the best of wills, remember her face on the following morning." The same writer tells us London has been turned "into an auction mart of amusements"; she speaks of "a society without ideals," of "a mob of pleasure seekers without so much as a standard of amusement." "The cultivation of the senses," she declares, "came in when the cultivation of the mind went out."

Such is the evidence of one who thoroughly knows what she is writing about.

How remarkable to turn from such a testimony and read what St. Paul says about the love of money and the love of pleasures. In his first epistle to Timothy he speaks about the one; in his second epistle he speaks of the other. How truly he says, "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the (or, a) root of all evil" (1 Tim. vi. 9-10). But his reference to pleasure is even still more striking, for he predicts that this will be one of the characteristics of the "last days"—the very days in which we live. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2 Tim. iii. 1-5).

We are seeing, then, around us only what the Bible eighteen hundred years ago told us to expect. Nor does it require a special article to convince us of what is taking place. Is not this cultivation of the senses—this mad craze for pleasure—evident to everyone? From the poorest working man up to the richest millionaire it is the same. The one may spend his sixpence at a picture show or a football match, and the other lavish hundreds of pounds on one evening's entertainment, both are alike controlled by the same passion.

Without even looking at this matter from the highest point of view—without, for the moment, considering it from the standpoint of Christianity—it does matter how a man spends his time. A ceaseless round of amusement is enervating in every way. What serious view of life are such people ever likely to take? Life has its responsibilities for everyone, be they Christians or not. Are people who give themselves up to pleasure likely to be equal to them, even if they accept them? Are the mind and heart to remain uncultivated and only the senses tickled?

And what about those higher considerations? "Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." Where is God in it all? Where is the soul? Are "rag-time" songs likely to elevate people in any conceivable way? Are the claims of duty likely to become more pressing by a fondness for such inanities? And then as to God's claims and the soul's eternal interests. If a ceaseless occupation

with that which appeals only to the senses is no preparation for the higher and sterner duties of life, is it any more for the soul's intercourse with God? Does pleasure, when it becomes the chief thing, even though it may not be sinful in itself, lead anybody to think of the "exceeding sinfulness of sin?" or the need of salvation? And how easily every serious thought is crowded out by it.

And it must not be forgotten that the words we have quoted, about being lovers of pleasures, are addressed to those who are not without a form of godliness. Religious people are in danger of this love of pleasure as much as the worldling. From the context it would almost seem as if the Apostle had such primarily in view, "Lovers of pleasures *more* than lovers of God." He is evidently not thinking for the moment of the utterly godless. And this view is confirmed by the next clause: "Having a form of godliness." Is it not only too sadly true that there are a multitude of lovers of pleasures within the churches? What a prominence is given to almost every variety of entertainment. In our June issue we gave a specimen, in Notes and Comments, of what was taking place at one time in a single town. And many would be present at these amusements who are never found at a prayer meeting. They are, indeed, "Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." A West-end clergyman said the other day: "Eleven o'clock used to be the time when the family assembled at church. It is now the hour for ordering round the motor car."

What is the advice the Apostle gives? "From such turn away." How important, too, in view of all that is taking place, to remember the exhortation, "Redeeming the time because the days are evil." And again, "The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." Never was there more need for us to be on our knees: to see that we "live soberly, righteously and godly in this present age," and to remember the words of our Lord and Saviour, which though primarily referring to another age have their application now, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

On one occasion during the life of the Lord Jesus, the fragrance of a "good work" excited "the indignation" of those whose privilege it was to enjoy that fragrance (Mark xiv. 6; Jno. xii. 3).

RED MARKS OF REDEMPTION.

By WILLIAM LUFF.

C. H. SPURGEON has said, "The blood of Christ is the ruby gem in the ring of divine love." It is the one thing needful. Let us trace this red mark of redemption.

When Israel took the victim from the flocks in Egypt they had

Blood in a lamb (Exod. xii. 3). There must be blood before blood can be shed. In Christ, God has provided Himself a lamb (Gen. xxii. 8). "Behold the Lamb of God!" (John i. 36). We had sinned in a body: hence it was necessary that Jesus should say, "A body hast Thou prepared Me" (Heb. x. 5).

But a live Christ, pure as a lamb, could not save us, any more than a living lamb could save the Hebrews; the lamb must die; then they had

Blood in a bason (ver. 22). This told of death. "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22). "This is my blood . . . which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. xxvi. 28)

Even blood in a bason would not save; it was only salvation provided, it must be

Blood on the door. "And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it" (ver. 7). The red marks were the proof of their faith in God's provision. "*And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt*" (ver. 13).

The difference between the house marked with the scarlet and the house not marked, was the difference between a house in which death has taken place, and a house in which death is to take place. When God passed through Egypt, He had a mission of death; but He passed over every house where death had already been executed. The substitutionary lamb saved all sheltered behind its blood.

When by faith I put up the blood of God's lamb between myself and God, I confess I deserve death; and that in faith I accept another dying in my stead; and God honours the blood. Thus the difference of a saved man and an unsaved man is that to one death is past, to the other it is to come in the awful midnight of wrath.

The blood thus,

Distinguished when God *passed through*.

It sheltered, so that God *passed over*.

It was a witness to all who *passed by*.

And opened a door by which Israel *passed out*.

The people were thus led away from serving taskmasters to serve the living God, who gave them His orders (Exod. xxiv.); which Moses wrote in a book (ver. 4). Then came blood shedding. "And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words" (vers. 7 and 8).

It was a consecration meeting, and in their zeal the people vowed, "All the words which the Lord hath said will we do." But, like the best of God's consecrated ones to-day, they needed the blood. Here we have

Blood on the people. God's people, fairly out of Egypt, and looking forward to a life of obedience. But in Heb. ix. 19, we read of

Blood on the book. "For when Moses had spoken, every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people. Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you" (Heb. ix. 19-20). Thank God for blood sprinkled upon the law which would otherwise condemn even the most obedient; and for that yet better blood of the better covenant. "Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you" (Luke xxii. 20).

God had brought forth this people, and made a covenant with them, that they might worship Him; hence a tabernacle was ordained; but how could sinners approach a holy God? The answer is in Numb. xix. 4, where, a red heifer having been slain, we find

Blood as the ground of our approach. "And Eleazer the priest shall take of her blood with his fingers, and sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times." The people were to approach, but like us, they could only stand upon "redemption ground." Even the priest could only stand inside the tabernacle upon this footing. "And the priest that is anointed shall take of the bullock's blood, and bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation. And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the Lord, before the vail of the sanctuary" (Lev. iv. 6). It was even necessary upon the altars. No worship, no service, no offering of gifts, not even the sweet incense of prayer and praise, except there be the blood. "And the priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the Lord, which is in the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation" (Lev. iv. 7).

Blood on the priests. These were special men in Israel, but all God's *spiritual* Israel are priests: so that the priestly blood-marks are for every believer. "Then shalt thou kill the ram, and take of his blood, and put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about" (Exod. xxix. 20).

The ear. Cleansed from what it has heard wrong in the past, and consecrated to hear aright in future: to listen to God's commands.

The thumb: that with which we grip hands and lay hold of objects: this needs cleansing and consecrating. Hands consecrated to God's service.

The toe: a little member, but one which points the direction of the walk. When the lion invited the fox to enter his den and dine, the fox examined the footprints around, and as the toes all

pointed inward, he concluded that those who entered did not come out again. Toes are indicators ; let them be blood-marked and go only where Christ has led.

Blood on the mercy seat. On the day of atonement, the priest entered through the veil. " And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward ; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times " (Lev. xvi. 14). Here was blood in its relationship to God brought to Him by a human high priest : " But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building ; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own Blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us " (Heb. ix. 11-12). Thank God the blood is not only upon me, and upon the altar of service, it is on the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat of God Himself.

Blood on the house. We started from a blood-marked home, suppose we finish at another such home, for our salvation is not much if it is only for a place of worship. It cleanses the dwelling, the life in the family. If leprosy had been in the house of an Israelite, the priest had to be called. " And he shall take to cleanse the house two birds, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop. And he shall kill the one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water : and he shall take the cedar wood, and the hyssop, and the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird, and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times. And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird, and with the running water, and with the living bird, and with the cedar wood, and with the hyssop, and with the scarlet : But he shall let go the living bird out of the city into the open fields, and make an atonement for the house : and it shall be clean " (Lev. xiv. 49-53).

There were places where the blood does not seem to have been sprinkled, for the apostle says, " Almost all things are by the law purged with blood " (Heb. ix. 22). This implies exceptions. Were they those things which typified God's provisions ? Such as,

The Laver.—He who cleanses from sin is sinless.

The Light.—God's light is pure.

The Loaves.—There is no leaven in God's bread.

If such things were excepted, it is because they shadow the perfections of Christ, "Without sin." "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins" (Heb. vii. 26-27).

May we ever give "the precious blood of Christ" its proper place. "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?" (Heb. x. 28-29).

"The blood has always precious been,
 'Tis precious now to me;
 Through it alone my soul has rest,
 From fear and doubt set free.
 Oh, wondrous is the crimson tide,
 Which from my Saviour flowed!
 And still in heaven my song shall be,
 The precious, precious blood!"

"STONES FROM THE BROOK."

When David, God-armed, met the foe,
 No spear was in his hand;
 But from the brook, five stones he took,
 No giant could withstand.

Get thou thy pebbles from God's Word,
 And in thy scrip lay by,
 Flung from thy sling, those stones shall bring
 All giants down to die.

Ask not for Saul's huge massive mail,
 But fill thy oft used sling:
 Then trust the Lord to use His Word,
 And prove that He is King.

But if no pebbles thou hast stored,
 How wilt thou meet the foe?
 How wilt thou fight, for God and right,
 And lay the giants low?

Prepare to use God's weapon well,
 Already foes are near!
 Thy crystal brook, God's Holy Book;
 Thus armed thou need'st not fear.

WILLIAM LUFF.

THE FEAST OF PURIM.

By ALFRED H. BURTON.

THIS (March, 1913) is the month Adar in the Jewish Calendar, and this day (March 22nd) is the 13th of Adar, the anniversary of the very day on which the great massacre of the Jews was to have taken place in the great vast of Persia (Esther viii. 12).

The "Higher Critics," as with much self-complacency they are pleased to call themselves, have decided that the book of Esther cannot possibly be inspired. "The narrative as a whole seems to read as a romance rather than as a history" (Driver), and again, "the perfect accuracy of the narrative . . . an impartial criticism entitles us happily to doubt" (Driver).

In these days of unblushing scepticism and infidelity, happy are those of whom it can be said, as of Timothy of old, that "from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Happy, too, are those who can add their unhesitating "Amen" to the statement of Holy Writ, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God."

But, unfortunately for them, many to-day have had their faith cruelly disturbed by criticism of the Bible, and that by men pledged by their solemn ordination vows to teach its precepts, but not attack its pages.

In the few remarks which follow upon the book of Esther we shall attempt to shew that their arguments are as baseless here as elsewhere.

The fact that the Jewish people are now celebrating the festival of Purim has led us once again to read through the portion of God's holy word that records the institution of this festival, and we have risen from our happy task more convinced than ever of the divine inspiration of this book.

Mœimonides, a Rabbi of the middle ages, affirmed that when the Messiah should come the Prophets and Hagiographa (the Psalms, &c.) should be done away, but Esther would remain. We are told that "Semler, in 1773, made the first formal attack on its historical

credibility." But it is gratifying, in these days of Christian (!) unbelief, to find a Jew writing in defence of the Scriptures :—" Much more evidence of course, can be adduced . . . but enough surely has been written to make out a case for the historic credibility of Esther."—(*Jewish Chronicle*, March 21st, 1913).

Grounds of the Critics' Objections.

It is difficult to write calmly when one considers the wild and reckless insolence with which a crowd of young theological students throw overboard, without a pang, the long cherished faith of ages. That the well known tripartite division of the Old Testament—the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms—was acknowledged by the Jews from remote antiquity, and that the third of these divisions, Hagiographa (or holy writings), contained the book of Esther, there can be no doubt. That our blessed Lord, risen from the dead, put His seal upon that threefold division, as it then existed, and as it was then known to the Jews, is proved beyond a question by Luke xxiv. 44. Yet, in spite of this, modern unbelief dismisses Esther as a legendary romance, utterly devoid of any historical accuracy. On what grounds? Let Canon Driver, one of the soberest of the critics answer—" To me," says the Canon, " the narrative has appeared to teem with improbabilities."* Brushing aside many of these as " trivial and inconclusive criticisms " we are left to consider five only on the basis of which we are asked to throw aside the ancient belief of the whole Jewish people, the faith of the Christian church, and worst of all, the pronouncement of the Lord Himself! What are these grounds? :—

1. " Esther cannot, it seems, have been Ahasuerus' queen. Between the seventh and twelfth years of his reign (chaps. ii. 16, iii. 7) Xerxes' queen was Amestris, a superstitious and cruel woman (Herodotus vii. 114, ix. 112), who cannot be identified with Esther, &c."†

But is there the smallest cogency in this argument? We are getting accustomed to the critics' " cannot." This " cannot " be, and that " cannot " be is an argument which will suffice in certain minds until from some unexpected quarter evidence arises that what the critic says " cannot " be actually is a fact! And who shall say that Amestris may not turn out to be none other than Esther? Certainly the names resemble one another, and the only reason adduced by Herodotus, and followed by the critics is the cruelty of the queen (comp. Esther ix. 12-15).

* Literature, &c., p. 452.

† Literature, &c., p. 453.

With reference to the names, it was long a matter of uncertainty who Ahasuerus could be. Scholars were not always aware that this Ahasuerus of sacred history was the same as Xerxes of profane. Ahasuerus in Hebrew means "King," and in the Bible there are three different kings named Ahasuerus (Ezra. iv. 6, Esther i. 1, Dan. ix. 1), just as different rulers of Russia are called by the same name, Czar.

We must bear in mind that it is only quite recently that any knowledge has come to us of the ancient Persian language. At the time that the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament was made (about B.C. 300) into Greek, there was absolute ignorance as to the names and customs of the Persian Empire, and the learned men who gave us this translation could not conceive who this Ahasuerus could possibly be. They translated the Hebrew name into the one that to their minds it most resembled, Artaxerxes. But while others during more recent times, choose other kings such as Cambyses, Astyages, &c., a few expressed their belief that Xerxes was meant. True this was only a guess, but its possibility was enough to alarm the great father of rationalism, De Wette. If Ahasuerus were really Xerxes the authenticity of the book of Esther was almost proved even to such an unbeliever. "The main point" wrote De Wette, "on which the authenticity of the book has been rested, namely, that Ahasuerus is the same with Xerxes, is very doubtful."*

The writer in the *Jewish Chronicle* justly observes:—

"The Ahasuerus of our Purim story is almost universally agreed to have been the Xerxes of Grecian history who ascended the throne in the year B.C. 485. Both these names are but the Hebrew and Greek variants of the Persian *Kshayarsha*, as the name appears in the Persian column of the trilingual inscriptions of this king."

But the identity is now an established fact! Much results from this discovery, but we merely note it now in passing to sweep away the "improbability" connected with the name of Amestris. It may yet be found out that Amestris and Esther are the same person. In any case Herodotus and the critics *must* bow to Scripture, and to the Lord Jesus Christ whose deity they deny if they reject the book of Esther.

* De Wette on the Old Testament, Vol. ii., p. 337.

2. The second "improbability," upon the basis of which the critics ask us to abandon our faith in the book of Esther is thus stated by Canon Driver :—

"The public notification of the decree for the destruction of the Jews *eleven* months before it was to take effect seems scarcely probable."*

This objection is as groundless as the one we have been already considering. Christendom is rapidly abandoning faith in the Word of God, and as our recent studies in the Book of Revelation have shewn, the only believers in God and His Word that will be found on the earth after the removal of the Church at the coming of the Lord, will be the Jewish Remnant, persecuted under the Beast. Is it not remarkable that a Jewish writer should rebuke the unbelief of professed christians in the following words taken from the *Jewish Chronicle*, March 21st, 1913, p. 25 :—

"With the superstition of an oriental, Haman determines upon the date of the massacre by lot, and the lot having fallen on the 13th Adar, proceeds *eleven months in advance*, to prepare the country for the execution of his decree. Is it likely, asks the critic, that Haman would have given the Jews eleven months' warning of their impending destruction? A careful reading of vers. 12 and 14 of chap. iii., furnishes an answer to this objection. The "copy of the writing" circulated among the people generally, consisted merely of the words that "they should be ready against that day," viz. the 13th Adar. In addition to this, the satraps *and rulers and governors were charged also with a secret order, "to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish all Jews" on the appointed day.* No wonder then that the City Shushan was "perplexed" when the ambiguous "copy of the writing" was first published. Mordecai, however, had no doubt as to its purport. Hence his sackcloth and ashes.

3. We now come to the third reason given to weaken our faith in the Book of Esther, and that in spite, again we say, of our Lord's acknowledgment of the group of books as known and received by the Jews in His day (Luke xxiv. 44).

To the critics it seems strange that Haman and king Ahasuerus are ignorant of the nationality of Mordecai (chap. iii. 7, vii. 5). A shallower objection it would be difficult to conceive. When we consider the vastness of the Persian Empire at that date, the immense number of peoples included in its dominion, the variety of nationalities that must have jostled one another in the capital, for Ahasuerus reigned from India to Ethiopia over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces (chap. i, 1); when we further reflect

* Literature &c., p. 453.

upon the strict injunctions of Mordecai to Esther not to divulge her people, nor her kindred (chap. ii. 10), and also the fact that the names Mordecai and Esther were Babylonian and not Jewish, it need be no matter of surprise that Haman should never have suspected the nationality of the Babylonian captive (chap. ii. 6). For five years the secret had been kept (comp. ii. 16, iii. 4, 7), but now the confession was wrung from Mordecai that being a Jew, his knee could not bow to the Amalekite. Haman's wrath was stirred to its deepest depths, but even then he does not inform the king that Mordecai was a Jew, "a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed" (chap. iii. 8) was sufficient description, hence it need not surprise us, though it mightily astonishes the critics, that Ahasuerus does not know that Esther is a Jewess (chap. vii. 5).

We cannot do better than quote from the same Jewish writer :—

Five years after Esther's advancement, or twelve years after the king's accession, Haman enters upon the stage of our history as Grand Vizier, having succeeded the famous Mardonius in that office. A man of obscure family and self-made, he reverently worships his maker, and is filled with mortal hatred towards those who deny him the outward marks of respect. Learning Mordecai's nationality, his heart is still further inflamed by his recollection of the hereditary feud which had for almost numberless generations raged between Israel and Amalek. He determines upon a general massacre of the Jews, and in order to trick the king into giving his consent to this step, he plays upon the anger which the monarch would most naturally feel regarding the persistent acts of depredation which "a certain scattered and dispersed people" had been committing in his dominions. The name of the people is expressly suppressed. As the country had been lately suffering from the incursions of marauding bands of Scythians, the king is naturally led to believe that it is they whom his Minister has in mind in counselling their wholesale destruction. When his eyes are opened at last by Esther, and he sees the true purpose of Haman's decree, his wrath is kindled against a Minister by whom he has been deliberately misled and imposed upon. And knowing his deception, Haman, on his part, is unable to appeal for support to the king's supposed assent to his object. The contention that no king, however deeply immersed in frivolous pleasures and careless of his subjects' welfare, would be likely, callously, and without the least reflection, to sign away the lives of a whole race, thus completely loses its point, apart from the consideration that such decrees of general massacre are not unknown in Jewish History.

4. Yet another objection is based upon the spirit of vengeance displayed by the queen and her uncle Mordecai, the book is said "to be further removed from the spirit of the gospel than any other book of the Old Testament."

An argument of this nature flows from failure to understand the difference between the dispensation under which the Jews were then living, and will yet be found living after the gospel period has come to an end, and this day of grace ; what intelligent Christian could, for instance, apply the imprecatory Psalms to this present dispensation ? And yet how applicable they will be to the time of Anti-christ's violent persecution of the Jewish remnant.

Take, for example, Psalm vii. where the Remnant appeal to Jehovah to save them from those that persecute them, and to deliver ; an appeal that is answered by the wicked enemy falling into the ditch that he had made for the people of God, and by his violent dealing descending on his own pate, even as it did in the days of Esther.

5. But this leads us to the last objection of rationalism to the authenticity of the book of Esther, namely, *the complete absence of the religious element*. The name of God never once appears from beginning to end, prayer is never once mentioned, and even in the day of the Jew's deliverance not one note of praise ascends to heaven. That this is so cannot be questioned, but instead of this being an argument against the divine inspiration of the book, it is one of the most conclusive evidences in its favour, as we hope to be able to shew.

(To be continued).

A WAKING THOUGHT.

I love thee, child ! five love-wounds still I bear.
 I care for thee ! canst thou not trust My care ?
 I died for thee ! thy life by dying bought :
 I live for thee ! thy Pleader in heaven's court.
 I am thy Guide, thy Glory, and thy Goal :
 The Lord, the Life, the Lover of thy soul.
 I was, I am, I ever more shall be :
 To live, to love, to labour—all for thee.
 Wilt thou not live for me ?

WILLIAM LUFF.

“ Communion with the Father and the Son, and the present knowledge of the Father's love, and the hope of the coming glories of the Son, can alone work a *divine* separation from the course and spirit of the present world.”

A NOTABLE CONVERSION.

Read Daniel iv.

WILL the reader carry his mind to the Continent of Asia, and to a period as far back as 2,500 years ago. At that time, and situated in a province which was watered by the Tigris on the east, and the Euphrates on the west, there stood the ancient and renowned city of Babylon. The surrounding country was one of the most fertile districts of Western Asia—a district intersected by a splendid system of artificial irrigation; some of the canals being navigable even to-day. The whole of this area had from time to time been under the dominion of Assyria, but at the moment to which we are about to refer, it was a free country, and under the rule of the mightiest potentate of ancient times—Nebuchadnezzar.

This king had almost entirely rebuilt Babylon, and made it the queen of nations. It was surrounded by a wall 200 cubits high, 50 cubits thick, and probably sixty miles in length. The estimated number of workmen employed is 2,000,000.

Whatever position profane history may accord to king Nebuchadnezzar, the sacred historian gives him a unique place; and it is for this reason that he has an interest for us at the present moment. It will be remembered that the book of Daniel gives us, in the first three chapters, an account of his doings and his greatness. He had conquered Jerusalem and brought away the king and the vessels of the temple and many captives. From this moment power was transferred to the Gentiles; what is called *the times of the Gentiles* began, and Nebuchadnezzar became universal monarch. In the image which he sees in a dream, the whole course of Gentile supremacy is traced out under four universal empires, under the figures of gold, silver, brass and iron, and Nebuchadnezzar is declared to be the head of gold. As Daniel said, in giving his interpretation—

“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power and strength and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.”

It is about the conversion of this one that we wish to speak.

In spite of all the favour, and all the honour conferred upon him, Nebuchadnezzar did not acknowledge the source from which all his greatness came : “ *his heart was lifted up and his mind hardened in pride.*” Pride was his besetting sin. It is recorded that he said on one occasion : “ Is not this great Babylon, that *I* have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of *my* power, and for the honour of *my* majesty ? ” In chap. iv. of the book of Daniel, however, we have a wonderful account of his conversion. God not only gave him earthly riches and temporal power, but bestowed upon him at last the best of all possessions, the true knowledge of Himself. Nebuchadnezzar has passed away ; the splendour of his empire has long since faded into a memory ; there remain only heaps of rubbish to mark the colossal nature of his undertakings, but the story of his conversion remains. The works *he* did have perished : the work God did *in him* lives in a record we can read to-day, and is one of the most striking narratives on the page of history.

Chap. iv. of the Book of Daniel opens thus :

“ Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations and languages, that dwell in all the earth ; Peace be multiplied unto you.

“ I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me.

“ How great are His signs ! and how mighty are His wonders ! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation.”

Will the reader, before going further, notice four things about this strange proclamation. 1. It is the announcement of a great king. 2. It refers to God’s dealings with him. 3. He addresses the whole world. 4. It is not a historical account, but a personal narrative. These four points will give us some idea of the great importance of the declaration. It does not contain a record of his achievements, but of how he was abased in order to be brought to his right mind. It is this that makes it of such supreme interest to us, and gives it a permanent value.

Nebuchadnezzar’s history, as it comes before us in his proclamation, is divided into three parts. Part I., when, as he says, “ I was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace.”

Part II. : His fall and disgrace ; seven years dwelling with the beasts of the field.

Part III. : His conversion ; when, at the end of the days, *he lifted up his eyes to heaven*, and he was restored to his former greatness.

I.

Nebuchadnezzar speaks of his conversion as a sign. "*I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the High God hath wrought toward me.*" What a sign to us that conversion is the supreme thing, and that what God desires above everything is that a man should turn to Him.

We are quite content to do without God, but He is not content to do without us. No doubt Nebuchadnezzar was in a measure satisfied. As he tells us, he was *at rest and flourishing*.

Do not the king's words describe many to-day? "*At rest*" and "*flourishing.*" Fairly satisfied with the present, and not disturbed about the future. Such was the condition of the king of Babylon.

But he was not to remain so. "I saw a dream," he says, "*which made me afraid.*" It was only a dream, and yet it startled this great monarch from his false ease and contentment, and led to the greatest results. God can use what means He pleases. Are you, my reader, one of those "*at rest*" and "*flourishing,*" without thought of how you stand with the God above you, the future before you, and the past behind you? Such was Nebuchadnezzar's condition, and he was distressed by this rude awakening. "The thoughts upon my bed," he tells us, "and the visions of my head troubled me." Yet it was to lead to untold blessing. Such blessing that he could not refrain from telling all the world about.

What did he do in his anxiety? He did what most people do. He had recourse to worldly means to get rid of his distress. He sent for all the wise men of Babylon. But the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers could not help him. They could not make known to him the interpretation of the dream. Are there not such people to-day? People who deal in the occult arts, who profess to read the future, and explain mysteries. But in matters of the soul, as regards the questions of a man's relationship with God, they know nothing. The Bible, and those who are versed in its teaching, can alone interpret spiritual difficulties.

Happily for Nebuchadnezzar, there was such a man at hand in the person of Daniel. And now it was Daniel's turn to be troubled. He had to tell the king, "The dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies." The news conveyed was indeed of a terrible nature :—

"They shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will."

Daniel closes with a warning. "Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor ; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity " (or, an healing of thine error). But how little regard those in prosperity pay to warnings. You may tell them of sin, of death, of judgment ; it produces little more than a passing emotion. You may speak of God's love, of Christ's coming into the world to save sinners, of all that He has suffered, you may press upon them the consequences of rejection, they listen, they sometimes seem affected, but they do not turn. It was so with the king of Babylon. Daniel told him of his sins ; he declared the solemn and fearful judgment that awaited him, yet, as far as we can learn, he not only did not give heed to Daniel's advice, but went his way as though no warning had ever been given.

II.

Yet the judgment Daniel had foretold came.

"All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty ? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken ; the kingdom is departed from thee."

Three things are to be noticed here. First, God gave him ample time to repent, and carry out the advice given him by Daniel. Twelve months elapsed between the warning and its execution. Daniel, who knew the mercy of God, how slow He is to anger and of great kindness, Who willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live, for judgment is His strange work—Daniel invited the king to turn from his sins,

if perchance it may have been an healing of his error. But delay seemed only to harden the king in his pride.

For, secondly, observe the language he uses subsequent to the warning. Could anything be more proud or boastful? "Is not this great Babylon that I have built . . . by the might of *my* power, and for the honour of *my* majesty." God is left out entirely. If men do not repent when God warns them, they grow worse.

Third. When the long-delayed judgment did come, it fell swiftly. "While the word was in the king's mouth," the decree was being put in execution.

"The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar; and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws."

God is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish; He bears with men year in and year out, for six thousand years the final judgment has been postponed, but when the moment arrives, there will be no longer delay.

"Despise thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds. For there is no respect of persons with God. In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ."

From this we see there is a day of wrath: there is a day of judgment: there is a day when we must give account.

We learn also, from Nebuchadnezzar's history, that all our actions are weighed and our words heard. Little did the king think that his proud boast was heard in heaven. But "*while the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven saying . . . The kingdom is departed from thee.*"

What a contrast is now presented. Here is a description of the king in his splendour:—

"The tree that thou sawest" (Daniel is interpreting the dream) "which grew and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth; whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation; it is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth."

And now, behold, what a change. He who had sheltered the beasts of the field and had dominion over them becomes as one of them ; he has a beast's heart given to him ; their food is his : he is as exposed as they to the climate ; until he becomes actually like them. And this is the proud monarch, who, earlier in his history, could make an image (probably of himself), and command all nations, peoples and languages to fall down and worship it, and whosoever refused should be cast into a burning fiery furnace !

Ah ! proud monarch, where is thy boasting now ? Thy kingdom is departed from thee ; thy counsellors and lords will not look upon thee ; thy meanest subject thinks himself better off than thou. And this is what we could all sink to, if God were to give us up. For those who affect to do without God are dependent upon Him for their intellect, their power of limb, yea, for every breath. Nay, we may go further. Nebuchadnezzar is not only a picture of what we may sink to, but of what we really are, if we are living without God. For we are certainly not in our right mind, and our life is really on a level with the beasts. We eat, drink, sleep and minister to our various appetites ; so do they. Our capabilities are doubtless of a higher order, but that only degrades us the more, if we do not employ them for a right purpose. " Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish " (Ps. xlix. 20).

It is safe to say, that the ordinary biographer would have omitted all reference to Nebuchadnezzar's degradation, or glossed it over. It would have been thought too painful—too much of an exposure. The remarkable thing is that the record comes down to us as a fragment of autobiography, one of the rarest and richest anywhere to be found, and with a particularity which leaves nothing to be desired. We never need fear exposure when God has us in hand. The more thorough it is, the more complete the blessing. For He wounds in love. He seeks our good, and not to do us harm. Such is seen to be the case in the drama before us ; the third and last act of which we have now reached. We are to see how all this affliction and chastisement came upon Nebuchadnezzar for good. We see him exalted ; debased ; and then exulting.

III.

“ And at the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honored Him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation ; and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing ; and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth ; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou ? ”

“ At the end of the days.” A period had been appointed. Twelve months had been the term of his probation. Then the judgment fell. Seven years was the duration of his punishment, and “ at the end of the days ” he lifted up his eyes to heaven. The sore discipline had done its work. Once he had lifted up his eyes upon Babylon and praised himself ; now he lifts up his eyes to the *Source* of all power and greatness, and he “ praised and honored Him that liveth for ever.” Here was his conversion. His thoughts and opinions were completely changed. Intoxicated with power, he had once looked upon himself as a god. Now he is humbled in the dust as he recognises, that, One alone has everlasting dominion, and before Him all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing.

This is where all true conversion begins, in turning to God : looking to Him as the source of all blessing. And, blessed be His Name, we never look in vain. For Christ has died, and God can forgive.

What had been Nebuchadnezzar’s great sin ? Pride. His language, already quoted, indicates it : “ Is not this *great* Babylon that I have built ” ? And now he recognises it, for his last recorded words are, “ Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment ; and those that walk in **pride** He is able to abase.” And is not pride the prevailing sin of to-day ? and with many, the chief sin ? Pride is doing more to keep men from Jesus Christ than almost anything else. Thousands upon thousands who would never go to excess in drinking, never be guilty of gross impurity, never sink to debauchery of any kind, are kept out of the Kingdom of heaven through pride. They are too proud to confess their need ; too proud to look to Christ for salvation ; too proud to appear strange before their fellowmen. They believe in being religious ; in attending

Church ; they may adopt a form of piety at certain times and on certain occasions ; but they have never seen themselves as God sees them—or, if they have, they have been too proud to own themselves guilty, lost and hell-deserving. “Pride,” said an old divine, “is like a man’s shirt. It is the first thing he puts on and the last thing he takes off.”

Yet pride is the most unseemly and unbecoming of all sins. Of what has a *fallen creature* to be proud ? That reflection should surely be enough to check this parent of all sins. Yet herein lies the very essence of our pride, that, being fallen, we refuse to recognise it.

Let every man ask himself, how far pride is keeping him out of heaven and away from God.

Well may the great dramatist write :—

. . . “Man, proud man,
Drest in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he’s most assured, . . .
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
As make the angels weep.”

God hates pride above everything, because it sets Him aside, and places the creature in an entirely false position. He would have us escape from its deadly embrace, and so He has placed on record His wonderful dealings with king Nebuchadnezzar.

Let us sum up, very briefly, some of the lessons to be learned from such a history.

1. We learn, that, if we are in an unregenerate state, the very benefits conferred upon us are used to foster our pride. Over and over again the Bible asserts that God gave Nebuchadnezzar all he possessed—“a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour.” Yet the same Scripture affirms “*his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride.*”

2. How slow we are to take warning. God spoke to the king of Babylon in a dream. He was even told how he might escape the impending doom, and twelve months respite given him ; but all was to no purpose.

3. We may learn how much it takes to overcome our pride. Was there ever such a fall ? ever so much magnificence turned into so much wretchedness ? or so much shame and degradation following upon so much glory ?

4. However high we may be raised or however low we may sink we are not beyond God's reach. He can bring us down from the topmost rung of the ladder, and can equally lift us up when we have fallen to the bottom.

5. What we should desire most of all is our conversion. Nebuchadnezzar had received more worldly glory than any other man. But it was all outward, material and transitory. He was without the knowledge of God, devoid of true moral elevation and lasting happiness. His degradation became a true picture of what he had always been morally.

6. Learn, if God could convert that proud, boastful king, steeped in sensuality and idolatry, he can convert anyone. And if He cared for such a man, does He not for us all? But most of all, we learn the way in which alone blessing can come to any of us. Nebuchadnezzar accepted his abasement; he lifted up his eyes to heaven; he justified God, and condemned himself. He at last accepted his sovereignty from the **King of Kings**, and gave Him the glory. In principle this is how every man is saved to-day, though the details are different. Blessing is always found in turning to God and accepting God's way. Just as Nebuchadnezzar lifted up his eyes to heaven, away from Babylon and all that appertained to himself, and praised and extolled and honoured the King of Heaven, so must we, owning our sinful and lost condition, look away from ourselves to the One Who died for sinners. His blood cleanses from all sin, *neither is there salvation in any other*. The special character in which God is revealing Himself to-day is that of **Saviour**. And this is the charter of salvation—

“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”

God is willing for all to be saved. But we can be saved only by accepting Christ and His work. For this is God's way, and there is no other.

7. Lastly, when Nebuchadnezzar took the low place, and humbled himself on account of his pride, the blessing came.

“At the same time my reason returned unto me,” he says, “and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me.”

How God delights to bless! And what wonderful ways He has of blessing. As with Job long before, Nebuchadnezzar could have said, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away," and like Job, "the Lord blessed his latter end more than his beginning."

The king of Babylon speaks of God's dealings with him as "signs." The special power committed to him was a fresh departure in the ways of God. It synchronised with the destruction of Israel as an independent nation, and marked the commencement of *the times of the Gentiles*. Power was transferred to them. With this difference, that, whereas Israel had never been a world power—they were not reckoned amongst the nations—and had never extended their dominion by conquest, just the opposite would characterise the Gentiles, as is witnessed by Persia, Greece, Rome and now Britain. Did God deal in this remarkable way with the first and greatest representative of Gentile supremacy in order to teach this lesson for all time, that however wide the dominion of any particular Gentile nation might extend, all power is derived from God, and that the salvation of a man's soul is more important than anything this world can give? If so, then Nebuchadnezzar's recognition of God, recorded by himself on the page of history, speaks for all time, not only to every individual, but to every nation and every ruler, under heaven. And this is his testimony:—

" I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever, Whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His Kingdom is from generation to generation ; and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing ; and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth : and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou ? "

R.E.

Is it not a remarkable fact that the king who manifested special interest in the "order of" "the house of the Lord," and of "all" Israel, was accused of being narrow-minded? ONE altar (2 Chron. xxxii. 12) never satisfies the human heart; therefore Sennacherib could not understand Hezekiah's *faith* and *obedience* in removing altars out of "every corner of Jerusalem," which his idolatrous father had placed there (2 Chron. xxviii. 24 and xxx. 14).

He reminds Israel of what Hezekiah had done, and warned them against being deceived.

Truth mixed with falsehood has always been one of Satan's most dangerous weapons against faith and obedience.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The Prophets, and the Prophetic Word.

THE Prophetic Scriptures have a unique place in the Bible, and they give the Bible a unique character. This Book of books contains history, admonition, counsel, doctrine, revelation—and all these stamp it as divine; but, in addition, there is this prophetic element—the book not only records what has happened, but also what will yet happen. In the prophecy of Isaiah (chaps. xl.-xliv.) where God makes His majestic appeal to His people from their false gods to Himself, He not only contrasts their impotence with His power, but He challenges them thus: "Let them bring forth, and shew us what shall happen; let them shew the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, **that we may know that ye are gods**" (chap. xli, 22-3). It is this very thing that God declares He can do. "Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare; *before they spring forth I tell you of them*" (xlii. 9).

In the face of such utterances as the foregoing, the Bible is either the biggest imposture that ever appealed to the credulity of mankind, or it takes rank above every other book, and is in a category by itself.

* * * *

It is the importance of this prophetic word we wish to impress upon ourselves and our readers, in order that we may all give heed to it. The Apostle Peter admonishes us as to this word of prophecy, in words which we cannot too often remember. "We have," he tells us, "the prophetic word made surer, to which ye do well taking heed . . . until the day dawn and the morning star arise in your hearts" (2 Pet. i. 19 N.T.). It is as a lamp shining in a dark place. All around us is dark, men know not what is about to happen or whither things are tending, the development of events is a mystery, but there is a lamp for those who will use it, a light that shews the course things will take, and reveals the end from the beginning. Above all it speaks of a day—a glorious day—which

is about to dawn for this earth. It not only speaks of a *day*, but of a *star*. Telling us of the One Who will usher in that day, and be its brightness. Evidently, the Apostle Peter felt it to be of all importance that that day should be anticipated, that our thoughts should run on to it, and our minds contemplate its grandeur; in fact, that both the day and the star—the herald of it—should fill our hearts.

In order that this may be the case, we need to give constant and fixed attention to the prophetic word. And to impress us with its certainty, and its divine origin, we are further told that, “the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” Do we realise that a day of glory is coming for the world, and do we understand what is going to bring it about? It was this that the prophets pictured in the most glowing language, and which became one of the most prominent subjects of their predictions. The Apostle Peter sums up their testimony in one most pregnant phrase: “The *sufferings* of Christ and the *glory* that should follow” (1 Pet. i. 11).

* * * *

The “sufferings” and the “glory” were both predicted. They formed the substance of the prophetic word. And just as certainly as the one has been fulfilled, so the other will be. Why should we accept the first and cavil at the second, or treat it as mere imagery? The one was literally fulfilled, so will be the other. In one of his addresses to the Jews, recorded in the Acts, St. Peter brings the two together in a most striking way. In ver. 18, chap iii., we read: “But those things which God before had showed BY THE MOUTH OF ALL HIS PROPHETS, *that Christ should suffer*, He hath so fulfilled.” Here is one part of the prophetic word actually made good. Then he proceeds to speak of the other part, “The times of refreshing,” and “the times of restitution of all things, which,” he says, “God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.” And he affirms that this will be fulfilled at the second coming of Christ (ver. 20). The two parts form one whole, and the second must necessarily be fulfilled to complete the other.

Do we not see from these passages the present and pressing importance of the prophetic word? The Apostle speaks of something about to happen—something foretold by God by the mouth

of holy men of old. Not only are the events foretold unspeakably great and far reaching in themselves, affecting indeed the whole world, but let us also consider whose word it is that gives us a warrant for expecting their accomplishment. "Which God hath spoken," says St. Peter. "God Who at sundry times . . . spake unto the fathers by the prophets," says St. Paul. How can we misunderstand such plain language or its import? Yes, the prophetic word is perfectly clear, both as to the day that is coming, and that it will be ushered in by the personal return of our Saviour.

How important then the prophetic word becomes, whether we think of God as the author of it, or of the nature of the things predicted. Especially when we remember that one of the two sections of it stands already translated into actual fact.

The New Testament throughout pays the greatest deference to the Old Testament prophets and their utterances. It was the very word of God. What was written by those holy men can never remain a dead letter. Think of how Christ Himself maintains the integrity of all they wrote. On the road to Emmaus He upbraids the two disciples for being "slow of heart to believe *all* that the prophets have spoken." "Beginning at *Moses and all the Prophets* He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself." And again, when He comes into the midst of His own: "All things must be fulfilled, which were written *in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me.*" And then He gives as a reason for His death: "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer." Whatever God has said must be done, and so Christ suffered. Do we not see from this how the Lord Jesus regarded the Old Testament? How many words we speak in the course of our lives which mean nothing. Every word God utters will be made good. Again and again we read of certain acts (even the acts of unconverted men), "That the scripture might be fulfilled." Truly, "the scripture cannot be broken."

* * * *

We might listen, too, to the Apostle Paul as he stands before Agrippa. What is his witness? "*Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which THE PROPHETS AND MOSES DID SAY SHOULD COME: that Christ should suffer*" (Acts xxvi. 22-3).

* * * *

In view of what has already been said, is it any wonder the Apostle Peter exhorts us to take heed to the prophetic word? And

he does so in order that the day dawn and the morning star arise in our hearts. He would have our hearts and our hopes fixed upon that day and upon the One Who will usher it in. He says also that word has been made surer to us. In what way? Evidently he refers to the Transfiguration to which he has just before alluded. There was seen in manifestation the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was a representation, within a limited area and for a brief moment, of what the prophets had foretold; and our Lord Himself spoke of it as the Kingdom of God coming with power. It was a confirmation of the prophetic word; it was intended to cheer the drooping hearts of the disciples; and it showed them that their Master really was the Messiah. They saw His face shine as the sun and his raiment become white as the light—the symbols of supreme authority and majesty as well as of purity. And the voice that came from the excellent glory was a witness of the honour and glory God the Father was putting upon His beloved Son.

That vision, transitory though it were, was so full of power and meaning that the disciples never forgot it, and henceforth Peter felt from the depths of his heart that he was not following cunningly devised fables.

We may well ask ourselves whether we live in the light that shines from that Holy Mount, and whether our hearts long for the day which that scene foreshadowed. If we dwell much upon the prophetic word such will be the happy result. May our eyes be fixed upon Christ and His day. The Apostle Peter seems as if in his second epistle he could hardly leave this subject. Almost his closing words are these: "*This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you: in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour*" (2 Pet. iii. 1-7).

May we be mindful, until the day dawn and the day star arise in our hearts.

David was accused of neglecting his sheep after he had "delivered" a lamb from a lion and a bear. Satan can still bring false charges against one who "put his life in his hand" (1 Sam. xix. 5) to save others, but David's God can still "deliver" those who put their trust in Him.

THREE DIVINE CAUTIONS:

“ Fear Not,” “ Fret Not,” “ Faint Not.”

THE word “NOT,” though small, is a word of much power. What a great difference the leaving of it out, or putting it in by mistake, will make in the sense of a sentence.

The word “not” stands connected with the very worst utterances of human depravity, as when the sinner says, “I WILL NOT” to God. It may form part of the most terrible reproach a holy God can utter: “*ye would not.*” It is also found in the most tender and triumphant testimonies of mercy, “O Israel, thou shalt *not* be forgotten of me.” “I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall *not* depart from me.”

But we purpose now to look at this word in connection with three other little words, FEAR, FRET and FAINT; and that in relation to believers. God’s prohibitions are very gracious, His promises are very glorious. If we would share what He proposes to give, we must shun whatever He forbids. Fearing, fretting, fainting, often hinder the enjoyment of God’s mercies, and impede our souls in His service. Let us, therefore, if we would be happy and fruitful, give good heed to these three necessary cautions. The first has respect to inward exercises, the second to withholdings of outward good, and the third to trying and perplexing circumstances. When we meet with a “fear not,” we should think of God’s gracious promises; “fret not” should remind us of His glorious purposes; and “faint not” of His grand performances on behalf of others.

I. “Fear not.” There are a great many “fear nots” in the Bible. We find God speaking thus encouragingly to His people, from Genesis to Revelation. The frequency of the occurrence of these two gentle words prove how ready God’s people are to fear; that, after all, there is no real reason for their fears, and that God would have them be without fear. He would have His people, for whom He has done so much, courageous and confident; happy and hopeful. Satan tries to make them cowardly and foreboding, miserable and despairing; and sometimes they are but too prone to fall into his snare. We should think much on what goes before and follows after these “fear nots.” If we look at the many passages in which they occur, we shall find that they imply trial

and temptation, difficulty and perplexity, and it may be that in some cases, failure, mistakes and even sins of a worse kind, have preceded them. If the histories of Abraham, Jacob, David, Paul and others, are examined, and if we note what went before some of the "fear nots" addressed to them, we shall see the truth of all this.

And yet what gracious words constantly accompany these two kind syllables; what sufficient reasons are assigned for this prohibition: "**Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.**" "*Fear not, Jacob, for I will go with thee.*" "**FEAR NOT, FOR I AM WITH THEE; BE NOT DISMAYED, FOR I AM THY GOD.**" "*Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom,*" etc., etc. And those who have welcomed these good words, and rested their souls upon them, have been enabled to be of good courage, have conquered their enemies, encouraged others, and sang in the midst of danger, "Whom shall I fear, of whom shall I be afraid?" "Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid."

The best way to get rid of the wrong fear is to possess the right in a high degree. Fear God with holy, filial fear, and you will not fear any enemies, either inward or outward with cowardly fear. Communion with God is the best friend to courage. The holy angels are always full of reverential fear, but they know not what any other fear is. They never need a "fear not," nor require to be exhorted to "fear God."

Some of God's people have many fears concerning their state. They fear that after all they are not right for eternity. Though they have really rested on Jesus, and on Him alone, and earnestly desire to be like Him, and to serve Him, yet they see so much evil in their hearts and histories, and so little good that they think will bear the test, that they conclude it is reasonable for *them* to fear and doubt, whatever confidence others may have. While passing through a temptation of this kind the snare was broken by the two following considerations. Suppose that you had done a thousand times more for Christ than you have, and done all a thousand times better, would all that be the least ground of hope before God? None whatever. Not all the obedience of men and angels combined would meet my case. I must have a divine righteousness, an infinite atonement. Next, suppose your sins were a thousand times more

than they are, would not that atonement cover *them*, and that righteousness clothe *you*? It is even so; all glory to the infinite Saviour! I should not scruple to say so to the worst of sinners; and why should I not believe it for myself? Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief. I would magnify the blood of Jesus above all my vileness, and with a conscience purified from guilt, serve Thee without fear.

Fret Not.

The second needful caution is—"Fret not." We find this word in *Psa. xxxvii. 17.* It is an ugly word but a very expressive one. It is applied in the old English translation to the action of moths upon garments (*Psa. xxxix. 11.*) Fretting injures and wears the strength and peace of the soul, even as moths fret a garment. It may also refer to the effect produced upon fine machinery by sand or gravel, or to the injury done by small pieces of metal to mill-stones, or even to the effect of mill-stones upon each other, if they were kept going swiftly round without having anything to grind. The word *fret* is also used in Scripture to describe the progress and results of leprosy as regards garments and houses (*Lev. xiii. 52, xix. 44.*) There is another evil association of this word which should help to warn us against indulging the state of mind set forth by it. There are few more awful descriptions of wickedness than that in *Isa. viii. 21, 22*; and the climax of all is, "*They shall FRET themselves, and curse their king and their God.*" A striking testimony is borne on this subject, and the evil thing is traced to its root in *Prov. xix. 3*: "The foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart *freteth* against the Lord." How striking is the contrast in *Job xxxiii. 27-28*: "God looketh upon men and if any say, 'I have sinned, and *perverted* that which is right, and it profited me not,' He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light." How much better is confession than murmuring; praying than fretting. When Hannah, great as her provocations were, left off fretting and took to praying, her arms soon embraced her Samuel, her heart rejoiced in God's salvation; and her lofty song so full of praise and prophecy, has come rolling grandly down the ages to this day.

Fretting in many cases supposes *envy*. "**Fret not thyself because of evil doers, neither be thou envious because of the workers of iniquity.**" Asaph did this, and he forcibly describes this painful and injurious process in the seventy-third Psalm. He surveyed the

wicked and their prosperity, the godly and their trials, he looked at both from a wrong point of view, his heart was grieved, and he was pricked in his reins. It became too painful for him. He questioned the rectitude of Providence, and the wisdom of God. Just then he was stopped ; like Job, who said, " once have I spoken, but I will proceed no further " ; he fell on his face, confessing, " I am foolish," " *I was envious !*" and soon the scene changed from darkness to light, from complaining to communion, from fretting to rest in God.

While the fretting mood lasts, while we are troubled because God withholds certain things from us which He gives so abundantly to others, *expectation* from God is excluded. The fretting one cannot say, " My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him." " I will look to the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation." " Though the fig-tree blossom not, I will rejoice in the Lord." Hope pines when the heart frets, and peace flutters outside the soul which care corrodes, and which complainings fill with discord.

Yet many *excuses* are often made for this line of conduct ; and the more it is indulged in, the more it is justified. But it cannot really be excused or justified. " Wherefore should a living man complain ? " If a sinner he has no right to do so ; if a saint, no reason ; for a sinner deserves hell at a moment, and a saint, though most unworthy, is on his way to a glorious heaven ; and his very trials and deprivations are a means of preparing and training him for that better world. Therefore "*fret not.*" Fretting is very much like murmuring ; nothing is more condemned in God's word than this, and few things have been more severely punished. Israel's history proves this, and they are "*our ensamples to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.*" LOOK AND LEARN are God's watchwords ; *Look and lust* are the devil's. Let us be very heedful at what our souls look (2 Cor. iv. 18).

Faint Not.

III. "*Faint not.*" If you fear and fret, most likely you *will* faint. The first two are the parents, and the third the offspring. Therefore, if you would not faint, cherish the opposite of the two forbidden things, even courage, and contentment ; and from these will spring what one well calls, " a jewel in God's estimation," even *endurance* ; or " patient continuance in well-doing." " For My name's sake " says Christ, " thou hast borne and hast not fainted."

Not fainting, is opposed to desponding amidst sorrows, or while under God's correction. "Faint not when thou art rebuked of Him." Also to weariness in service. "In due season we shall reap, if we faint not." There is much need to watch against both these, especially when sorrows are heavy, or success is seemingly withheld. Even Job, so celebrated for his patience, fainted under his heavy load, and thought his case without parallel and beyond relief. Elijah "requested for himself that he might die," when such little results seemed to come from his ministry and miracles. Jonah fainted when he was very angry; and he fainted again when he fretted over his withered gourd, and we need not wonder at either. Surely we had need to entertain the kind caution, "faint not," as we contemplate these remarkable instances of fainting.

The way not to faint is simply and sincerely to inquire what is present duty, and having ascertained that, to set ourselves honestly and heartily to do it in the promised strength of grace. Whatever the circumstances of our case may be, however desolate or dangerous, there certainly must be a way to serve and honour God in connection with them. *God never leaves His people without something to do for His glory.* It may be humbling work, very small work, out of sight work, undoing, unlearning, or even pulling down work; but there it is somewhere: so search it out and do it. You are never excluded from glorifying your heavenly Father.

While seeking to glorify God in the fires, cultivate a spirit of *dependence* on Him, for guidance and strength; wait on Him, and He will assuredly give them. Faith will fetch a cordial from the promises, and hope will cause a breath of heavenly air so to fan the soul as to revive it again. "*I had fainted*" says David "*unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord, in the land of the living.*" Then strengthened himself, he speaks a hopeful word to others, "WAIT ON THE LORD, BE OF GOOD COURAGE, AND HE SHALL STRENGTHEN THY HEART; WAIT, I SAY, ON THE LORD."

With these gracious words of caution, *fear not, fret not, faint not*, let us connect one most positive and precious word from the lips of that kind, pitying Father, who "knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust." "I WILL NOT FAIL THEE, NOR FORSAKE THEE." Friends may fail, circumstances may change, enemies may conspire and unite; yea, old age may come with its depressing feelings, and manifold infirmities, flesh and heart may also fail;

but God says, and he means it : " I WILL NOT FAIL THEE." One to whom we have already referred, whose " feet were almost gone, whose steps had well-nigh slipped," realised this, and sang a joyous song of victory over fearing, fretting and fainting, in the triumphant words : " GOD IS THE STRENGTH OF MY HEART, AND MY PORTION FOR EVER."

The apostle renders the above words, which were first addressed to Joshua, thus : " I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee " (Heb. xiii. 5). In this passage is found (what Dr. Nevins calls) "*five negatives*," which he says, are " faithfully as well as beautifully brought out in the well known verse—

" The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes :
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never, forsake ! "

Therefore the apostle infers " *we* may boldly say, the Lord is *my* helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Think not then that it can be reasonable for you who trust alone in Jesus to give way to fears, to waste your soul's strength in fretting, or to lay down in despondency. Often call to mind the words " *I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee* " ; and if you need another weapon wherewith to fight this threefold foe, let it be (Isa. xli. 10) " Fear thou not, for I am with thee " : here is an antidote for all fears. When tempted to *fret* because of withholdings or inflictions, or apparent inequalities of Providence let the next words, " Be not dismayed, for I am thy God," calm and satisfy the soul. And if faintness in long and sore trial, or difficult service, or stern poverty, steals over the soul, remember who hath said, " I WILL STRENGTHEN THEE, YEA, I WILL HELP THEE, YEA, I WILL UPHOLD THEE WITH THE RIGHT HAND OF MY RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Bear in mind also that the Lord Jesus " spake a parable to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint." In connection, then, with " the sword of the Spirit," take what Bunyan calls, " the weapon of all prayer," meditate much also on those comforting words in Phil. iv. 6-7, " Be careful for nothing " ; so shall fears be scattered, fretting cease ; and instead of fainting, you shall sing, " He restoreth my soul ; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, for His name's sake." " I will hope continually, and will praise Thee more and more."

In closing, we would ask attention to one other *caution*, one oft-repeated, yet much needed prohibition, "FORGET NOT." "Remember, and forget not," was God's word to Israel, but it is recorded to their dishonour, "They soon forgot His works." "Forget not all His benefits," is a word with which we should often ply our souls, and thus persuade them "to continue in the grace of God." What immense importance did Paul attach to "keeping in memory the FACTS concerning Jesus" (1 Cor. xv. 1-3), and the WORDS which God hath spoken about him (Heb. ii. 1). Ah, we are prone to let them slip or "leak out." Therefore let us look to the Spirit of truth, the Comforter, to be to us the Remembrancer, that we may not only admire, but in some goodly measure attain unto what is contained in the grand old words of the prophet, and in the gracious declaration of the Lord Jesus, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in THEE." "These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace; in the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer (*fear not; fret not; faint not*); I have overcome the world." Let us not forget His words, who hath said, "I will no more remember thy sins," "yet will I not forget thee."

"'Tis a very great privilege to have burthens to bear while here; so thought our Lord."

"Trouble and distress sometimes make a blaze of prayer come out of two or three little coals of faith."

"The light that came out of the cloud to Israel must have had something of a very rich and soft character to a believing Israelite. How gentle was its touch to those whose fears and anxieties were healed by it!"

* * * *

"An Ambassador is not *of* the country into which he is sent, so we, having to bear witness for Christ down here, should do so according to the glory in which He has set us; and as being born from above, carry out into the daily details of our conversation the great and heavenly principles of that country to which by our new birth we belong."

* * * *

"If man be a sinner, you may *polish* a sinner, but he is a sinner still."

“DELIVERANCE AND LIBERTY.”

Notes of an Address by Mr. Alfred Mace, at the Temperance Hall, Boscombe,
March 6th, 1912.

Romans vii. vers. 24-25 ; Chap. viii. vers. 1, 11 and 19.

MY subject is “deliverance” and “liberty”; first for the Christian and then for Creation; for the Christian in *two* ways, and afterwards for Creation itself.

We must distinguish between “deliverance” and “liberty,” as the verse just read makes that necessary and important distinction. “The creature (Creation) itself also shall be *delivered from* the bondage of corruption *into the glorious liberty* of the children of God.” There is, as you see in that verse, the negative and positive: “deliverance” *from*, and *into* “liberty.” Deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

I wonder if all in this meeting know deliverance from their sins; from their connection with Adam; from the power of sin; and from the law.

In Romans 4, 5, 6 and 7 this fourfold deliverance is expounded. This it is which gives such force to the opening words in Chap. viii. 1, “There is therefore *now*.” That “now” does not refer to time, but is the conclusion of an argument. He has been explaining throughout the Epistle (of course led by the Spirit of God) how we may have deliverance from these four things. You and I have committed sins, one of which deserves hell fire for ever. They must be atoned for and put away, and in Romans iv. 25, we are told that “Christ was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification.” He died for our sins, and His resurrection becomes the public declaration on the part of God that those sins are gone for ever—raised for our justification.

I trust that all in this place know that wonderful part of our deliverance, that our sins are gone. They are to be remembered no more. The blood-shedding of our Lord Jesus Christ has put them away for ever. Are you *sure* of that?

But, dear friends, that is not all. It is in fact but the beginning. It is the first rung in this ladder of blessing; I shall never be condemned for my sins because Christ has borne them all away.

But besides the question of guilt, we belong to a fallen race. We are connected with Adam and his posterity by natural generation. "As by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Romans v. 12). There are two classes of persons in B—— to-night, and it may be that they are in this very hall; the one is connected with Adam fallen and the other with Christ risen. As believers, our link with the former is severed and we are now in association with our Lord Jesus Christ—who, as risen from the dead, has become the head of a new race.

Death—Christ's death—has broken the bond of the Adam connection. He has suffered the consequences—though absolutely free personally—for His own, of all that the first man had involved the race in.

An Evil Nature.

Then there is the fact of a sinful nature to be faced. We need not go far to find that out. You know what God said to Moses. He had only to put his "hand into" his own "bosom." It came out leprous. Is there a man here to-night who thinks he has no sin in him? Anyone who says he has no sin deceives himself. "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves." You *have* a sinful nature. It is this which makes the man of Romans vii. cry out "Oh, wretched man that I am." Not, "Oh *guilty* man that I am." In Romans iii. he is guilty. In Romans iv. he is happy. "Happy are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered." In Romans vii. he says, "Oh *wretched* man that I am." He is conscious of that awful inbred sin, that terrible evil nature. "Out of the *heart* of man proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies," and we have that same sinful nature in us. What has God done with that? He has condemned it. God has condemned sin in the flesh in the Person of His Spotless Son, and now the believer has deliverance from the power of the flesh. "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Christ's death has broken the link with sin. "In that He died, He died unto sin once . . . likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin." We have to reckon that death as if it were our own.

Deliverance from Law.

God has condemned sin in the flesh, in the cross of His Son. But what about the law? Turn to Romans vii. vers. 1-4: "Know

ye not brethren how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead she is loosed from the law of her husband." . . . "Wherefore my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

Now, dear friends, we find no mention of judgment in this opening verse in the 8th of Romans: "There is therefore now no condemnation." Why? Because everything has already been condemned in Christ. It is more than the fact that you won't come into judgment. There is nothing to be judged. Sins have been put away and the flesh judged. My connection with Adam fallen has been broken and I have died to the law through the body of Christ, and am married to another Who is risen from the dead. Oh the force, and the power, of the word "*Therefore.*" Look at that Blessed One. He is out from death risen and glorified; He is on the Father's throne. He has passed all the judgment, and you are in Him where judgment can never reach you. Dear friend, if at 8 o'clock to-night you were on your way to hell and you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, you would be in Him where judgment could never reach you.

"There is no condemnation, there is no hell for me,
The torment and the fire mine eye shall never see;
For me death has no judgment, for me death has no sting,
Because the Lord Who loves me shall shield me with His wing."

There is thus complete deliverance from the four things which held us in captivity, but that is not all. There is what theologians call (and rightly so) objective and subjective truth. The objective is that I am in Christ where there is no condemnation.

I was once very much troubled about indwelling sin. Oh, the awful thoughts I had—blasphemous, infidel—and I didn't want them. And then I heard Richard Weaver preach one Lord's Day morning in a theatre, and how he hammered at Romans viii. 1, and, somehow or another, I was not troubled after that. There is, therefore, *now* no condemnation. How can there be? Has He not passed the judgment and you are in Him?

Liberty.

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free." That is liberty. For me there is no condemnation, and the life of that risen Christ has come into me, and that is liberty.

Christian, that word "liberty" is yours, it belongs to you. The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free. There is a governing force, or principle, or power, or law, connected with the life of the risen Christ, and, beloved friends, in the power of the Holy Ghost you have the life of that risen Christ in you, and attached to that life is the law of liberty. The governing force connected with that life is one of liberty. Yes, you can go where you like; because what you will like will be to please Christ. I am talking of Christian liberty, and not fleshly lust. You will be like the star, keeping in its orbit by the power of the sun. If God said to you, "Where would you like to go? Any spot you like." Where would you go? To Palestine, Switzerland, across the Alps or the Rockies? No, you would go to Christ. What did He say to those standing round at the grave of Lazarus, "Loose him and let him go." And *where* does he go? You find him sitting alongside Christ, in the next chapter. They made Jesus a supper; and Lazarus sat at the table with Him. Your liberty will take you where Christ is. That is liberty, not licence, much less is it bondage. It is freedom.

Beloved friend, you are free from your head to your feet. Free in conscience, free in heart, free in mind. The Son has made you free. You have got the life of the risen Christ in you in the power of His blessed Spirit. In Him, that is objective, there is no condemnation, but He is in you in the power of the Spirit; that is subjective, and when someone says, "Would you like a cigar?" you have got liberty to say "No." You can say "No" to whist; and "No" to the theatre. You say "Yes" to Christ, and "No" to the Devil.

The word "law" in ver. 2, simply means a governing force. You are connected with the life of our Blessed Lord Who has risen from the dead, and you are free.

We have got no grave-clothes upon us. Some worldly people pity us. Don't pity us. You may blame us, and say we are not what we ought to be, but don't pity us. We are free, free in the life of Christ. We can go to where He is in the power of faith. Free of self occupation. "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." "The law of the spirit of life has made me free." It is individual, it is personal. It is myself that is made free, and, beloved friends, there is no greater blessing than this one of Christian liberty, which you have in the life of the risen Christ.

The Mortal Body.

Chap. viii. ver. 11, gives us the second part of the Christian's deliverance. "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."

God is going to quicken our mortal bodies. My soul is saved, and He is going to quicken my mortal body. It has nothing to do with faith healing.

Christ is coming, and then our mortal bodies will be quickened on account of the Holy Ghost dwelling in us. When the Lord Jesus Christ comes in the air, farewell mortal body, farewell weakness, farewell sickness and infirmity for ever.

"Soon shall we mount and soar away,
To the bright realms of endless day,
And sing with rapture and surprise,
His lovingkindness in the skies."

He is coming. Would you like to see Him? Would you think it queer if He came before 9.30 to-night? If you don't get into something like a rapture over His coming, there is a screw loose somewhere in your spiritual mechanism. Your heart should say "Amen, even so come Lord Jesus."

Here is the complete answer to the 7th of Romans: "Oh, wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from this body of death?"

First of all, spiritual liberty by having the Spirit of Christ in us. But what about the body? The same life that is now in our souls will be imparted to our bodies, and mortality is swallowed up of life. "Swallowed up," what grand words! The rheumatism swallowed up, and the weakness swallowed up. I have seen a young fellow in Devonshire who could not move hand or foot—I am speaking literally—who could not move his head or his feet. His body was absolutely rigid. I said to him, "Are you happy?" And he poured out his praise to God. It is easy to talk from a platform, but take his place. How would you like to change places with him?

At the coming of our Lord, those on earth will have their mortal bodies quickened and those who are asleep will be raised and changed, and that may take place to-night.

A little boy was going along the streets of Manchester, and he kept on repeating, "At three o'clock. At three o'clock." And a servant of Christ (the one who wrote that little book, "Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment") overheard him. He said, "My little man, what is going to happen at three o'clock?" The boy jumped, he thought he was all by himself. He turned round and said, "Mother has been away for a long time, and she is coming home at three o'clock."

I would like to say, are we as eager for Christ's return? Would your heart rejoice if the Lord would be here before ten o'clock to-night?

But that is not all. The

Creation itself is to be delivered

from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. The creation has been groaning and travailing for thousands of years. Cruelty, oppression and the effects of sin everywhere. Beloved friends, Creation is going to be delivered from it all. What a wonderful thing that is. The liberty of grace is a marvellous thing, but how about the liberty of glory, when the Lord Jesus Christ gets the reins of government; when all kings fall down before Him, and creation smiles under His benign rule for a thousand glorious years! There's a good time coming, but Socialism won't do it. Anarchy won't do it. But the Lord Jesus Christ will do it. Creation itself will be delivered from the bondage of corruption.

May that blessed day be hastened when He will be on His own Throne and we shall reign with Him. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory. The hosts are His people, and they are coming with Him when He comes as King to reign. I hope, my dear friends, you will be there among them. Will you? God grant it for Christ's sake. Amen.

It was not until Isaac was "weaned" that Ishmael mocked. It was "when the blade brought forth *fruit*" that the tares appeared (Gen. xxi. 8-9; Matt. xiii. 26). Satan always dreads active and fruit-bearing Christians, and seeks to hinder by mocking or opposing their work for God, but he does not trouble Christians who are good for nothing.

A GROUP OF GRACES.

Notes of an Address on 2 Peter i. 5-7.

By WILLIAM JEATER.

“ Yea, and for this very reason, using all diligence, in your faith supply valour, and in valour knowledge, and in knowledge self-control, and in self-control endurance, and in endurance piety, and in piety brotherly affection, and in brotherly affection love.”

THIS is hardly the occasion on which to trouble you with many words on the subject of the genuineness of this Epistle. Yet there cannot be many of us who do not know that in very early years, as well as in recent days, there were those who questioned, and there are those who still question, whether this is a document that is really from the pen of the Apostle Peter. In the early years of the Church, some of the books that form our Bible had a very hesitating welcome into the Canon of Scripture. So far from there being a stupid, uncritical acceptance of everything that professed to be an apostolic writing, there was such care as we should expect to find in the Church of God with reference to what claimed to possess apostolic authority. And this epistle, for a time under a cloud of suspicion, was at last received by the Church as a genuine letter of the Apostle Peter.

There is no possible alternative between that and downright forgery, however men may talk about the difference between the literary ethics of that time and of the present day. In every solemn way the writer claims to be Simon Peter, the servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, and to have been with Him on the Mount of Transfiguration. He is conscious that the end is near—the end that (as he says) “our Lord Jesus Christ showed me.” He refers to the memorable conversation beside the Sea of Galilee after the Resurrection, when his Master told him of the manner of the death by which he should glorify God. Such statements, as Dr. W. Griffith Thomas says, are “too definite and too solemn to admit of question,” or to let us believe that the Church of Christ “has been deceived all through the ages.”

Apart from those direct statements and claims, there are others that lie not so much on the surface. Experts in questions of forged documents know how much depends on water-marks in the paper.

These have often gone far to establish the genuineness or the falsity of documents that have been under suspicion. And in the case of this epistle there are certain things that prove, like water-marks, the origin and source of the document. "When thou art converted," said the Lord to His boasting and untried apostle, "strengthen thy brethren." And that word "strengthen," which must have burnt itself as a glad yet solemn charge upon the soul of St. Peter, comes out again and again in this epistle, in divers forms, as though the writer was altogether unconscious of quoting his Master's word. An imitator, says Dr. Lumby, who calls attention to this feature, "may carefully study and imitate the external marks of style in the author whom he intends to copy, but to enter into the man's mind, to look back with the vision of another over a life of which he has had no experience, and to reproduce touches the same in kind but different in particulars, yet such as would have been natural to the thought of the true writer, this is beyond imitator's work."

It has been necessary to say that much about the genuineness of the epistle, because the interpretation of the passage I have read turns upon the author, and upon the circumstances in which it was written. Those circumstances are very touching. It had been revealed to Peter by the Lord Jesus that very soon he must put off this tabernacle; he was consciously near to the glory, consciously near to the moment of his departure to the Saviour he had loved and served, and from that high eminence he addressed a last word to those who were dear to him in the faith, to whom he had written before.

A- Question.

And here a question may suggest itself to your minds. Having regard to the simplicity of the graces he urges upon his readers—the elementary character of the things they are to add to their faith—is it the sort of message we should expect from one who is so consciously near the Unseen? Has he no higher instruction than to exhort them to valour, knowledge, self-control, endurance? Well, that is his message, and it seems to me that this very simplicity of appeal is one of the indications of its genuineness. For in this respect it differs from the ordinary conception of what such an utterance would be, while it agrees with the corresponding message from both St. John and St. Paul. When John, an old

man, wrote his last message to the Church, what did he regard as the proof of a man's dwelling in the love of God? That he feeds and warms his brother who is cold and hungry—surely a most elementary duty of the Christian life! And when St. Paul writes in his swan-song to his son Timothy, along what line does his instruction run? He, like Peter, knew that the end was near; any moment might bring for him the axe of the executioner, the flash of which would mean his entrance into the presence of the King eternal, immortal, invisible. His fight was ended; his course was finished; he had guarded the faith and was ready to lay down his arms. And his message? It is that Timothy should not be ashamed of the Gospel; that he should continue in the things he had learned; that he should endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; that he should flee youthful lusts and keep himself pure. In fact, if you condense those clauses into single words, you find that, in St. Peter's language, they spell valour, self-control, endurance.

This may seem to some to move along a low level of Christian life and service, yet, when we come to think of it, its fitness makes itself felt. For the brighter the light that comes from the presence of God, the more vivid become the claims and duties of everyday life. These constitute the bulk of our existence here. God gives to all His pilgrims seasons of refreshing in the House Beautiful, and moments of vision from the Delectable Mountains. At the other extreme there is the conflict of Vanity Fair, or the agony of the Valley of Humiliation. But how large a proportion of the journey to the Celestial City lies along a way that has no features to make it memorable—that is simply covered over with the grey dust of the commonplace.

And after all, God's manifestations of Himself to us along that way are more needed, and are perhaps of more lasting value, than brief moments of spiritual exaltation, precious as these are. There is the sense of His presence at the Lord's Supper; and there may be also the sense of His nearness with us as we ply our daily task with busy feet,

“Through crowded street and wrangling mart.”

What I point out is that these three witnesses, Paul, John and Peter, men nearer to Christ spiritually than we can hope to be, and consciously near to that uplifting of the veil which would bring

them into Christ's immediate presence, laid all the emphasis of their teaching upon the very elements of Christian instruction, that a godly, righteous and sober life is what befits our confession. God saves us for eternity, but that salvation has to be manifested here, in every circumstance of daily life. The power of Christianity is shown, not only by the way in which we face the dread questions of death and destiny, but by our behaviour in circumstances that are cross-grained and trying. Home, business, our daily intercourse with Church and world, have in them an abundance of *little* things that put us severely to the test. And perhaps the trifles of life manifest what we really are more surely than its crises. A man in his home and among his own people is more truly himself, very often, than when taking part in some religious service.

What we are to add.

This is enough by way of introduction. Peter, assuming faith—the root-grace—in his hearers, charges them to add to it valour, or courage, knowledge, self-control or restraint, and patience, or endurance. These are the normal graces of the Christian character in itself. Then, as towards God, he calls for godliness or reverence; towards the brethren, brotherly-kindness; towards all men, charity or love.

“Add to your faith, valour.” One cannot help feeling that Peter is drawing the lesson from his own experience. The great confessions recorded in the gospels are his. “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matt. xvi. 16); “We believe and are sure that Thou art the Holy One of God” (John vi. 69, R.V.). Nothing could be more radiant than such confessions of faith. But at the moment of testing in the High Priest's court, not once but thrice his courage failed, and he denied the Lord he truly loved. Not less to-day than then is this valour needed, both in our intercourse with the world and in the Church. Physical persecution, for us, has passed, but the world assumes to itself superior airs, and looks down upon the Christian as a man deluded by obsolete ideas, or the slave of an oriental superstition. Some years ago there was a correspondence in one of the daily papers, led by a well-known literary man, on the theme, “Is Christianity played out?” His answer was “Yes.” And though there has been a rebound from that position during the intervening twenty years, the spirit of Robert Buchanan is still

sufficiently widespread, and a man who holds to the faith of Christ needs courage to accept the position of being considered intellectually inferior to the unbeliever. It is so easy to pose as being "advanced;" it is not easy to accept the reproach of being pledged to obsolete fancies, or as the popular slang of to-day puts it, of being "a back number."

But it is not in the world alone that we have need of courage. Perhaps even more do we need it in the Church. Paul was indeed brave in preaching Jesus as Messiah to the Jews; he needed greater courage to withstand Peter when Peter was erring from the truth of the Gospel. For who was Paul, they might well ask, that he, the former persecutor, should set himself against the chief of the Apostles—against a man who had had the incomparable blessing of three years' association with Christ? Paul did not love his task. It called for courage to withstand to the face an honoured senior in faith and service. And to-day, we may have to take our courage in both our hands, and within the Church, to protest against teaching that empties the Gospel of its power, or that ignores, though it may not deny, the Divine Personality of our adorable Lord. Or we may have to protest against practices, especially in connection with the raising of funds, that make the Church indistinguishable from the world. You will be twitted with asserting a greater spirituality for yourself than for your brethren. Yet loyalty to Christ may demand your stand. You will need courage. If what the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews calls "the reproach of Christ" meets us in the world, it is a stranger and a more painful fact that what St. Paul calls "the offence of the Cross" is too often shared by the faithful within the Church.

But courage needs to be informed by knowledge. That is the corrective of valour in excess. The Apostle does not call upon us to cultivate what worldly-wisdom calls "the better part of valour—discretion." He bids us add a fresh grace—the grace of knowledge. Courage alone is not the noblest of endowments. We speak of the courage of a bull, but it is an expression of the greatest contempt to say of a man that he goes at a thing like a bull at a gate. Ten years ago, South Africa was the wonder of the world for the courage of our soldiers, but very hard things were said about lack of brains in their leaders. And in the Church of God many a thing has been done that seemed bold and brave, which nevertheless lacked that

truest knowledge—the knowledge of Christ, His will, His purpose, His mind. Probably a thrill of joy—the joy of action—ran through Peter when he drew his sword and struck out on behalf of his Master ; it was brave, for he was inviting reprisals from the armed band, but where was his knowledge of that Master's will? Brethren, we need to grow in knowledge. We need to ask ourselves if our plans are intelligently conceived by minds that are taught of the Spirit.

Yet knowledge alone, and as an end in itself, is full of peril. "It puffeth up," says St. Paul. In the case of the Corinthians, the superior knowledge of some who have been dubbed "the intellectuals" in that congregation led them to set at nought the consciences of uninstructed brethren. Meats and drinks, asked they contemptuously, what are they but creatures to be used? True. Yet if the use of them by us harm others, it is no defence for us to plead their lawfulness, and to say that (as was involved in the Corinthian case) an idol was nothing. And so the call comes to add to our knowledge the grace of self-restraint, self-control. The determining question with regard to our conduct is not what I have *liberty* to do, but what will most help those for whom Christ died. If Christ went *so far*, surely we as His servants and followers, should keep a close hand upon ourselves in everything wherein we may influence others.

But the very existence of rigorous self-control on our part is apt to make us impatient of others whose conduct is not so ordered. Therefore, to our self-restraint we are to add patience towards others—the brave endurance of circumstances that are vexing and burdensome. It is sometimes a bitter piece of schooling when our self-denials and restraints are made by others occasions of imposing upon us, when meekness is misread as feebleness of spirit and we become the target for insult. But here again Christ becomes our Pattern ; when threatened, He answered not ; when reviled, He reviled not again ; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously. This grace is perhaps the most difficult to acquire, and though misread by the world, it is not the least noble.

What follows must be dealt with in a sentence or two only. At the heart of our patience, which is far other than a mere stoical non-human contempt of pain in body or emotions, there must be the sense of God—the God of patience. And this leads St. Peter

to the thought of reverence or godliness, piety, veneration. It is an awful state for a man to lapse into, when there is nothing left to him that he holds to be sacred, and reverence becomes a lost grace. Tennyson wrote to his future wife: "What matters it how much a man knows and does if he keep not a reverential looking upward? He is only the subtlest beast in the field."* This is true. Even in the Christian, familiarity with sacred things, and the constant use of the Holy Names of God and of Christ may lead to an unthinking habit of mind, and the putting our shoes from off our feet may seem an unnecessary act of humility. We need to echo the poet's prayer—

May knowledge grow from more to more,
And more of reverence in us dwell.

Then the thought of the Apostle turns to the brethren, and he charges his readers to add the grace of brotherly-kindness. That grace is needed to-day. A congregation that is kept together only by the attractiveness of some particular preacher who happens to be the minister for the time being, and not by the bonds of Christian sympathy that links member to member and all to Christ is not a church at all. There is the *possibility* of a church, but it is no more a church than a measure of unground wheat is a loaf.

Finally, with a wider sweep of his vision that takes in all men, he bids them add love, the crown and perfection of all. And it is only as this grace of love is developed that we become, in Paul's startling phrase, imitators of God. His kindness and love towards man has been manifested—He has loved the world.

"If these things be in you," the apostle adds—the words indicate permanent possession—"and abound, they shall make you neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Unbelieving Israelites say of the Lord (Deut. i. 27) exactly what "the nations" say (Deut. ix. 28). What an humbling lesson for us. Unbelief in a believer brings him to the level of the world.

* * * *

Unbelief of the present blots out "all" we have "seen" of the Lord's power in the past, and prevents our enjoying all the "good" things He has for us in the future (Deut. i. 28-36).

* Tennyson: A. C. Benson, p. 112.

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LIVING OR DYING—THE LORD'S.

By WILLIAM JEATER.

WHEN Charles Spurgeon was dying, he was visited by a friend, to whom he said: "My theology is now summed up in four words. It is perhaps not enough to live by, but it is enough to die by—'Jesus died for me.'"

Not enough to live by, but enough to die by! Many of us, I fear, would have thought the words were the rambling of a dying man. For most of us regard Death as the last dread enemy against whom we need to be specially armed, while Life is our friend and cheery companion. Death is darkness; Life is sunlight. Surely the dying man had unconsciously tripped in his words?

Yet Spurgeon was right. The Cross alone is enough to die by; it is not enough to live by. The dying saint was not belittling the Cross. He had gloried in it. He had preached it with a fervent power that was apostolic in its quality. His name is becoming a memory, perhaps, but it is a memory that is charged with the preaching of the Cross.

Sometimes at eventide the atmosphere is rarified and clear, and the eyes get a truer sense of the perspective and of the bearing of objects than is possible when they are blurred in the heat of the day. And Spurgeon, looking back on life and forward on death, saw that what met the need before him would not alone suffice if he had to return to the conflict and the toil of life. It was a passport that he needed at the gate which on this side is called Death, and on the other is "Life indeed" (1 Tim. vi. 19 R.V.); but for this present life, with its warfare and conflicts, its victories and its defeats, its successes and its failures, what is wanted is an armour, a power, a strength and an indument. These are found in other facts of the Christian faith, such as that Christ was not only for us in His death, but that He is with us and in us, here and now, and that, living or dying, we are His. The Cross of Calvary can never be far from our hearts. It will be our only peace and source of assurance as our feet touch the river. No recollection then of

endeavour or of achievement will be enough to make us take boldly the last solemn step. Christ and His Cross alone will lighten the gloom of "the Valley." But for the living there is the glad knowledge that in our weakness Christ is our strength; He is not only *near*, but, as St. Paul says, with a joyous reiteration that runs through all his teaching, Christ is in us and we in Him. And at the last, an old man, in prison, shut off from those he loved, surrounded by a pagan soldiery and in the power of the brutal Nero, he affirmed that he was able to do all things through Christ Who strengthened him.

It was this thought, the awful demands of our life and the ample provision that is ours in regard to that life, which doubtless was behind Mr. Spurgeon's words. Death is earnest, but Life is earnest too. Perhaps we do not realise the solemnity of either one or the other, and even when we do think of them, we misplace the emphasis.

It is not often that Paul speaks of the death of the believer. For him the coming of the Lord was too vivid a belief to allow him to contemplate the passing of the years with their inevitable toll of the living. Once indeed (1 Thess. iv. 16) he speaks of "the dead," but the word is transformed by the addition of the phrase that means so much—"in Christ." When the thought of death comes to his mind it takes the form of being put to sleep by Jesus (1 Thess. iv. 14) or of striking the camp in order to move on to the next stage,* or in an allied figure, of taking down the tent of one's temporary abode (2 Cor. v. 1). One might almost say that death comes very little into his thought; certainly never with the dread imagery and rhetorical figures of many of our hymns and of much devotional poetry. More than once he brackets life and death together, much as though they were the two sides of a shield, or the obverse and reverse of a coin. He sums up a man's course in the words, "living and dying." "For me," he writes, "to live is Christ; to die is gain." Life and death were differing means by which alike Christ might be magnified. And in a passage of wider application he says that whether we live, we live unto the Lord; whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Rom. xiv. 8).

"The Lord's!" One might confidently say that if the apostle were appealed to to say what thought gave him strength for his

* This is the figure that underlies the word translated "depart," (Phil. i. 23). The word is also used of weighing anchor.

arduous toils, it would be his consciousness that he was the Lord's. From the day that he was "apprehended" by the Lord Jesus, the sense of being Christ's was one of constraining obligation and of exceeding joy. And we may say of him, as we can say of few others, that the consciousness of Christ's personality and of Christ's ownership of him were the twin stars by which he steered his course. Regret and repentance for the past indeed came into his life. But more than this was the constraining power of a new love that time never weakened. The story of his life and toils is so familiar to us that it has lost some of its power to surprise and to inspire, yet as we recall his deeds and his daring, his services and his sufferings among his own countrymen and among the Gentiles, we can only magnify the grace of God in him, and seek to learn his secret. For he at least had found something that was "enough to live by."

That secret was the abiding consciousness that he was the Lord's. If he lived, he was the Lord's; if he died, he was the Lord's; it was one and the same to him, except that for him personally the departing to be with Christ was very far better. Yet if his remaining meant a larger measure of the joy of faith to those among whom he laboured, he was happy to remain. The assurance that the will of his Lord was the best thing that could happen to him, kept him free from anxiety.

If the consciousness of our relation to the Lord, as being His in life or death, took possession of us as it possessed the apostle, how immeasurably it would exalt, ennoble and calm our lives! Because we are His, both what we are and what we have should receive a deeper meaning.

In the first place, it speaks of *the Lord's claims upon us*. In this there cannot be any sense of irksomeness or of unwelcome constraint if we are abiding in Him Who loved us and gave Himself for us. The low standard of Christian life and service which we all have to lament arises from our feeble apprehension of what Christ has done for us and of His consequent claim upon us—a claim, the cords of which are the silken strands of love. We are the Lord's; therefore our profession of His Name may not be limited to so-called religious services or to sacred days. It should govern our week-day with its absorbing occupations of business and of recreation. It should control our church-life and our service in the church. In our personal acts, our speech, our thoughts,

we may not do, say, or harbour anything that is opposed to His spirit. This thought of the apostle's is a veritable searchlight ; if only we let it play upon our character and our life it will send us again and again in deep humility of heart to Him Whose we are, that by the cleansing of His grace we may conform more closely to His will.

Moreover, the word is one of infinite gladness, for *it assures us of His guardianship and of His provision for us in life and in death.* If life means warfare, the Christian knows he is not left to undertake it at his own charges. If death means mystery, he goes to it and through it with the One Who "holds the keys." And so St. Paul read everything in the light of this glorious truth of being possessed by Christ. If his purposes and plans in his work were thwarted, it was the Spirit of Jesus Who suffered him not to carry out his project (Acts xvi. 7). At Rome, when he seemed to be given over to the hostile powers, and every friend forsook him, the Lord stood by him and strengthened him.

Very especially, this thought should be *a cure for our cares.* For many Christians to-day what is needed is not so much a dis-suasive from the sins of the flesh as a word of cheer against the weaknesses of the spirit—against doubts concerning the faithfulness of God—against mistrust and anxiety about the future—against a readiness to see lions in the way, or to imagine that the Hill Difficulty in front of us is an unscaleable mountain. Some Christians' lives might be epitomised by the word "worry." It is a form of sin that is very prone to beset us, for, after all, it is sin—the sin of unbelief. It is the more reprehensible if we can recall occasions, as most of us can, when the Lord's delivering Hand manifestly appeared for us. But *that* set of circumstances, our unbelieving heart tells us, was so different from the present, or from the conditions that seem to be looming ahead. That may be the case. The reply is that no conditions are too hard for the Lord. *They may vary ; but He is the same.*

The experience of many Christians seems to be that it is harder to trust and to be at rest in relation to passing circumstances than it is to trust our salvation to the Lord's keeping. It sometimes seems that something like a fresh surrender of ourselves is needed to receive the full comfort from this thought that in living as in dying we are the Lord's, and that abundant provision for all the

needs of our life is to be found in Him. It is not an experience that can be acquired at second-hand from books, however learned, nor from teachers, however devout. But on the knees of our heart, in the school of Christ, we can humbly learn this truth with its enriching, uplifting power, and shall find that in Christ we are equipped not only for death, but for life.

“WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW?”

A Hymn for the Children.

I often wonder Children, dear,
If you would greatly like to know
A little more of Jesus Christ,
The Lord of Heaven, Who loves us so!
Why did He leave His throne on high?
He came to bring His Father's love,
And tell us He is always nigh
In spirit, watching from above.

Refrain.

O yes, I like to know, indeed I like to know
More of the Saviour Jesus Christ
The Lord Who loves us so.

- 2 He came to prove “the Bible” true,
That “love is stronger far than death,”
And though our sinful hearts He knew,
“Forgive” He cried with dying breath:
No greater love could ever be
Than for his friend a man should die,
But Jesus died on Calvary's tree
That we might live eternally.

Refrain—O yes, I like to know.

- 3 When the dear Saviour was on earth,
Children were brought for Him to bless,
He took them in His arms of love,
Enfolding them in fond caress.
And in the “Book of God” we read,
Some would have sent the lambs away,
But, oh! 'tis sweet to hear Him plead,
“Suffer the little ones to stay.”

Refrain—O yes, I like to know.

- 4 And will He take me, if I come?
O! will He bless and save me too?
May I His little one become,
O! tell me, tell me, is it true?
Yes, tell me, for 'tis good to hear
Of Him Who left His Father's throne,
The Story old, is ever dear,
That tells of God, and His dear Son.

Refrain.

O yes, I like to know, it is so good to know,
Of Him Who died on Calvary
Because He loved us so.

- 5 And will He never turn away,
 A little child though weak and poor?
 But if I humbly to Him pray,
 Will Jesus open mercy's door?
 Say! will He take me as I am,
 And teach me what is good and right,
 Guide, and protect His little lamb,
 Then take me to His Home of Light?
Refrain—O yes, I like to know.
- 6 O yes, in very deed and truth,
 "The Holy Bible" tells us plain
 That they who make "The Lord their trust"
 Shall never seek His face in vain.
 Yes, you may trust without a fear
 That with you He will always stay.
 For "Jesus is the Children's Friend,"
 In times of grief, or hours of play.
- Refrain.*
- O now I long to know,
 I long so much to know
 Of the dear Lord, Who died for me,
 Because He loved me so.

THE ETERNAL COVENANT.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Heb. xiii. 20-21).

EVERYTHING in the Epistle to the Hebrews is eternal. The Jewish system, hoary in its Sinaitic origin, had already been morally set aside in the death of Christ, and was now about to be swept out of the sight of both God and man by the ruthless legions of Rome. "That which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away" is the word of the writer in chap. viii. 13. But Christ has introduced another order of things which, by reason of the majesty of His person and the perfection of His work, must needs abide for ever. Hence, He is the "Author of *eternal* salvation unto all them that obey Him"; He has "obtained an *eternal* redemption"; and He has secured for God's called ones "the promise of an *eternal* inheritance" (Heb. v. 9; ix. 12-15).

The old covenant has been divinely set aside as faulty. It depended upon man. "Thou shalt" was God's word to the

creature, constantly reiterated. But since man never does what he ought to do, anything that is contingent upon his fidelity can never gratify the heart of God. Accordingly, in the new covenant, "I will" is substituted for "thou shalt" (Heb. viii. 10-12). Everything thus rests with God. His love will have its way, even in regard to the most unworthy. He gives because He delights to give, and He blesses because it is His sovereign pleasure to bless. Creature deservings have nothing whatever to do with His wonderful ways of goodness in connection with the new covenant.

Let us see to it that we understand the force of the word "covenant" as used in Scripture in relation to God's dealings with man. Let us not confound it with a "bargain," wherein two contracting parties, acting upon equal terms, bind themselves toward each other. God could never stoop to bargain with His own creatures. God's covenant is the declaration of the terms (laid down by Himself without consultation with those to whom He addresses Himself) upon which He will have to do with His people. Of old it was the principle of obedience, with blessing dependent thereupon; now it is sovereign grace, fruit of His own eternal thoughts of love.

This is necessarily abiding. The law has run its disciplinary course, and the evil of man has been exposed thereby; now God is free to tell out all that is in His heart for His poor perishing creatures. There can be no advance upon God's present terms of dealing with His people; neither can God ever find fault with His own plan of grace; the covenant is therefore everlasting. Our God be praised!

The *spring* of everything for us is God's own sovereign disposition towards His people; the *foundation* is the blood of Christ ("this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" Matt. xxvi. 28); and the *assurance* is the fact that God has "brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep." Well may such a God declare Himself "the God of peace." His own matchless working has dispelled once for all every cloud of judgment, and has ended for ever the controversy between man and God.

Well might the apostle pray for us, and most suitably might we pray for ourselves, that there might be produced in us all that is well-pleasing in His sight. His will should be our deep delight. Yet even this is the fruit of His own divine operation within our hearts. Truly it is all of grace.

“THE YEARS THAT THE LOCUST HATH EATEN.”*

By RUSSELL ELLIOTT.

“ I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten ” (Joel ii. 25).

IF we are to understand the full force of this passage, and the richness of the promise it contains, we must remind ourselves of the terrible effect of a plague of locusts in the east. It will be remembered that one of the ten plagues of Egypt took this form. It is thus described in the Book of Exodus, chapter x. 14-15 : “ *And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt ; very grievous were they . . . for they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened ; and they did eat every herb of the field, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left : and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt.* ”

In the most graphic language, the prophet Joel depicts the devastation wrought by these insects. He tells us, “ The land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness ” (Joel ii. 3).

Another description tells us that they come as “ thick as snowflakes, darkening the sky, the rustling of whose wings is as the sound of a broad river.”

Yet, in the face of this terrible scourge, and in the presence of bare fields and ruined harvest, God says, “ *I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten.* ” Does not the extent of the calamity only make the promise more wonderful and more welcome ?

May we not derive some comfort from this promise for ourselves, even though living in a country where this spoiler is a stranger ? Are there not locusts of another sort ? In other words, are not human lives often laid bare—does there not come, from one cause or another, what seems often like irreparable loss ? Years of sorrow, sickness, or some form of suffering, when life seems stripped of all that it once promised us : barren patches, produced by our own failure, or the failure of others : a wilderness stretching across

* The above complete in booklet form, price 2d. each or 1s. 3d. per doz. post free, 34, Cliff Road, Hyde Park, Leeds.

our life, which the memory can never recall without a pang or a shudder? If our experience is anything akin to this, is there not a wonderful comfort contained in the promise, "*I will RESTORE the years that the locust hath eaten*"?

Sorrow.

1. *Some sorrow may have darkened your life.* Just as the sun and moon and stars may be darkened by a swarm of locusts, so it seems as if the sun would never shine again for you; at least, not in the same way. But God can make you forget that you were ever sad. "*I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten.*"

Your sorrow may be caused by disappointment in someone you love. The locusts have come up upon your married life. The field from which you expected such a rich harvest of happiness is almost bare. You look back, perhaps, over years of emptiness, years devoid of that which you covet most. You expected to be made much of; you anticipated that every attention would be paid to your wishes; you hoped that everything would be laid at your feet, and you thought of all you would give in return. But the locusts have come; and they seem to have left very little. Can you trust God to restore these years? Will you not take this promise home to your own heart, and *count* upon the One Who made it?

Or the sorrow may be over a son or daughter. He promised so well. There was a time when he obeyed your will and sought to please you. He had gifts; but they have been squandered. He has spent his all, but has not yet returned to you. You are silent about him now. Once you loved to talk of him. But think of what God can do: "*I will restore the years that the locust hath eaten.*"

Financial Trouble.

2. *You may have met with misfortune in financial matters.* In temporal affairs life seems to be something of a desert compared with what it was. The locusts have left little of those luxuries and comforts you once thought essential to your happiness. You have moved to a smaller house, been compelled to abolish your carriage and dismiss some of your servants. Not only this, but some of your friends have vanished with these appurtenances. If He does not see fit to give you back these earthly possessions you once prized so much and have lost, He can, in a higher and better way, "restore

to you the years which the locust hath eaten." He wants you to understand how very, very small a part of real happiness depends upon external things ; for the world can never, never give peace ; the more people possess of it the more anxiety they often have : and He wants you to possess that which He alone is able to give, " the peace which passeth all understanding " : that peace of which Christ spoke when He said, "*Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you : not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid*" (John xiv. 27).

Bereavement.

3. " The years that the locust hath eaten." Is it through *bereavement* in your case ? Is it husband, wife, son or daughter, lover or friend who has been taken from you ? Whoever it may be, you feel that life is dreary ; it has lost its zest ; things fail to interest you as once they did. Some reading these lines may remember the story, told by Washington Irving in his Sketch Book, of a young Irish girl, whose lover was an Irish patriot, and who, during the troubles in Ireland was tried, condemned, and executed on a charge of treason. From this blow the young woman never recovered. " The most delicate and cherishing attentions," we are told, " were paid her by families of wealth and distinction. She was led into society, and they tried by all kinds of occupation and amusement to dissipate her grief, and wean her from the tragical story of her love. But it was all in vain. There are some strokes of calamity which scathe and scorch the soul—which penetrate to the vital seat of happiness—and blast it, never again to put forth bud or blossom. She never objected to frequent the haunts of pleasure, but she was as much alone there as in the depths of solitude. Nothing could cure the silent and devouring melancholy that had entered into her very soul. She wasted away in a slow, but hopeless decline, and at length sank into the grave, the victim of a broken heart."

Such is the sad account. How true it is, " The sorrow of this world worketh death." How differently it might have turned out had there been any one near to lead her to the true source of peace and rest. She needed an object greater and better and more satisfying than the one she had lost. This God alone can supply ; but this He has supplied—it is Christ. The One Who promises rest to those who come to Him : Who has said, "*He that followeth*

Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life”; and Whose words to a once empty hearted woman, still remain to do for us what they did for her: “*If thou knewest the gift of God, and WHO it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water.*” If He is once known, however sore the heart may be, it can be solaced; however broken, it can be healed; however empty, it can be filled.

Probably few men suffered more from bereavement than Jacob. He never forgot the death of Rachel. With his dying breath, almost, her name is upon his lips. “*As for me, . . . Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way.*” For twenty years he was separated from his favourite son, all the while believing him to be dead; and for a time he had to part even with Benjamin. And yet Jacob’s last days were his best days.

* * * *

Away from God.

4. “The years that the locust hath eaten” sometimes take another form. They are years spent away from God *in the pursuit of worldly pleasure and self-gratification*. How empty it leaves the heart, especially if Christ has been once known. The wail of Naomi on her return from the land of Moab has often gone up since: “*I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty.*” Yes, the novel and the newspaper are no substitutes for the Bible: the play and the dance cannot replace communion with God: the friendship of the world is a poor exchange for the companionship of Christ. Yet how many have tried it. Professing Christians have virtually given up their profession, and launched out on an unknown sea, without chart or compass. Their baptism, in which they, or others on their behalf, undertook to renounce the pomps and vanities of this world, has been made a dead letter, their vows have been forgotten—the most solemn undertakings neglected. Is it any wonder the fields are bare? Is it any wonder there are years that the locust hath eaten?

God allowed the locusts to come as a judgment upon His people of old when they had departed from Him. Has He had to deal like that with you because of your waywardness and wandering? Naomi had to confess, “*The Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me*” (Ruth i. 21).

“ A lady was spending the summer in Switzerland. One day, as she climbed the mountain-side, she came to a shepherd’s fold. There sat the shepherd. Around him lay his flock. Near at hand, on a pile of straw, lay a single sheep. It seemed to be in suffering. Scanning it closely, the lady saw that its leg was broken. ‘ How did it happen ? ’ she asked. To her amazement, the shepherd answered : “ Madam, I broke that sheep’s leg.’

“ A look of pain swept over the visitor’s face. Seeing it, the shepherd went on : ‘ Madam, of all the sheep in my flock, this one was the most wayward. It never would obey my voice. It never would follow in the pathway in which I was leading the flock. *It wandered to the verge of many a perilous cliff and dizzy abyss.* And not only was it disobedient itself, but it was ever leading the other sheep of my flock astray. I had before had experience with sheep of this kind. So I broke its leg. The first day I went to it with food it tried to bite me. I let it lie alone for a couple of days. Then I went back to it. And now, it not only took the food, but licked my hand, and showed every sign of submission and even affection. And now let me tell you something. When this sheep is well, as it soon will be, it will be the model sheep of my flock. No sheep will hear my voice so quickly. None will follow so closely at my side. Instead of leading its mates astray, it will now be an example and a guide for the wayward ones, leading them with itself, in the path of obedience to my call.’ ”

Has God been dealing with you in a way somewhat similar to the shepherd with his sheep ? It is because He loved you. That is why He would not leave you alone. He missed your face. He wants again to enjoy your company. And so He broke the link that was binding you to the world and its frivolities. And now, if you will only be true to Him and trust Him, He can restore the years that the locust hath eaten. You will never know, perhaps, how He preserved you in your wanderings. How He followed *you*, though you had refused to follow *Him*. Those years spent away from Him and out of communion have been wasted years. Your soul was neglected and remained unnourished ; spiritual joys were unknown to you ; your energies were not spent in His service ; your whole life received an impress of the vain world for which you lived. You lived and moved and had your being, not for God, or even for the highest part of you, but for your lower self. Happy indeed if

you are beginning to find this out : if your eye is resting now upon a brighter object ; and you are beginning to say,

“ Jesus, Thou art enough
The mind and heart to fill.”

Saint Augustine.

Saint Augustine could look back upon the years that the locust had eaten. But how wonderfully God restored them to him. “ He wrote one hundred and eighteen books, sermons, letters, tracts, and notes on different parts of the Bible ; and they have all been bound together in twenty immense volumes.” “ He had not always been holy. When he became a young man he fell into open and abominable sin, and he also turned away from the true faith. . . . His mother, Monica, never ceased to pray for him. . . . As for Augustine himself, he always hoped that some day or other he should repent ; and he used to pray, ‘ Lord make me holy, but not now.’ ” How good of God not to take him at his word, and to be better to him than his thought. One day after hearing of some of the saints of earlier times, he rose from his chair, and went into the garden in great agony of mind, and threw himself on the ground. While in this position “ he heard a sweet voice as of a child that cried, ‘ *Take up and read ! take up and read !* ’ He looked round, and saw a copy of St. Paul’s Epistles lying on the grass. He took up the book and opened at this verse : ‘ Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying ; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.’ From this moment he was changed, and then he thought it would be for the glory of God if he gave a history of his former life.” “ Thus he speaks of himself : ‘ I wish,’ he says, ‘ to call to remembrance my past vileness, and the corruptions of my soul, not because I love *them*, but that I may love Thee, O my God. I do this for the love of Thy love, calling to mind my most evil ways, that, when I feel the bitterness of my own sin, then I may also feel how sweet Thou art.’ ”

Thus God made the sinner into a saint. Is there anyone reading these lines who has had the first part of Augustine’s experience ? A life wasted with sin. Spectres gaunt and grim rise up to greet you as you review the past. He Who restored the years for St. Augustine can do this for you.

* * * *

You must leave the *manner* of the restoration of the years to Him. The way to ensure *it* is the important matter, and that is indicated in this same second chapter of Joel: "**Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to Me with all your heart . . . and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil. Who knoweth if He will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him. And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten.**"

How many years? We are not told. Only this: "I will restore the years." If not in time, yet eternity will be long enough.

HELP TO THE STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

By WALTER SCOTT.

AS to the best method of studying the Bible, no rule can be laid down. Minds are differently constituted. Some first apply the telescope, then the microscope to the study of the sacred Scriptures; others again, just reverse the order. From a broad and comprehensive examination down to careful and minute detail would certainly suggest itself to us as the wisest and most profitable method of Bible study, *i.e.*, from telescope to microscope. We will never make the least progress in the *divine* knowledge of the Word of God (for such the Bible is) unless we bring to bear upon our biblical studies three truths of commanding importance: *First*, the soul's recognition of the verbal inspiration of the original Scriptures. The absolute authority of God over the whole being of man is based on this rock-bed of revealed truth. *Second*, Christ in all Scripture, not creation, the Jew, or the Church, but Christ in one or other of His Personal or Official glories is God's great subject in the Bible. What a loss where *this* is missed. *Third*, ever occupy the place and seat of the learner. Never read the Bible to criticise, to find fault, to pick holes. The Bible does not address itself to *reason*, but to *faith*.* The Holy Ghost is the Teacher. The Bible our only text-book.

In the Old Testament we have Christ in *shadow*. In the New Testament we have Christ in *substance*. Both Testaments form

* There is nothing in it contrary to reason, but a great deal that is beyond it.—*Ed.*

but one book—one completed Revelation. The Lord Himself arranged the 39 books of the Old Testament into three main divisions. This is exceedingly helpful. Our first clue, therefore, to our studies in this matchless Volume is supplied by the Lord, risen from the dead, and in a passage seldom referred to by biblical students. In Luke xxiv. 44, we read, "And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the *Law of Moses*, and in the *Prophets*, and in the *Psalms* concerning Me." Here, then, is our first lesson. Within these three divisional titles the whole of the books of the older Revelation are embraced.

"The Law of Moses" embraces the first five books of the Bible. Those five books by themselves form an independent course of study. The following simple words would briefly indicate the main characteristics of the several books. **Beginning** (Genesis) of Creation, of plant and animal life, of human history, of sin, of sacrifice, of civilisation, of government, of patriarchal life, of judgment, of national history, of God's works and ways, &c.

The main feature of Exodus may be expressed in one word **Deliverance**. The Deliverance is two-fold; first from Divine Judgment (xii.), second from Captivity to Satan (xiv.). The overthrow of Pharaoh and his host, type of satanic power, is grandly celebrated in song (xv.). We have, too, the history, trials, and testings of the Deliverer Moses. His life of 120 years being divided into three periods of 40 years each. Then the state of the people before and after their mighty Deliverance, and Jehovah's relation to the nation under law, then mixed law and grace, and lastly, the revelation of Christ in the institution of the Tabernacle, its covering, vessels and services.

As we open the sacred pages of Leviticus, the thought of **Atonement** naturally arises in our minds. Now two things are essential to effect Atonement, namely, Sacrifice and Priesthood. and those very truths are prominent features of this book. Moses the Mediator, could *deliver* in the power of Jehovah. Aaron the High Priest, alone could *atone* in the grace of Jehovah. Sacrifice is the basis of Atonement. Priesthood the instrumental means of making the blood available in the presence of God and before His Throne. Hence, to make Atonement (xvi.), the blood of the Sacrificial Animal was *shed* at the brazen Altar, and then *sprinkled* by the High Priest on and before the Mercy Seat in the holiest of all—"Heaven itself."

In Genesis, the *Works* of God occupy the first 11 chapters. The remaining 39 chapters display the varied *Ways* of God, chiefly in connection with four persons. In Exodus, the stirring scenes are laid in the ancient land of Egypt, and in the wilderness lying between it and Canaan. Faith, in energetic action chiefly by Moses the Deliverer, is a marked feature of this interesting book. But the faith and acts herein described centre in one word **DELIVERANCE**. In Leviticus the Sanctuary is the point of view. Holiness is stamped everywhere and on everything, but it is a sanctity founded on the grand and vital truth of **ATONEMENT**.

But now we leave the Tabernacle, and its rich unfoldings of grace, and take our place in the Desert. This is the book of Numbers. What is the characteristic word embodying the main truth in the fourth book of Scripture? We term it **Service**. In Exodus Moses is prominent. In Leviticus Aaron is the leading personage. In Numbers the Levites are chiefly in action. The priest represented *worshipping* Israel. The Levites represented *servicing* Israel: service in the wilderness.

The fifth book of Scripture—Deuteronomy—has a character as distinct and peculiar as any of the preceding books. Here the wilderness is reviewed. The characteristic thought of the book is **Obedience**, the practical ground of blessing and safety. In Genesis we have God and the *Patriarchs*. In Exodus we have God and the *Mediator*. In Leviticus we have God and the *Priests*. In Numbers we have God and the *Levites*. In Deuteronomy we have God and the *People*.

<i>Beginning</i>	-	-	-	Genesis.
<i>Deliverance</i>	-	-	-	Exodus.
<i>Atonement</i>	-	-	-	Leviticus.
<i>Service</i>	-	-	-	Numbers.
<i>Obedience</i>	-	-	-	Deuteronomy.

The Pentateuch is the foundation of all Revelation, and its careful study is sure to yield a rich harvest of spiritual blessing.

“The Prophets” is the second great division of the Old Testament. Within the brief designation is comprehended the historical books from Joshua to Esther, and the prophetic books from Isaiah to Malachi—in all 29 books. Prophecy signifies *forth-telling*, not necessarily *future-telling* (see John iv. 19; 1 Cor. xiv. 1, 3). In these texts it was the then present, and not the future, which is

referred to. In the historical books the mind of God for *present* duty is declared. In the prophetic books the mind of God as to the *future* is disclosed. The term, "the prophets," comprehends both.

"The Psalms." In this third divisional title of the Old Testament the following five books are embraced: Job, the Book of Psalms, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. These five books contain, in full, the exercises of the human heart expressed in Hebrew poetry. Carefully distinguish between "the Psalms"—a divisional title—and "the Book of Psalms"—this latter is the inspired designation of one of the five books grouped under the general title "the Psalms" (Luke xx. 42; Acts i. 20).

The writer has been greatly helped in the study of the Old Testament, simplified by the Lord's division into those three great sections of the older Revelation. The more you read the Bible, the more precious it becomes. Other books you read tire you in course of time. But not so the Bible. The interest grows the more it is read. The Bible will make men and women of you. Its truths will establish your character and confirm you, for the Bible and Prayer link the soul with God.

FULL SALVATION.

ROMANS i.-iii.

By R. E.

CHAP. i. 8-15. The first seven verses present to us Christ, God's Son, as the One Who has power for the blessing and salvation of men. The gospel is for all nations, for there is no other Name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved. There is salvation in no other.

The verses under consideration show us the link that is formed between those who accept Christ as their Saviour. So strong is that link that even though the apostle had never visited Rome, and had not founded the Church there, his words seem to throb with affection towards those to whom he writes. He thanks God for their faith, for that is the mark of all God's children. He continually mentioned them in his prayers, though most of them he had never seen (ver. 9). He longed to see them (vers. 10-11),

in order that their faith might strengthen him, as well as his impart something to them. (ver. 12). He had oftentimes purposed to come, but had been hindered, for he wished to preach the gospel to them at Rome, the then capital of the world. How little he knew, at that time, that when he did go it would be as a prisoner.

Ver. 16. As he writes the words contained in this verse, does he think of the mighty power of Rome at that time, her legions victorious in every quarter of the globe, and her sovereignty owned in all parts of the then known world? and is he conscious that he carried a greater power still, a power that could save men from their sins and from a worse slavery than man could impose? "I am not ashamed of the gospel" he says, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." The gospel is not a remedy devised by man, it is the power of God exercised on man's behalf for his complete emancipation from sin, Satan and death. When the Lord Jesus was on earth we see that power exhibited. With the finger of God Christ cast out Satan (Luke iv. 33-5; xi. 20). He claimed to have power on earth to forgive sins (Luke v. 24). He raised the dead (Luke vii. 11-15; John xi. 40-44). Is it any wonder the Apostle Peter summed up our Saviour's mission in these words, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed with the Devil: for God was with Him" (Acts x. 38)? All this power reached its climax in His death and resurrection. For He was "once offered to bear the sins of many"; "through death He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the Devil"; and He also "annulled death and brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel." So that a complete SALVATION is ours if we believe the gospel. Faith links us to the very power of God. God can do anything if we only believe; just as an engine can draw trucks along, which have no power of movement in themselves, if only the link is on.

In ver. 17 we come to another thing the gospel contains. "For therein is the *righteousness* of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith." God must have a righteous ground for exercising His power on man's behalf. Let us notice how perfectly the gospel is adapted to meet the need of the sinner. When man fell he came under the control of the power of evil, and two things now are true of us all by nature: we are guilty and we are weak. So weak that we are quite unequal to combat our foes—

Satan, sin, and death ; but also too weak to fulfil God's law, and therefore guilty. If the gospel is to be real glad tidings it must offer us two things—power and righteousness. Power to deliver us from all our enemies ; and a righteousness before God in place of our guilt. Are not these the very things presented to us in the opening verses of this epistle that unfolds God's glad tidings ? The gospel is concerning God's Son, and He is declared to have power. The gospel is said to be God's power unto salvation, because it tells us of a Saviour whose power is greater than that of all our enemies. So in this blessed Person we have all the power we need. What about the righteousness ? If this One can settle matters with our enemies to which we are liable, can He also settle matters with God against Whom we have sinned, and before Whom we are guilty ? Yes, He is able to do this as effectually as the other. In His death and rising again we find our every need met. So that God's gospel is indeed *glad tidings*, for it brings us a righteousness of God to replace all our guilt, and power instead of our weakness. So we read, " therein is righteousness of God revealed." " Righteousness of **God.**" The law demanded righteousness of **us**. This we could never attain to ; as fast as we kept one law we broke another, but the gospel offers us " a righteousness of God." For our weakness God presents His power. Instead of our guilt He offers us His righteousness. What a gospel !

But the question will arise, how do these blessings become ours ? There are multitudes of our fellow creatures who do not seem to possess them. How does anyone possess them ? Ver. 17, which we are considering, answers the question. It is on the principle of faith. " From faith to faith." That is, faith all along. We begin with faith and we " live by faith." We become righteous before God by faith, and we live day by day by faith. *Faith is that faculty of the soul which believes.* In other words, it accepts as true what God says. It is not feeling, or seeing, or sense of any kind. Although *when* we believe we do feel and see. But faith cometh by what God says to us. So it is said to come by hearing (or teaching), chap. x. 17. God speaks, and when we believe, without doubt and without hesitation, that is faith. God offers us something and when we receive what God gives, we exercise faith. So all the righteousness and all the power, we are speaking of, become ours the moment we believe.

Vers. 18-32. In these verses we have unfolded the state of man and his need of God's salvation, for God's wrath is about to fall upon man on account of his sins. Man is without excuse, for on every hand God's works are seen in creation (vers. 19-20). How solemn is the accusation in vers. 21-23. Man once knew God, but glorified Him not as God. Instead of being thankful to God as Creator, Who "gives to all men life and breath and all things," and worshipping Him only, men fell into idolatry. As a consequence, God gave them up (ver. 24); and the following verses shew us the degradation to which men sink without God. It is always so. If men refuse the testimony God gives they sink lower and lower. This is seen in the earliest ages of the history of the human race, until God destroys the world with a flood. A new period commenced with Noah's family, but that ended with the tower of Babel. God was again forgotten. Then Abraham was called out in order that one nation might be a witness to the true God amid surrounding idolatry. That nation—Israel—in spite of all God's wonderful dealings, became at length even worse than the heathen. And now God is proclaiming everywhere the riches of His grace, a way is open for men to return to God—forgiveness and eternal life are freely offered—yet multitudes are turning a deaf ear, in spite of all God has done for man's salvation, and in the face of His declared wrath against all ungodliness. How unwearied has been God's patience. Nothing has been wanting on His part, He so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son. It is to such men as these verses describe God sends His good news of salvation. Salvation through His own Son from the worst of sins and the worst of foes. Could man's need be greater or could God do more to meet it?

Chapter ii. deals with the moralist, who judges other people but forgets that he himself is subject to the judgment of God, for he is guilty of the very things for which he judges others. He is puffed up with the sense of his own fancied goodness, instead of seeing that God alone is good (ver. 4). There is a day of wrath, vers. 5-10 declare, when everyone will have rendered to him what he really deserves. All who have sinned against light and knowledge will perish (ver. 12) for God will judge the *secrets* of men by Jesus Christ. It is important to notice St. Paul adds, "according to my gospel" (ver. 16). For men are judged by their opportunities and the light God has given. Men who lived before the flood will

not be judged by the ten commandments given at Sinai ; and those who were under law will not be measured by the standard of to-day when the full revelation of God and His attitude towards sin has been given. The worst sin of all now is to refuse the gospel, for it is a direct affront to God, it is like turning round and saying that man does not want God, or His love, or His help.

But what about the Jew—the Jew who was outwardly in a place of privilege and separated from all other nations ? This subject is dealt with in vers. 17 to end. The Apostle shews that mere external position and verbal acknowledgment of what is true and right is not enough. It is not sufficient to approve, we must perform ; not sufficient to have the form, we must have the spirit ; to know God's will is not enough, we must *do* it. And the Apostle closes by saying, " He is not a Jew which is one *outwardly* "—just as, if living to-day, and viewing the vast profession of Christianity, he would say, " He is not a Christian who is one outwardly "—" but he is a Jew (or a Christian) who is one *inwardly* "—it is " of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." Seeing that those who profess Christianity to-day stand in the place of the Jew, viewed from an outward standpoint (such as John xv. 1-6, Rom. xi. 16-25 give us), the verses under consideration (17-29) demand the most serious consideration, and every baptised person should test himself and herself by them. Is my religion merely an outward form, or is it a real matter of the heart and of the spirit ?

NEHEMIAH AND HIS TIMES.

By S.E.D.

THE times of Nehemiah are very typical of the present in many ways, and we may gain much profit as well as warning from a consideration of them.

I The Lord my Comforter (chap. i.).

Nehemiah's name means " The Lord My Comforter." He realised time after time in his uphill experience how blessed it was for him in every sorrow, difficulty and trial to take it to one Who was able to comfort and support him.

How blessed it would be if every child of God would only realise the same portion. We have much in the world and in the Church which brings sorrow to our hearts. What then is the only safe resting place? Where can I get my heart and soul relieved? Only as I am in the enjoyment of this—The Lord my comforter.

II. **The Right Beginning** (chap. i. ver. 2).

Nehemiah receives the report respecting the desolation of Jerusalem. What does he do? He weeps. He prays. He puts himself and his cause into the hands of the Lord to guide and help and prosper him. He gets in sympathy with God about the state of things and waits for a way to do what will please Him. How much we need to begin in the right way. Not to rush or to go before the Lord. But wait before Him, then He will open the way according to His blessed will.

III. **The Surrender** (chap. ii.).

Nehemiah surrenders himself to the Lord and His work. He leaves the palace with its luxury and pleasure, and links himself with God's people. What a surrender it was. What a pattern for many of us to-day. How often are we tested as to which our choice shall be—the pleasures of sin or suffering affliction with the people of God. Our faith is nothing if it has no sacrifice and surrender in it. The great question for us to ask at this point is this: Whose interests lie nearest to our hearts? Our own or the Lord's? Do we know anything of the spirit of the words of the Apostle: to count all things loss for Him.

IV. **The Work and Workers** (chap. iii.).

When Nehemiah arrives at Jerusalem he makes known his mission to the people, and the people had a mind to work. This is willingness. This is what is required just now. The Lord can gain mighty victories, with willing workers. But notice what kind of people they were who were willing to arise and build:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---------------|
| 1. The Men of Jericho | .. | Chap. iii. 2. |
| 2. Goldsmiths | | „ iii. 8. |
| 3. Women | | „ iii. 12. |

But you do not hear of the men of Jericho complaining because they lived some miles away from the walls.

The Goldsmiths did not say we have no gift for building, it is not our work.

The Women did not say we must not do men's work ; our place is at home.

No, they all, in spite of what people might say about them, offered themselves and worked until they accomplished their task.

But notice where they worked. Facing their own home. They began at home where everyone knew them. This is of great importance in our day. Begin at home, stand and testify at home. (See Chap. 3. vers. 10 and 20-28).

Special note must be made of individuals who built. We read of Zaccur (Chap. iii. 2). He worked by himself all alone. No one to watch him. But he does his work well.

Then notice Baruch (Chap. iii. 20). It is said of him he "earnestly repaired." He was full of zeal and energy, knowing it was the Lord's work. The enemies were in earnest. The Lord was in earnest, and Baruch felt he must be in earnest too, in doing his work.

But there is also a warning in connection with some who were listless, and "put not their necks to the work of the Lord." (Chap. iii. ver. 5).

V. Hindrances to the Work (chap. iv).

The first thing we read of is ridicule from the Lord's enemies : laughing and sneering. Tobiah says, "The Work will never stand." But he forgot the power of God : where that power is at work nothing can break down. When God converts a soul, that work will stand. Every Christian is kept only by the power of God. We read, "the enemies conspired together to fight and hinder" (ver. 8). Every one of us has to meet the world and the enemy every day. All set against our progress in divine things. What is the remedy ? Praying and watching day and night (ver. 9). Then another hindrance was the heaps of rubbish. Surely this appeals to us very much to-day. Some around us are mourning the decrease of membership ; the lack of spiritual power in the Church. Why is this ? Because there are too many rubbish heaps : worldliness, amusements, cards, billiards, &c. Oh, that the professed people of God would seek to sweep these things away.

How much will be removed, in that coming day, of what the Lord calls wood, hay and hubble. As time goes on these things seem to get worse and worse. Let us all awake from our slumber. Hold our sword, and use it aright, and build with our trowel. And may we remember it is the Lord's work we are engaged in; and if we are faithful where the Lord has placed us, He will give us the victory notwithstanding all the foes who may be against us.

"Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. xv.).

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The Faith and The Flock.

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TO OUR READERS.

WHEN this number reaches your hands another year will have run its course nearly. We would like to say something, if we could, to help the people of God at the present period of the Church's history. We are living in unsettled times, and great changes are taking place. This is true, not only in the sphere of legislation and in connection with the ordinary problems of life, but in the realm of thought and religious influence, the changes that threaten are more ominous still. To some men and certain minds nothing is settled and nothing is sacred. The accepted views of God, and of man's relation and responsibility to God, as well as of man's relationship and responsibility to his fellow creature, are being assailed on every hand. New ideas about almost everything are being forced upon our attention.

It would not matter so much if changes, such as we describe, found the Church prepared to meet them; steadfast in her own convictions, fully alive to the danger, unshaken in her faith, strong in the consciousness of her divine mission, and fully assured of the adequacy of her resources. Alas, the Church is almost as unsettled as the world; and many of the features that are prominent in the world to-day are to be found within the professing Church itself. Unbelief is there; love of power and display are there; fondness for pleasure is there; and so are darkness and indifference. Plenty of money and machinery, and imposing organisations there certainly are, but of real devotedness to Christ and desire to keep His Word, comparatively little; and consequently little of true spiritual power. Is not the word, spoken long ago to the Church of the Laodiceans, applicable to a great extent to the Church as a whole to-day? **"Because thou sayest I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked."** *"Knowest not!"* There lies the hopelessness of it all.

Yes, it is too late to look to any ecclesiastical sect or system to retrieve the situation. And anything like self advertisement by

any company of Christians is to be deplored. But there always remains the individual, *and it is individual faithfulness that is required to-day more than anything else.* And the thought we wish to impress upon our readers is the value of such testimony. What God looks for to-day is individual faithfulness and personal devotion. You will do more to save others by saving yourself than in any other way.

Have you ever noticed the glorious offers God makes to individuals, particularly when all corporate testimony has failed? In Isaiah lvii. 15 we read, "*For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, Whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*" And again, "TO THIS MAN WILL I LOOK, EVEN TO HIM THAT IS POOR AND OF A CONTRITE SPIRIT, AND TREMBLETH AT MY WORD." A poor and contrite spirit commands the very presence of God. He Who fills the high and holy place, condescends to dwell with such.

The foregoing promise is as real and true to-day. In Chap. xiv. 23 of John's Gospel, we read, "**If a man love Me he will keep My word ; and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make Our abode with him.**" While in Rev. iii. 20 we have a similar promise: "*Behold, I stand at the door and knock ; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.*" In every case the promise is to the individual, and in every case it is the same in character—God promises to come and dwell.

Can any of us want more than is promised here? It means the presence of the Father and of Christ. And in every case the promise is made when that which God had publicly owned and made His dwelling place has proved unworthy. It is the lowly—those who know what it means to be lowly with God, without pretension, and who tremble at His word—who gain this priceless blessing. Christ to come in and sup with us and we with Him, is the guarantee of all we can possibly want.

It is an individual walk with God which secures the blessing we are speaking of, and is the great desideratum. God dwelling with us, and we dwelling with God. And in the last phase of the

Church's history—as depicted in Rev. iii. 14-22—this is precisely what is offered to those who are self-empty enough to hear His voice. What God is always looking for is *character*. And we can only have character as we live in the right *company*.

It is because the Church does not represent God to the world that it is so powerless. And the reason of this is that so many professing Christians are not walking with God. The important thing is that each individual should look to himself. Quite recently there has been a great deal said as to decline in Church membership and Church attendance. Someone wished to discover the reason of this. He thought, at all events, he might test his own neighbourhood; so he circulated amongst all classes of the inhabitants a number of printed questions, with space for the answers. In due course these were collected. Some of the questions were: “*Why do YOU not attend the services of the Christian Church?*” “*Why don't your friends?*” “*What definite charge can you bring against the Church?*” &c., &c. The answers were carefully gone over and arranged in order of importance. Will it surprise our readers to learn that the most general reason given why people did not attend Church was this: “**THE INCONSISTENCY, IMPERFECTION, AND UNFAITHFUL WITNESS OF CHURCH MEMBERS THEMSELVES?**”

It is only as individuals we can set this right. May we all take to heart the present state of things. Let us search our own lives. Are we living with, and for, God individually as we should? When all is said and done and when the end is reached, each individual has to give account of himself to God.

1. Let us see if there is anything that is calling loudly for correction. Anything that must be renounced if our christian life is to be what it ought to be, and might be. If we are conscious of a single thing between us and God, may we seek grace to get rid of it. Cast it out of your life at all costs. If there is anything claiming precedence over Christ, making fellowship with Him less sweet, and causing us to neglect, however little, the Bible and prayer, reject it.

2. Are you as an individual helping all you can the work God is doing in the world? Do you give as much *personal* service as you might, and do you give of your means to the extent that you can

really afford? How much individuals miss by withholding from God more than is meet, they sometimes little realise. Oh, the blessing that would come if individual Christians were less self-indulgent and would spend more upon the service of God and less upon themselves, their families and their homes.

3. Let us give ourselves to *prayer*. It was never more needed than now; and it is quite as efficacious as ever. At the moment we would be inclined to place prayer above everything, for there is so much activity that doesn't count. The words we need to have engraved upon our hearts are these, "*Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and WATCHING THEREUNTO with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.*" Prayer for ourselves, and for the people of God needs to be ever on our lips. The Satanic influences that are abroad to-day can be literally felt. Nothing can counteract them but God's Holy Spirit. And only prayer and communion can ensure His co-operation.

May God keep us in this lowly, waiting attitude before Him, in that condition which ensures His company; that thus we may be, in our Lord's words, "disciples indeed." We cannot conceive of anything more important at the present hour than this individual walk with God, characterised by devotedness and communion, and waiting for His Son from heaven.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Kepler's Prayer.

IN these days of superficial reasoning and all too thoughtless readiness to throw over the Bible, it is delightful to recall the simple faith of those giants of intellect of a past generation, amongst whom must be placed the great astronomer Kepler. One of his astronomical works concludes with the following prayer:—

"It remains only that I should now lift up to heaven my eyes and hands from the table of my pursuits and humbly and devoutly supplicate the Father of lights. O, Thou, Who by the light of nature dost enkindle within us a desire after the light of grace, that by this Thou mayest translate us into the light of glory; I give Thee thanks, O Lord and Creator, that Thou hast gladdened me by Thy creation, when I was enraptured by the work of Thy hands. Behold,

I have here completed a work of my calling, with as much of intellectual strength as Thou hast granted me. I have declared the praise of Thy works to the men who will read the evidences of it, so far as my finite spirit could comprehend them in their infinity. My mind endeavoured to its utmost to reach the truth by philosophy ; but if anything unworthy of Thee has been taught by me—a worm born and nourished in sin—do Thou teach me that I may correct it. Have I been seduced into presumption by the admirable beauty of Thy works, or have I sought my own glory among men, in the construction of a work designed for Thine honour ? O then graciously and mercifully forgive me, and finally grant me this favour, that this work may never be injurious, but may conduce to Thy glory and the good of souls.”

The true greatness of mind and nobility of character which breathes in such language is more to be commended than the self-confident and boastful tone of the men of our times. How true it is that, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom.”

* * * * *

*The Gospel
of Mark.*

“THE Gospel of Mark arranges the facts of our Lord’s life in the order of their occurrence, and I am persuaded that the Spirit of God intended that we should have among the gospels one that adheres to the simple order of the facts in giving our Lord’s history.

Otherwise, we must be plunged in uncertainty, not merely as to one particular gospel, but as lacking the means of rightly judging departures from historic order in all others ; for it is plain, that if there be no such thing as a regular order in any gospel, we are certainly deprived of all power of determining in any case when the events did really occur which stand differently connected in the rest of the gospels.

It is not in any way that one would seek what is commonly called a “harmony,” which is really to obscure the perception of the special objects of the gospels. At the same time, nothing can be more certain than that the real author of the gospels, even God Himself, knew all perfectly. Nor even, to take the lowest ground, on the part of the different writers, is ignorance of the order in which the facts occurred a reasonable key to the peculiarities of the gospels. The Holy Ghost deliberately displaced many events

and discourses, but this could not be through carelessness, still less through caprice, but only for ends worthy of God. The most obvious order would be to give them just as they occurred. Partly, then, as it seems to me, that we might be able to judge with accuracy and with certainty of the departure from the order of occurrence, the Spirit of God has given us in one of these gospels that order as the rule. In which of them is it found, do you ask? I have no doubt that the answer is, in spite of tradition, in the gospel of Mark. And the fact exactly agrees with the spiritual character of his gospel, because this also ought to have great weight in confirming the answer, if not in deciding the question."

W. KELLY.

* * * *

***Gone
Astray.***

WHILE walking along a country road the other day we met a lad driving a few sheep. He was wiping his forehead and looked as if he had been exerting himself. "They'll go any way but the right way," he exclaimed, "they've gone through seven gates they ought not to have gone in by." "Has it ever struck you," I replied, "that that is just like you and me?"

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Is. liii. 6.

We had a few earnest words, and the lad seemed much impressed. "I know I've gone astray, Sir," said he, "but it is so hard to keep straight."

We have no strength either to save ourselves or to keep ourselves, but "He is able to save to the uttermost."

* * * *

***The Unity of
the Spirit.***

THE unity of the Spirit is not a confederacy of meetings—this would be a sect of the most pretentious nature in a day of ruin. Separation from evil is a necessity individually and collectively for all those who have to do with God, for God is holy and cannot tolerate evil. But separation from evil is not a bond of union nor a ground of gathering. It is the truth positively that does this.

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Can any of our readers furnish a tune to the hymn, "Would you like to Know," which appeared in last month's issue?

HERO OR SAVIOUR.

By W. W. FEREDAY.

THE Christ question is ever with us. And no wonder. The dignity of His person, and the magnitude of what He has accomplished are such that all other topics of discussion pale into insignificance in comparison. God will yet insist upon a distinct answer from every soul to the great challenge, "What think ye of Christ?" In vain will any plead moral doings, religious observances, or works of philanthropy; that which will decide every man's eternal destiny is the attitude of his heart towards God's Christ. "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed in the name of the Only-begotten Son of God" (John iii. 18).

In what light do we regard Him? In what place do we set Him in our soul's firmament? Many are prepared to acknowledge Him as one of the world's brightest luminaries, who are altogether unwilling to confess Him as "God manifested in flesh." They would set Him amongst the heroes of antiquity—some would even set Him at the head of them all. They speak approvingly of His unique life, of His lofty teaching, and of His patience and courage in suffering and in death. In their eyes He is the flower of the human family, the crown of the race—a worthy pattern which all would do well to follow. His great utterance popularly known as the Sermon on the Mount comes in for their special commendation, though we are not aware of any person of this type who makes any serious attempt to carry into literal effect its wonderful teaching. (Of the dispensational bearing of "the Sermon," or of any other of the Saviour's teachings one would not expect them to have any conception).

But a man may be an admirer of Christ, and perish everlastingly. Is He God and man in one sacred person, or is He man only? Was His death mere martyrdom for the truth, or was it indeed an atoning sacrifice? Is He really alive again from amongst the dead, and now seated in a tangible human body (albeit a spiritual one) at the right hand of the Majesty on high? These are the questions men have to face. In a word—is the Christ of God a hero or a Saviour?

It is undeniable that man needs a Saviour. It is folly to pretend that he is what he should be. Huge gaps are everywhere visible in man's moral system. The structure of humanity is manifestly rotten to its foundations. It is useless to speak otherwise. Man therefore needs a Saviour. A hero may be an object of admiration, and even of emulation, but, we repeat, man needs a Saviour. No Saviour is available but God Himself. Ages ago the Divine voice declared: "I, even I, am Jehovah; and beside Me there is no Saviour" (Isa. xliii. 11). No mere creature has the competency to save his fellows. "None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Psa. xlix. 7). Now Christ, when here, proclaimed Himself as Saviour. "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10). Is He then *God*? With adoring hearts we read the angelic announcement to Joseph before His birth: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21). Jesus means "Jehovah the Saviour"; it was Jehovah then who was coming down from heaven to earth to bring salvation to men. Mark the words, "His people." Only of God could this be said. We do not wonder that the Evangelist follows immediately with the quotation from Isa. vii.: "Behold, the Virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." Yes, there lies the whole blessed truth—God has been here, and Himself undertaken our ruined cause.

No victim of inferior worth
 Could ward the stroke that justice aimed;
 For none but He, in heaven or earth,
 Could offer that which justice claimed."

Let it be our happy part to imitate the woman of Luke vii. 36-50, who discerned in the lowly Man of Sorrows the only possible Saviour of sinners, and who poured upon His sacred feet those tears which were expressive both of repentance and loving worship.

It is only in the measure that we work faithfully upon our own personal responsibility that we can work together in unity. Prov. vi.-viii. gives us a true picture of such workers.

* * * *

Unbelief says, "All these things are against me" (Gen. xlii. 36). Faith says "All things work together for good" (Rom. viii. 28).

EVANGELISTS AND EVANGELISATION.

By WALTER SCOTT.

THE early heralds of the Cross were sent out by the Lord from the guiltiest city on earth—Jerusalem. They were called to the work, endowed for the work, and sent out to the work by the Lord Himself. No church, or society overshadowed His authority. They were His servants, and accordingly it was His sole prerogative to send out into the harvest *whom* He would and *where* He chose.

Now there are five indispensable requisites for evangelists and missionaries who would labour on Scriptural lines.

The *first* of these is AUTHORITY. From whence does the evangelist derive his authority? From whom does he receive his commission and marching orders? Christ, and not church or society, is the sole source of his authority. "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that *He will send forth labourers into His harvest*" (Matt. ix. 38). All the "Evangelistic Associations," and "Missionary Societies" combined, cannot *send forth* one labourer into the harvest. That is the sole prerogative of the Lord. *Our* part in the blessed work of evangelisation is to pray for labourers (Matt. ix. 38); have fellowship with them in the service (Phil. i. 5); and liberally meet their temporal needs (1 Cor. ix. 13, 14). *His* it is to send forth into the harvest. It was the Lord and not man who said to the first Christian evangelists, "*Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature*" (Mark xvi. 15). The Lord, too, when He went on high gave evangelists (Eph. iv. 11). Thus before the Cross (Matt. ix. 38), after His resurrection (Mark xvi. 15), and when ascended (Eph. iv. 11), the Lord provides labourers and sends them out to declare the glad tidings. What certainty this imparts! What firmness of tread and distinctness of purpose should characterise every Christ-sent evangelist. Herein consists the true dignity of the servant—the Lord Himself has sent him forth. To have the blessed consciousness that the exalted and glorified Lord has sent one to announce in the world the grandest news which ever fell on mortal ears is indeed a privilege of surpassing greatness. Sent by the Lord in glory constitutes one exclusively *His* servant, then "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 the God of Paul may surely be counted upon to supply and oversee the temporal needs and necessities of every dependent servant who with courage and faith goes forth to the work "taking nothing of the Gentiles."

The faith and simplicity of evangelists in the early days of Christianity directly sent out by the Lord Himself, as witnessed in their free service in the Gospel, stands out in marked contrast to the system in vogue now-a-days. We long for a return to the primitive methods of apostolic times.

Their Sphere of Labour.

The *second* essential feature of New Testament evangelists is their SPHERE of labour, which is "all the world." Evangelists are not named among the gifts referred to in 1 Cor. xii., nor is preaching the Gospel in the ministry detailed in chap. xiv., for the simple reason that in those Scriptures the Church, and not the world, is in view. "All the world," then, is the appointed parish of the evangelist. The sphere is large enough to tax to the utmost the energies of the most zealous and devoted of labourers. There is abundant scope for all without overlapping. "Yea, so have I strived to preach the Gospel, *not* where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation" (Rom. xv. 20). We gather too that the open-air, halls and buildings of every sort—sacred and secular—may be freely used by the Lord's servants, where, of course, they can deliver the glorious message without compromise of truth or hindrance. Personally, we hold ourselves free to preach the Gospel *anywhere*, as a principle. The question of identification with this or that, does not, we judge, enter into the question of *where* you preach the good news of salvation to lost sinners—only provided you are left free as the Lord's servant and under the alone control of the Spirit of God. The disciples "went *everywhere* preaching the Word." It is a serious matter to interfere with the liberty and freedom of Christ's servants; on the other hand, they should exercise that freedom wisely and with due regard, as far as ever they can, for the feelings and convictions of their fellow-believers, but they are directly responsible to Christ.

The *third* essential feature of the Lord's evangelists is their WORK, which is to "preach the Gospel." More glorious work could not be committed to men. To declare the good news of God's love; to

point sinners to Christ once on the Cross, but now in heavenly glory ; to beseech, warn, and plead with intense and soul-thrilling earnestness men and women to be reconciled to God, is indeed a privilege beyond anything known to us. To stand in the midst of a wrecked and ruined world and proclaim the soul-saving truths, God is *light* and God is *love*, is a mission of the highest order and character. To be a soul winner, or successful evangelist, one's soul must be wrapped up in the Gospel, and as much at home labouring for *one* soul in private (Acts viii. 26-39), as for *many* in public (5-8). The cry of the evangelist is " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Philip the evangelist went down to Samaria and preached CHRIST (ver. 5) ; to the eunuch he preached JESUS (ver. 35). To the former, Christ in heavenly glory was announced ; to the latter, Jesus in His humiliation and death was evangelised. The mighty work of God ; that magnificent deliverance for sinners accomplished in the death and resurrection of Christ was, of course, unfolded and declared in power, else " preach the Gospel " were a futile command ; where the death and resurrection of Christ—the *gist* of every sermon recorded in the Acts—are omitted, you give husks and not wheat, a stone and not bread, a soul-ruining Gospel, which is not another (see 1 Cor. xv. 1-4 ; with Gal. i. 6-9). But the lofty aim of the evangelist should be to connect souls with Christ. " We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord " (2 Cor. iv. 5). Converts are formed after the model presented to them. If an evangelist speaks about himself, his travels, his successes, his meetings, the converts will be formed after *that* character. You cannot lead on a soul further than you are yourself in moral and spiritual power. Evangelists would do well to see if the moral accompaniments of true Gospel preaching, in corresponding life and ways, are witnessed in themselves. The state of the converts is an index of the kind and character of the workman (1 Thess. i.).

Words have nigh lost their meaning, else how is Christ's command " *preach* the Gospel " twisted to practically read " *sing* the Gospel." It has become a favourite custom for the " preaching evangelist " and " singing evangelist " to tour these and other lands. Alas ! alas ! are we losing faith in the grand old Gospel which ever was, and ever shall be, " the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth ? " (Rom. i. 16). God's power in saving men is lodged in the gospel ; He does not say in the singing of it, but in the preaching of it (ver. 15). Why the need of those advertised

religious concerts? Why seek to attract by services in which solos, duets, quartettes and choir are duly announced, and openly held out as inducements to attend? Must the power of the Gospel be supplemented by these mere human expedients and ways? We beg most earnestly to warn our christian friends against these and similar innovations, which are absolutely destitute of Divine sanction, besides being a practical denial of the total moral ruin of man. Preaching is relegated to a secondary place, and singing is the prominent feature.

The Lord's command is "preach the Gospel." Results, such as they are, do not prove the scripturalness of those other methods. God is sovereign in the choice of instruments to accomplish His purposes. Balaam the apostate prophet (Num. xxiv.), and Caiaphas the apostate priest (John xi. 47-52) and others who have followed in their wake (Matt. vii. 21-23) have been used of God. Did that fact make them morally right? The servant who is crowned is not the one who can count converts by fifties or hundreds, "yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully," *i.e.*, according to the rules of the game (2 Tim. ii. 5). Unless the service is framed and ordered according to *God's word*—however large and important it may look in the eyes of men—it is worthless in His sight, and the servant has forfeited the crown.

Do not in your eagerness to have conversions hurry souls into a hasty confession of the name of Christ. God's work in the soul is a slow and painful process in general. If your sphere of service is amongst the heathen, go and preach the Gospel among them. Your aim is to bring them into living contact with Christ. Do not waste time trying to convince men of the "reasonableness of Christianity"; the Gospel will find its way to the hearts and consciences of men. We cannot prepare men for the Gospel, but the Spirit prepares ground for the seed. Preach the Gospel faithfully, earnestly, intelligently, and simply. Have nothing to do with religious concerts or musical and other entertainments to make the Gospel more popular and inviting. Stick to your work—preach the Gospel.

To Every Creature.

The *fourth* characteristic of evangelistic service is its UNIVERSALITY—"every creature." There is no gospel after death. "The larger hope" is a satanic delusion, in the light of Luke xvi. :

“between *us* and *you* there is a great gulf fixed ; so that they which would pass from hence to *you* CANNOT, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence ” (ver. 26). The evangelist has a sphere commensurate with the universality of his mission. “All the world ” defines the limit of the former ; “every creature ” stamps its God-like breadth on the latter. “Preach the Gospel to *every creature*,” forbids exception. The king and peasant, philosopher and boor equally need the the salvation which the Gospel offers to guilty men. Every soul of Adam’s race outside the grave, alone limits the work of the evangelist. Character, qualification, standing in society, or moral status are questions with which evangelists need not concern themselves. Their mission is one of grace to every member of the human family—“every creature.”

The *fifth* essential condition of a scriptural evangelism is GUIDANCE. Evangelists beyond any other class of servants fail in this. The very fact that they serve in the world and not in the church, although, of course, of it, and, further, that a much greater degree of freedom from interference is necessarily enjoyed in such happy work, make the position of evangelists a critical one. The danger is in being guided in the service by ways and methods not authorised by the Lord in His Word. One remarkable feature of New Testament evangelism, which is in marked contrast to the modern one, is the fact that preachers did not hit upon plans and adopt expedients of any kind to draw or attract congregations. The Lord was looked to to provide the congregation whether it consisted of units or thousands. The direct guidance of the Holy Spirit to persons and places secured Divine and permanent results—immediate results, moreover. Directions from the Lord should be earnestly sought. A call, however urgent, to preach in a given place should not in itself determine my judgment to do so. The Macedonian cry, “come over into Macedonia and help us,” was not in itself enough for Paul. He gathered up the Lord’s mind and acted upon *that*. The appeal for help may be a potent factor in determining one’s course, but it is the Lord’s direction which must be sought and ascertained (Acts xvi. 9, 10). This principle of directly looking to the Lord for direction *what* to say (Acts iv. 8), *where* to go (viii. 26), and *when* not to go (xvi. 6, 7), is one of paramount importance in these lawless times. There is immense danger of evangelists, in the laudable desire to acquaint thousands of the Glad Tidings, to condescend to rules of human expediency, now so unhappily common in Christendom.

There is an immense waste of energy and service, true enough in its character, because this principle of guidance by the Holy Ghost has been virtually set aside, and men go here and there without clear direction from the Lord. In all cases recorded in the Acts where evangelists were sent by the Lord, immediate results followed. The preaching did the work it was meant to accomplish. Philip—the only one termed an Evangelist—was Divinely directed to seek one soul and lead him into the light of the Gospel. Was it written in vain for evangelists in all time to come, “The Spirit said unto Philip, go near and join thyself to this chariot?” (Acts viii. 29). The alacrity of the servant in answer to the Spirit’s call is another feature of this model evangelist: “and Philip *ran* thither to him” (ver. 30). There is a miscellaneous quantity of service undertaken with no definite aim. The arrow is discharged at a venture; if it hits the mark, good and well; if it fails, why then we must try again. What is wanted is Christ-given and Spirit-directed work. A prayerful waiting upon God for special service and for the right way of doing it. The arrows discharged by the evangelists in the Acts always hit the mark. The sword used in the combat always did its work for it was the sword of the Spirit—the word of God.

We commend these five New Testament characteristics to the prayerful consideration of our readers, and heartily wish God-speed to every effort and every service to save the lost. We should greatly rejoice to see evangelisation once more occupy the ground which it did in Apostolic times. All that is needed is direct faith in God and in His Word.

Job exclaimed, “Let him weigh me in balances of justice, that God might know mine integrity” (Job xxxi. 7 margin). He did not know at that time, but he learned “afterward”—Heb. xii. 11—that he was then being weighed by both God (Isa. xxvi. 7) and Satan: one anxious for his “profit”; the other for his downfall.

* * * *

It pleases us to know that the Canaanites hear of mighty works of Jehovah having been wrought through us (Josh. ii. 10); but we are apt to forget that they also hear of our failure, which gives them the opportunity to blaspheme the name of the Lord (Josh. vii. 9).

DISCIPLESHIP: ITS MEANING AND MOTIVE.

Recollections of two addresses by A. C. M.

THE simple meaning of disciple is, learner. An individual desires to acquire the knowledge of some subject and he attaches himself to a master or teacher. But as he learns his subject he unconsciously imbibes the spirit of the one who instructs him. Even so it is in Christianity. Not only do we learn what Christianity has to teach in the way of doctrine and precept, but the very spirit of Christ ought to take possession of us.

Disciples, in the New Testament, are of two kinds. There was the disciple who in an outward way identified himself with Christ, listened to His teaching and followed Him, but never truly became His and drank in His spirit. It is of this class we read, "Many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him (John vi. 66). "Then said Jesus unto the twelve, will ye also go away?" Then Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." These last were the kind of disciples of whom Jesus said, "If ye continue in My word then are ye My disciples *indeed*" (John viii. 31). There are thus, those whose discipleship is a mere form; and there are those who are disciples indeed. How are we to become such? Only as we make up our minds that nothing short of being like Christ shall content us.

1. It is by occupation with Christ that we become like Him. We must behold the Master. How truly John presents to us the perfect attitude of a follower of Christ, as he exclaims, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"; and again, "Behold the Lamb of God." We behold Him first of all as our Substitute and Sin Bearer—the One Who undertook on our behalf and God's to deal with the mighty question of sin, and remove it—and then He, Who has removed the sin, becomes our lifelong study and object. Sin is gone; He is left. "Looking upon Jesus as He walked"; this is now the true occupation of a disciple.

St. Paul follows in the same line as John the Baptist. "*But we all,*" he says, "*with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*" In the earlier part of this same Chapter,

(2 Cor. iii.) he had addressed the Corinthian believers as **“manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God : not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.”** Here we have a true description of a disciple. He is a letter of Christ. If anyone wishes to convey his mind to another, he transcribes his thoughts on paper by means of words, and as near as possible you have his mind expressed or revealed in the words of the letter. So as disciples we are to be an expression of Christ. Manifestly declared to be Christ’s letter. The Spirit has written Christ upon the heart and life, and everyone who comes in contact with us should be able to read our Master there.

But *how* does the Spirit write Christ upon us? Does not the other verse give us the answer? *“Beholding . . . the glory of the Lord.”* We cannot change ourselves. By no effort can we transform our own characters. Nor will any rules and regulations help us much. It is by occupation with the Person to Whose image we wish to be conformed, that the work is done. How simple and effortless it is. We look at Christ, and we become Christlike. We behold His glory, and we become glorified.

2. If we are to be true disciples there must be holiness. *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your intelligent service.”* Holiness really means “wholeness.” It is entire surrender to the will and service of God. There is a church standing near the river at Oxford which is flooded when the Thames sometimes overflows its banks. And when the water gets into the basement of the church two things are always affected—the organ and the heating apparatus. There is no *music* and there is no *heat*. Are not these two things often lacking in the lives of Christians? And the reason is they have allowed the world, or duties or engagements of various kinds to swamp them, and when that is the case the life does not tell. There is no music and no zeal. People see in us, not the impress of Christ, but of the things that engage our time and attention. If I am to do any good,” said one, “I must *live* the thing that I preach.” We can only do that as we give time for prayer and reading the Bible, and communion with our Master.

3. THERE MUST BE SELF-SACRIFICE. Do we only give that which we do not want? Some children were playing in the bath-room at the Flood. At the end they remembered that Noah, when he

came out of the Ark, offered up a sacrifice. The question arose what should it be? The boy suggested his sister's best doll. But she would not consent; and in return, proposed that his horse and cart would do instead. But he was equally loth to part with such a treasure. So at last they searched the nursery cupboard and found something that had long been thrown away as useless, and that became their sacrifice. Are we not often like these children in the matter of our giving? We present to God what we never miss. No wonder the world believes so little in our Christianity.

In every human heart there is a throne and a cross. If we take the cross Jesus will take the throne.

4. ALL TRUE DISCIPLESHIP WILL BE CHARACTERISED BY A SPIRIT OF EARNESTNESS. Some men who were at work were buried underground by a sudden fall of earth. The attempts to rescue them seemed unavailing, and as time went on, and no passage was made, there seemed less and less hope of success. When suddenly, a man appeared on the scene, and seizing pick and shovel began digging with all his might, and made the others appear almost listless in their efforts. The explanation he gave was: one of the men underground is *my brother*. We cannot be true disciples unless we catch the Spirit of the Master in the matter of soul winning. We must convince people that we are in earnest.

In every way Christ must live over again in our lives if we are to be true disciples. The world must read Christ in us.

BY BOZEZ AND SENEH.

By F. C. JENNINGS.

1 SAM. xiv. 4.

[T was a time of great discouragement in Israel; very like that which prevailed in the day of Paul's second letter to Timothy; not unlike that which may be discerned in many places to-day.

The Philistine was dominant, as his antitype, a "form of godliness" with a denial of its power, was in Timothy's day; and (we must add) of this in which we live; and this is ever accompanied by timidity and depression. Saul, whose name means "asked for," as this first king surely was, fitly represents the arm of flesh, on which, alas, we are ever too prone to put our trust; but which,

although desired or "asked for," results in that "spirit of fear" that Paul tells Timothy is *not* given of God, any more than Saul himself was God's elect king. Saul is at *Migron*, meaning fear or terror, surely a most suggestive name in perfect harmony with the spirit of depression then prevailing.

This dark setting only serves as a foil to throw into brighter light the faith of Jonathan; as in a dark night the feeblest glimmer is of value. Not that Jonathan was of little faith at all; but at least, may I not say, that this has its encouragement for some of us who *are*?

Jonathan's very name speaks clearly in strong contrast with Saul's, of what the Lord *has* given; for it means, "The Gift of Jehovah." Jonathan then represents this "spirit of power, love, and a sound mind" which Paul in this same Epistle, assures Timothy (and us) that *God has given us*.

But now we are told of the Rock that marked the path that Jonathan must take for victory; and may we not say the path that *we* must take would we be "*meet for the Master's use*."

And further, this Rock has two teeth or crags, the names of which are given us.

Now let us ask: is it possible that these names are divinely told us without any purpose? Would it not appear little less than a calumny on the goodness and wisdom of God to suppose that we have taken in all that He intended, when we have simply learned that the name of the one was Bozez and of the other Seneh, and leave it here? How intelligible is that to us? In what way is it profitable? How does it "reprove, correct, and instruct in righteousness," as all Scripture does? Or what edification is there in seeking to identify them with some doubtful modern site? The whole book was written in Hebrew; would these Hebrew names be equally unintelligible to Hebrew ears?

There is, admittedly, a two-fold difficulty connected with this study of names: first, the exact meaning of the Hebrew word; and then the application of that meaning, even when it is clear. Both press upon us the need of the humblest dependence on the Lord; and, particularly, a jealous watchfulness against mere carnal ingenuity, which has probably tended more than anything else to cast discredit upon this line of research.

In the present case the meanings of these names are quite clear, whether we can apply their meaning correctly or not.

BOZEZ, from a root meaning "to be white," "to shine," may be rendered "surpassingly white" or "white and glistening." It is constantly rendered in the O.T. by "fine linen," as 1 Chron. iv. 21, &c. ; and we have practically the same word in *byssus* and *bussinos*, that "fine linen" which is interpreted for us as "the righteousness of the Saints." Does not this give us divine help in interpreting BOZEZ, as first, the glorious holiness of the Lord Himself, and then, that to which those who would serve Him must in measure correspond. As it is written, "*Be ye holy for I am holy*": and again, "*Let everyone that names the Name of the Lord depart from iniquity.*"

Perhaps it may be well to add a warning against a spurious imitation of BOZEZ in a "holiness" of human manufacture, so self-conscious as to deny its very name, and which is nothing but a subtle form of pride under the garb of piety, that is really nauseous, but BOZEZ is a true self-abhorred Christ-entranced separation to Himself.

And the meaning of SENEH, the crag pointing in the other direction, is equally clear and sure. The word means a "thorn bush," and it is used six times in Scripture, and *in exactly this form*, and is *always* applied to that bush in which God appeared to Moses (Ex. iii. 2).

Consider it a little: SENEH is a bush that bears only thorns. Can we possibly err in interpreting this as representing poor man as born of Adam; and as represented in the day of Ex. iii. by Israel? Is he not a thorn bush? Surely nothing could represent him better since that day, when, in a darkened Eden, the ground from which he came, answered to, and expressed the changed condition of its master, by bringing forth thorns: tokens of the curse upon it for his sake. Adam and his adamah (ground) are identified in more ways than by name in Scripture.

Yet this is not all—thank God it is not—for strange indeed was the sight that attracted Moses. The thorn bush burned with fire. That was right; thorns are only fit for burning (Heb. vi. 8), but this bush *was not consumed*. That was the "great sight"; and no wonder Moses was drawn to it; for what can that speak of but *Grace* to sinful men?

Nay more, the Lord actually *dwelt* in the bush : as it is written, " The goodwill of Him that dwelt in the bush." That is not only grace ; it is rich grace ; not unlike that corresponding word that most certainly speaks equally of grace, " The Lord knoweth them that are His." It is in view of this most precious truth that one of our own poets sings :—

" I want this grace that springs from Thee,
That quickens all things where it flows,
And makes a wretched thorn like me
Bloom as the myrtle or the rose."

So *Bozez* and *Seneh* speak clearly and simply of Holiness and Grace ; or of *Human responsibility* to answer to divine requirements ; and the *Grace* that is alone our hope of doing so. We may indeed see the two trees of Gen. ii. 9, in these two ways. Nor, surely, has there been anything strained in this. We have derived both the meanings of the words, and their applications from Scripture itself—is not that safe ?

But will this give my readers courage to accompany me a little further ? Look at the relative aspects of these two crags of the one Rock. *Bozez* is in the *North*. If the Lord has told us this, can we err in considering what He says ? Is not this the very condition of His giving us understanding (2 Tim. ii. 7) ? Have these points of the compass any significance ? Without the slightest question, they have. In what other way could there be any meaning at all in that blessing : " Oh, Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord, possess thou the west and the south," when Naphtali's lot literally fell rather in the North and East ? These points must, in this case, most surely be expressive of, and in harmony with the two previous sentences : it is in *being* " satisfied with favour," and in *being* " full with blessing " that Naphtali *does* possess the *West* and the *South* : for he does so in no other way : and, if we may further analyse, the " favour " answers to the South : the " *blessing* " to the West.

Again, for further confirmation, look at this solemn contrast, in the night wherein by the great *East* wind, the way was made for Israel even through the Sea. That quarter then speaks of the opposite of *Blessing*—Judgment.

Thus I feel quite confident that we are not receiving a lesson in geography, or a meaningless detail, when we are told that one way was Northward and the other Southward. And further, we have

already a hint as to the force of the North ; and instinctively feel of what it is likely to speak.

As to Scripture light upon it let us hearken to the closing words of Elihu in Job xxxvii. 22, as in R.V. :—

“ Out of the north cometh golden splendour,
God hath upon Him terrible majesty.”

The exclamation of the second line gives the bearing of the first. From the North comes something glorious yet terrible ; attractive yet awe-inspiring. It is the glory of Him who is “ glorious in holiness.” Surely this is in perfect accord with that holiness that ever becomes His house, and must mark those that form it. Is not that also simple ? Does it not bear witness to its own truth by its harmony with its context ? *Bozez* must be on the North, for that quarter expresses God’s Holiness.

But then *Seneh* is on the South side : the quarter that speaks of *Favour* as we have seen ; and indeed where else could *Seneh*, the poor thorn bush be but here ? Aye, it is “ the Favour—the goodwill of Him who dwells in the bush,” of which the South speaks. Perhaps we may hear the same, although much clearer voice in : “ The Lord knoweth them that are His.”

But there is another point in our narrative which is obscured in our A.V. which gives the impression of two distinct and separate Rocks ; but it is to be questioned if that was the intent of the divine Author. The verse reads very literally thus (ver. 4) : “ And between the passages by which Jonathan sought to go over to the Philistine garrison (was) a tooth of the Rock on this side, and a tooth of the Rock on that side.”

That is, there were two passages formed, or marked out, by one Rock ; with two crags looking in opposite directions : the one passage received its character from one crag, the other from the other.

Ver. 5 : “ The one tooth, a pillar on the north, opposite Michmash ; and the other, on the south opposite Geba.*

* So Darby’s version of O. T.

N. B.—The word “ pillar ” is not repeated. The word rendered “ situate ” in A. V. is most assuredly “ pillar,” as its use in the only other place where it occurs, confirms : “ The pillars of the earth are the Lord’s, and He has set the world upon them.” This is very suggestive, for the word evidently is not merely Pillar, something “ set up ” ; but used in the sense of *bearing up* as does a *foundation*. It is equivalent, may we not, say, to the *Foundation of the Lord* which ever standeth sure (2 Tim. ii. 19).

Here then we have one Rock, forming a Pillar or Foundation, having two aspects which we have already looked at.

Thus let us gather up these points as far as we have gone, and mark the striking correspondence to 2 Timothy.

1. King Saul, the one "asked for," represents a misplaced confidence in some form of "flesh," resulting in the spirit of fear which may rule the Lord's people, but is *not* given of God (2 Tim. i. 7).

2. Jonathan, Gift of Jehovah, represents "the spirit of power, and love, and a sound mind," which He has given us (2 Tim. i. 7).

3. The Rock, marking the path of being used of the Lord, is Christ the One Foundation of God, ever standing sure, and Who indeed is *The Way* (2 Tim. ii. 19).

4. Two Teeth or Craggs of this Rock, answering to the two sides of the Seal on the One Foundation: the one *Seneh*, the "thorn bush," beautifully picturing God's grace to His poor people; never failing, never changing, for *The Lord knows them that are His*.

The other *Bozez*, human responsibility to live in conformity with His holiness, answering to, "Let everyone that names the Name of the Lord depart from iniquity."

5. To these two crags correspond exactly their position in in the "Favour, grace, goodwill" of the "SOUTH": in the golden *glory* and *terrible* majesty of the "NORTH."

Surely these are not mere coincidences; but to all true reasonableness they speak of *intent*; and of the one divine Author of both Scriptures. "In the old, the new lies hid: in the new, the old lies open."

Thus the Old Testament narrative is infused with Light and Life; and is no longer a piece of mere secular history; interesting, and indeed not without its value as giving examples of courage and devotion; but it is transfigured before us; and His glory shines through these externals, so that they too are "white and glistening as no fuller on earth could white them."

(To be concluded.)

The enemies of the Lord "remembered" a very important statement made by Him (Matt. xxvii. 63) which His disciples forgot. Are we not still "slow of heart to believe" what our Lord tells us?

NOTES ON SCRIPTURE, ETC.

AHAB was guilty of two kinds of idolatry. The first led him on to worship Baal in *public* and then permit Jezebel to "cut off the prophets of the Lord." The second led him to covet Naboth's vineyard in *private*, and then to murder him in public (1 Kings xxi. 19-25).

When tempted to worship any God but Jehovah, we who have known His love and faithfulness to us answer with Peter, "Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (John vi. 68). Baal has no attraction for us. Satan knows this, so he seeks to draw us from the Lord by idols of other descriptions; his object is to place "idols in our heart" (Ezk. xiv. 3), which do as much mischief, or perhaps more, than Baal.

No form of idolatry is more dangerous than covetousness (Col. iii. 5); for it creeps into the heart before we know it, and there is no telling where it will end or the consequences that follow. Such was David's painful experience (1 Kings xv. 5).

I can truthfully say that since my conversion 46 years ago, I have never been consciously guilty of idolatry in *public*, but I must confess with shame and pain that I have often been unconsciously guilty of idolatry in *private*, and feel more than ever the necessity of taking heed to the closing warning in John's first epistle, "Keep yourselves from idols."

The Queen of Sheba travelled from "the uttermost parts of the earth" to "prove Solomon with hard questions." And with an honest purpose she "communed with him of all that was in her heart." Solomon told her all her questions: there was not anything hid from the king which he told her not" (1 Kings x. 1-3).

What a contrast the elders of Israel, "who enquired of the Lord" through Ezekiel, bring before us. Idols occupied "their heart," therefore the Lord asked, "Should I be enquired of at all by them?" (Ezkl. xiv. 1-3).

If we mean to have "hard questions" solved, we must have no "idols in our heart," and we must let God know *all* that is in our heart. On such terms alone will our hard questions be answered.

We are often like Peter, too impatient to await our Lord's reply to our questions. We act as we think best, thereby giving the Lord the trouble of undoing what we have done (Luke xxii. 49-51).

One who prayed, "Teach me thy statutes," found out that he had to "Learn God's statutes" through affliction (Ps. cxix. 68-71).

None can understand the "works" of the Lord, only those who "know" Him personally (Judges ii. 10).

David was not permitted to build the temple, but he was permitted to "make preparation" for it. He states, "In my trouble I have prepared for the house of the Lord . . . gold, silver, brass, iron, timber and stone (1 Chron. xxii. 5, 8, 14), and he sought to encourage the man whom the Lord chose to build it.

Our being denied the privilege of carrying out work—which in the sincerity of our hearts we planned for the glory of God—as was David (1 Kings viii. 8, 17), should not prevent our working heartily where God permits us to work. Words can hardly express the disappointment David must have felt when told that he was not to build the temple, but after hearing this he "went in and sat before the Lord God" (2 Sam. vii. 18), and then started to "make preparation" for the building.

Surely the joy he had in seeing the place, and in giving instruction to Solomon, with the offerings which in his trouble he "prepared for the house of the Lord" (1 Chron. xxii. 14), fully compensated for the disappointment.

All trials are opportunities given to the believer to prove to himself and others what God can do for him, and what he can do for God.

The enemies of the Lord seldom forget the failures of saints (2 Sam. xii. 14), but they are too ready to forget "all his righteousnesses" when he fails (Ezk. xxxiii. 13).

* * * *

Disobedience of the people of God—Jer. xvii. 21—leads "adversaries to mock" (Lam. i. 7).

The Faith and The Flock.

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PRICE—ONE PENNY.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

“ *A Mad World.* ”

THIS was the title of a leading article, some little time ago, in one of our prominent daily papers. It dwelt chiefly upon the vast armaments maintained by the Powers—the expenditure being £350,000,000 a year—pointing out how senseless it all was in the face of the prevailing feeling that peace is “ the greatest of blessings ”; and it concluded thus :—

“ So we jog along, heading carelessly for something like bankruptcy, with discontent growing everywhere more pronounced and more bitter, and the masses more conscious of their disabilities and less acquiescent in their fate, and the pent-up unrest releasing itself from time to time in floods of popular disorder, which are no sooner driven back than statesmanship takes up once more its Sisyphean task. A mad world, my masters.”

This is a frank confession of the real state of things, and it is as true as it is fearless. It is in happy contrast with the optimistic views so prevalent in some quarters. Would that men would learn their need of a higher power, and confess their own weakness and inability. After six thousand years, civilization has not much to boast of, and yet there are certain individuals who place their hopes upon education and legislation, and dream that by these means an era of universal blessedness is about to be introduced. We hear education extolled as if people needed only to know more in order to do better ; but we have yet to learn that an educated sinner is less likely to do evil than an uneducated one. He may do it in a different way ; but do it he will, for education does not change his nature ; it only enlarges his capacity for wrong doing, and increases the variety of his operations. Human nature is sinful, and man is a sinner, and the power that can change this is the only power that can do any real and lasting good. That power is the grace of God. God’s love to mankind, revealed in Christ ; Christ’s blood that can cleanse from all sin ; the Holy Spirit indwelling the heart ; the word of truth that sanctifies, these are the means which alone can meet man’s desperate need.

It was by eating of the tree of knowledge that man fell. He is not likely to get back by further eating of it ; especially in his changed condition ; for he is now corrupt ; then he was innocent.

Oh, that men everywhere would realise that there is help in God for them! Could they but see that His face is towards them, and He is willing to be their Saviour, and that they need no longer remain in the far country, then there would be hope. "A mad world" indeed! But most of all mad because it persists in remaining with its back towards God, forgetful of His goodness, despising His grace, occupied with things which do not profit, neglecting all His overtures, and refusing His offers of priceless and eternal blessings which are a free gift to those who will accept. O mad world, hear thy God pleading with thee! "*Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not?*" HEARKEN DILIGENTLY UNTO ME, *and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.* INCLINE YOUR EAR AND COME UNTO ME, *hear and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you. Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and LET HIM RETURN UNTO THE LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."* (Isa. lv. 2-3, 6-7).

GLORY! GLORY! GLORY!

"In His temple everything saith, 'Glory.'"
(*Psalm xxix, 9, R.V.*)

TUNE—*Trinity.*

Glory! Glory! Glory! Hearts and voices blending,

Let us bring in concord to God a grateful song:

"Glory!" in His temple evermore ascending—

Soon all Creation shall the praise prolong.

Glory! Glory! Glory! Gladsome be our singing!

Laud, with exultation, the riches of His grace!

Sov'reign grace has reached us, free salvation bringing,

Guiding us onward toward "a resting-place."

Glory! Glory! Glory! JESUS died, and liveth:—

Great High Priest! Within the veil He lives to intercede:

By His blood He entered, perfect peace He giveth,

Home, Home to Heaven He will safely lead.

Glory! Glory! Glory! JESUS'S Name confessing—

"Lord of lords, and King of kings," He worthy is of praise!

By His great redemption He secured our blessing—

Life, light, and glory, to eternal days!

Glory! Glory! Glory! JESUS is returning—

Coming to receive His own, for whom His blood was shed:

Go we forth to meet Him lamps all trimmed and burning—

Then ever with Him, CHRIST, our LORD and Head!

NOTES ON THE SEVEN CHURCHES.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,

In turning over some old papers recently, I came across some notes of an address given many years ago by the late G. V. Wigram. There is a freshness and spiritual unction about them which may appeal to your readers. For myself they have a peculiar interest for they are in the handwriting of an uncle of mine, and bear the date of May 25th, 1861.

I remember as if it were yesterday watching up the avenue, a mile long, for the carriage that brought him back to the old home after an absence of seven years with his regiment in India. He had left it a scene of utter worldliness and returned to find a complete change, for the influences of the great 1859 Revival had altered everything. He had not been in the house many days before he, too, came under the power of the grace of God which was so marvellously at work in those days.

A. H. BURTON.

No. I.—EPHESUS: Revelation ii.

ONE short expression repeated in each of these addresses brings down the substance of all to each individual believer!

“He that hath an ear to hear.”

One might be living in a country where there was nobody taking the place of “the Church of the Living God”—like John at Patmos—still that word would come home with a mighty challenge to one’s soul.

There is a contrast and a correspondence between the opening and the close of this address. The opening is the starting point of the bit of ground we have to examine. God set up a certain light for Christ in the world—“seven Candlesticks”—a light God had kindled for Himself, that there might be a reason why the Lord Jesus Christ should have something to do with the earth. The day of Pentecost set up a certain light, and put responsibility into man’s hands; they had to bear light for a Christ walking “in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.”

You at Ephesus have got the responsibility of letting this light of God’s own giving, *shine out* for God. Is God acting for Himself through Christ in connection with man? It is in connection with *Testimony*—“to Him that overcometh.” In Genesis we see a paradise for man—here we have a paradise for God. In *man’s* paradise were certain things, trees, &c.—things in which the heart of man could find refreshment, and a particular tree in the midst of the garden. In the midst of God’s garden of delights will be a tree of life too—and that “*The tree of life.*” One cannot doubt who that

is? Of that garden God will be able to say, "Here *I* have all *I* admire, here *I* can delight—Eden was no place to satisfy me—here *I* have everything to delight in. I've filled the earth, and there is not a single thing that does not tell Me of what is *My own delight*. All around, a perfect answer to My heart; poor sinners saved by grace, filling heaven."

Now one right well understands that when we come home to the garden of *God's delight*, while it will be very blessed to look around on the saints reflecting the glory, there will be *One* Who will stand out conspicuously among all—The blessed Lord Jesus. *The* tree of Life in the midst. It is *God's Paradise*. No hand save His has interfered *there*. Mark what a place man gets in connection with it—to "eat of the fruit." That tree for man! Man will be there and have as an *overcomer* a special token of the Grace of God. Israel ate of Manna, but not of the "hidden manna." God loved to feed His people, pilgrims in the wilderness, loved (in doing it) to tie Himself by His own law of the Sabbath, but *that* display of His love was a passing one, not needed in *the land*. But there was a portion not to pass away—treasured up, not for Israel, not for the priests, it was to be a record to *God*. If Israel rejoiced in the Manna, God delights in *Him* who was the Manna. Did *His* delight in Christ cease when Israel needed the Manna no more? No! He loved to have the memorial of it laid up for Himself.

Here is Manna—day by day. I take and feed on it, but how little does my heart enter into the preciousness of it, compared to what it will do there. There will be to those who overcome, the power of *tasting* *God's delight* in Christ as the tree of Life "in the midst of the Paradise of God." Christ the One who can give life to poor sinners, and be the ornament in the midst of that Garden of delights of God, to adorn it, when He takes me in there. What is the intermediate portion between the two passages? The very spot on which I now stand. All the difficulties I meet with daily. The candlesticks, where are they? Had the word been, "let him connected with the candlesticks hear"—I must have said it is not for me, for there is nothing I can point to here. But I have an ear to hear. Is God become a dead God, because man has failed? No! *He* is the living God, and the God of *testimony*. If the candlesticks had *not* failed it would have been that at last the *creature* could carry blessing. Now that is *not* true; God has tried man over and over again, and man has always failed, but yet God is never wearied out. The

Churches have all failed. He knew that man would fail. He does not change because the creature changes, neither do His thoughts vary. "He that hath an ear, &c.,"—an ear to hear. It is the very *lowest* thing; not, "Can you work? do anything? Israel in the wilderness had *no* ear, and was overthrown; so will you if you have none. God says as it were, "Has *My word* any entrance into your hearts? If you have got blessing from anything I have ever said, here is my challenge to you: 'He that hath an ear.'"

"I know thy works." There is such a mixture all around. A little bit of God and a great deal of evil. The little bit of God first thought of by Christ: the great bit of evil noticed by us. We don't like the deep sand of the wilderness. It seems as though the Living God had drawn a picture on purpose that I might see how *His* eye, that I thought rested only on Christ, comes down here; weighs up and judges all, and puts responsibility home on me. He is there marking all the things that have the unsavoury taste of the wilderness. One reason why people do not like to recognise the ruin of the Church, and the reason why God allowed it, is because it puts all on the individual. I have to pick every step of my way; to try all. I don't like that. It puts me under responsibility. A question between one's own soul and God, and that is what God meant. Everything that the renewed nature puts forth as the fruit of faith in Christ, God looks on as "works." There will always be works of some sort, either God's work or Satan's. Besides this you ought also to know what it is to labour for the Lord, not only to bear spontaneous fruit but "labour and patience," a consciousness that *you are standing* against a *rapid current*. "Patience" does not mean simply the quietness there may be when there is no difficulty.

"Hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, &c." One cannot stand in the position God sets them in here, without feeling something about the responsibility of hating evil. *Is the Church* the place where *evil is to be allowed*? What does a man that has an ear hear from God: is it toleration of evil? You will carry about to the end of your lives the law of sin and death in your members, but you will *hate* your own self-will, evil, &c., and have need of patience to bear with it—separation from evil, one of the first principles of our position before God. "Borne—had patience—not fainted," sketches the position held by a soul when the current is rushing past it, while it is standing in integrity with God. You may find

the evil strong, but you've got *God*, you can *endure*, look for the exodus, *God* will provide.

What's the position of the Church of the living God now? Everything tottering and shaking. Have you no heart for that that is dear to God? No communion with *all* the living members of Christ down here? I may have *happy* intercourse with those who feel with me (in fellowship with God) and be embarrassed in communion with those who are loving the world and not walking with Christ, but can I give them up? Not care for them, mourn over them? *I never can get away from them.* If it is only a prayer, only a groan, only supplication, there is always something for me to do for them before God.

First love. How many have had to deplore losing their first love!—not true of all. Paul went on getting strength as he went; what then if your heart's love grows cold: has that changed the brightness and beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ? Has God turned away from *Him*? "Do the first works"—very difficult for us to discern the workings of Satan. One of his ways is to occupy *young* Christians with *doing*, and *old* Christians with *feelings*: God's question is neither about doings nor feelings, but love—works of love—neither work without love, nor love without works. We often lose power by separating the affections of the heart from the fruits that flow from the activity of love. There is no place where LOVE can be given or sustained except in communion with God. If God has presented light and the heart has trifled with it, you will *not* find joy. The heart has trifled with what God gave for ITS joy, and is put on walking steadily with God *without it*. Sometimes joy comes in at the end of the course. We cannot settle what the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes was. God would put us as having Him as the living God, as the One *to judge for me*. I have to trust to God to show me what is contrary to His mind.

If man has let slip all that God put into his hand, God has not withdrawn these truths. What was the power of the Church then but Jesus Christ in heaven, and the Holy Ghost sent down here?

May the Lord lay *His* own word home to our hearts. He knows how to pour truth, *old* truth into the heart, and the truth fills up every void, every crevice of the soul, discovers all that is there: tells of the utter failure of man, and of the utter faithfulness of God.

BY BOZEZ AND SENEH.

1 SAM. xiv. 4.

(Concluded).

By F. C. JENNINGS.

BUT there is another point in the narrative of Jonathan's act of faith that we cannot afford to ignore. Jonathan suggests a sign whereby they may discern the Lord's will and walk in it. He says to his armour-bearer, "We will discover ourselves unto them. If they say thus unto us 'Tarry until we come to you,' then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them. But, if they say thus, 'Come up unto us,' then we will go up, for the Lord hath delivered them into our hand."

This is, at first sight, a very strange conclusion. If an outpost of probably not less than one hundred men—for twenty were killed quickly—call out to *two*: "Come here," most people would rather assume this to be a good and natural reason for going the other way; for it would betoken confidence and preparedness; they are not off their guard. A surprise might offer some hope of success, but only a surprise. Faith, however, never has reasoned, and never does reason, naturally, is ever *supernaturally* bold, and takes the proud self-confidence of opposition as a "sign" of independence, nay of defiance of God; and so, not only of real weakness, but of the interposition of God in answer to such a challenge. So to David the vaunting boastings of Goliath were the "sign" of his quick coming destruction. Faith recognises exactly the same "sign" in the spirit of vaunting pride so characteristic of the world in this day; and *knows* that the world's judgment is correspondingly near.

But the alternative is no less striking, and is very strongly worded: "If they say tarry, then we will stand exactly where we are, on the ground now beneath our feet": that is, we will not give way one inch, but die where we stand, if the Lord so will.

This is well worth considering. There is a spurious faith, a presumptuous vain confidence that seems to assume that God is *bound* always to interpose for the present deliverance of His people. Those who claim this spurious faith claim to know the Lord's mind in every trial, and they are but too apt to condemn unsparingly any uncertainty as to the outcome of a sorrow, or affliction from

which others may be suffering, as being only guilty unbelief. Let us learn from this dear man of faith, Jonathan ; he says, practically, " I am not yet assured as to what the outcome of this may be. I cannot positively assert that the Lord will interpose and give us victory. It may be that He will work for us, but of this I am quite clear, that He would not have us give ground to, or flee from, these uncircumcised ; so, if it does not please Him to deliver them into our hand, then we will die where we stand. We will not purchase life at the cost of our Lord's dishonour : we will glorify Him in one way or the other, by our death, if not by our life."

Nor is Jonathan the only witness to the same weighty truth. The three Hebrew youths before Nebuchadnezzar, whilst indeed confident of final and eternal deliverance from the king's hand, yet professed no absolute assurance of knowing God's purposes with regard to them, or of being delivered then and there from the fiery furnace. But " if not," they were quite as clear as Jonathan that they would not, could not, dare not worship the golden image. There they stood : that was the ground beneath their feet, and they would maintain it at all costs.

Nor does our Apostle Paul tell another story : he " despaired even of life " ; but he adds, " we had the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves but in God, Who raiseth the dead "—and let us mark these last words carefully, for He does not always deliver those who trust Him from trouble, or trial, or loss, or sickness, or bereavement, or death : but He may let these take their course, even when they are affecting His own most faithful and devoted servants ; but He will surely intervene at last, even if things have gone to their most extreme length, even to *death*, and the body has been crushed to its kindred dust, for He "*raiseth the dead.*" Is this weak faith ? Is it unbelief ?

So too, I take it, the same writer shows the same spirit of faith exactly when he contemplates the possibility of death in writing to the Philippians. Joyously he says, " that is all one to me, I count this all my salvation, that Christ be magnified whether by life or death." Here, it is true, he seems to have a divinely given assurance of a present deliverance from death given him.

But when he has nothing of this—when he looks death full in the face, is " ready to be offered up," still he speaks, with unchanged confidence, of a *final* deliverance : " And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly

Kingdom : to Whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen." Though he dies ; though the sword of the executioner cuts short his life ; though God does not intervene at all ; *that*, even that, does not affect his confidence at all ; he will be "delivered" *after* that. Do those who now insist that we ought always to look with assurance for *present* deliverance put the Apostle to shame ? Or may not they safely judge themselves by him ?

Nay ; how seriously do the Lord's dear people err in assuming that He will always deliver *now* from every trial, in answer to prayer ; or what I may call, a *forced* faith. "He will heal you if you only trust Him," has become a kind of formula instantly pressed on the afflicted. It grows out of what is called "Divine Healing," or "Faith Healing." In the case of sickness, the very continuance of the malady is often pressed upon the sufferer, as evidence of his, or her, lack of faith ; and indeed, *if* God does *always* heal in answer to prayer, this would appear the inevitable and legitimate conclusion. But who can estimate the damage, the grievous distress, aye, at times almost despair of many a true child of God, resulting from such unscriptural pressure ?

Or, when one who is very dear to us is sick, and we have pleaded with God for his or her recovery ; we have perhaps supposed that it was the very essence of faith, to stifle every doubt or question, and to believe or profess to believe that that recovery was assured, and certain ; and when they, after all, have "fallen asleep," not only is there the natural sorrow, but our very faith has received a staggering blow, from which recovery is often difficult and slow. Have we not known such cases ?

At times God does, we thankfully recognise, give an assurance of our prayers having been granted. We rest then with happy confidence in Himself, for "we know that we have the petitions that we asked of Him" (1 John v. 14) ; but this is only when what we ask is fully in accord either with His clearly revealed, or His hidden will. To that Will we must ever be submissive ; nor, whatever may be the outcome, give up one inch of the ground "beneath our feet" ; that is, we must not give up one particle, or shade, of confidence, or trust, or hope : for our trust too is "in God *who raiseth the dead*" ; *that* is the characteristic faith of the Christian to-day : Jesus of the seed of David is raised from the dead (2 Tim. ii.).

May I draw one other lesson from this most interesting incident : we will assume that the Lord signally uses one who, as Jonathan,

acts in some peculiar line, or takes certain ground, in dependence on Him ; and lo, a host of imitators assume the same place : rush in, but without the same direct dependence. It is rather as did the Egyptians into the Red Sea ; only to evidence their folly. Such do not follow *the faith*, but the *ways*, or *methods*, of other servants of the Lord : and we need to warn one another against this.

On the other hand there are those who in trial—let us say sickness—not only will have nothing to do with questionable or undoubtedly evil means, as Christian Science, but refuse all means whatever. That may be all well for them : they may be as Jonathan quite prepared to *die* rather than give up the principle that they hold. We may rejoice and admire all such expressions of faith, where it is not simply fanatical. But too often these go still further ; and insist, as Jonathan never did, *that everyone else shall stand there too*. The ground under them must be under everyone else. Many are thus forced, as it were, to take a stand far beyond their faith, with no clear word of God on which to rest, and often the result is some sad fall that brings reproach upon the truth of God. Those who take the place of Jonathan in our day may well heed the Apostle's word : " Hast thou faith ? " Then do not insist on others walking by your measure, but " have it to thyself before God."

Thus this Old Testament narrative, giving an account of a deed so thrilling that the young are enthralled by it—by these divinely given meaning of names ; by the one rock and its two crags ; by the very points of the compass, and by every other feature—springs up into life. The Word is no longer a dead record in an old book ; but a living oracle in every detail ; refreshing, enlightening, instructing, strengthening the divine life in His people. As quaint George Herbert sings of the Scriptures :—

This verse marks that, and both do make a motion
 Unto a third, that ten leaves off doth lie :
 Then, as dispersed herbs do watch a potion,*
 These three make up some Christian's destiny.

NOTICE.

If any of our friends can undertake to distribute back numbers of *The Faith and The Flock*, will they make application to the Editor for the quantity they can dispose of, which will be sent gratis, carriage paid ?

* That is, they wait to be gathered together for a potion, or for human blessing, as we have sought to do with the " dispersed herbs " or scattered verses of Scripture above.

THE MESSAGE OF THE EVANGELIST.

By F. R.

“Good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.”—Luke ii. 10.

ARE we not often surprised, yea, and deeply grieved at the present-day response, or rather, want of response, to this the most marvellous message ever addressed to the human family? So little fruit apparently from all the efforts put forth to make it known, and yet, without question, it is the most soul-stirring message man has ever heard, or human lips have ever uttered. True, as the lawyers say, the *venue* has been changed, so that instead of peace and joy on earth, it is peace to the conscience, joy to the heart, to those who receive it. May I be allowed to give a word to the evangelist, on this most important subject?

Now, the preacher who engages in this great work must be endued with a true understanding of the grandeur of the message he has been called to proclaim; that it is a message from God, declaring His marvellous love, grace, mercy and patience to those who hitherto have been kept captive in the enemy's camp; and been serving Satan and themselves, without any knowledge of God's ways, or ability to serve Him.

The preacher must go forth with the thought that the world needs Christ, and must have Christ; the fact was, the world knew Him not (John i. 10), and the work of the evangelist is to make the Lord known, to introduce Him as being “the Christ, the Saviour of the World” (John iv. 42).

The evangelist should start with the thought that “the field is the world.” There must be no acidity or hardness in the message, for it is a message from the Throne of God telling of peace made and peace proclaimed. The Saviour's death revealing the boundless love of God to sinful man.

The Jews truly rejected Christ as their promised Messiah, and He was thus by them “rejected of men” (Isa. liii. 3). Pilate, the Gentile, on the other hand, acknowledged Him as “King of the Jews.” The Lord's rejection by His own people was necessary for the fulfilment of Scripture, in order that the great mystery that had been kept secret from the foundation of the world (Matt. xiii. 35), might be made known—“a mystery, even the hidden, which

God ordained before the world unto our glory " (1 Cor. ii. 7). This was necessary in order to foil Satan, and his works be destroyed.

That the Lord was not received by the Jews is a matter of history, confirmed by their scattered condition. Thus the world-wide admission of Jehovah's righteous sway over the earth was put off for a period, that a day of grace might reign for 2,000 years, while He made known a free pardon by the mouth of His messengers. This was Godlike, and confounded Satan entirely. Now it is with a due sense of this that the Evangelist must go forth and minister to man's crying need. Deep down in the human heart there is often a great yearning after the Divine, for God made man's heart so big that nothing but Himself can fill it. He said, " thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might " (Deut. vi. 5). Everything else is unavailing to satisfy, although men may try every conceivable thing, and as one pleasure tires resort to another ; but, with the Preacher, confession must at length be made, " vanity of vanities, all is vanity." The work of the evangelist is therefore to introduce the Lord to mankind, by making known the wonderful and complete work that has been accomplished for them by His death on the Cross, meeting all God's righteous requirements, to enable them to stand in His presence with the knowledge that sin has been cancelled by the atoning blood, and they are now meet for heaven. This is good news indeed, and those who receive it can well rejoice.

The preacher has to lead men on step by step to have to do with God. As Paul preached, Felix trembled ; he had reached the anti-chamber, and when he saw where he was he halted and trembled, he durst go no further without the blood.

The preacher has to lead the sinner into the presence of God, and this requires special preparation. An intellectual grasp of certain truths will never do alone ; their presentation must come with that savour that speaks of intercourse with God. Less intelligence if accompanied with this savour will be blessed to souls ; whilst the other remains barren. It is a day when men are yearning after something, they do not know what ; many shorten their lives with the hope of finding it. It is therefore a great day for the man of God to go forth, and make known the " Good Tidings of Great Joy—the exceeding riches of His grace " (Eph. ii. 7).

St. PAUL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY:

St. PAUL AS A MAN.

By R. E.

THERE was not much outward attractiveness about Paul. Though one of the greatest of men, morally and spiritually, yet he seems to admit his "bodily presence was weak." Paul, means "little"; and there is every reason to think he was small of stature. Possibly he alludes to this when he speaks of glorying in his infirmities, and in that connection refers to being let down the wall of Damascus in a basket, and by that means escaping the governor's hands. Had he been a man of large stature this might have been found impossible. In addition to his diminutive figure he had an affection of the eyes, so that his personal appearance was not very prepossessing.

It is however, St. Paul's moral characteristics that we wish to enlarge upon at the present time. What can we discover of these in the record he has left to us? Scattered throughout the Acts and the pages of his Epistles there are many references which reveal unmistakably the kind of man Paul was, both mentally and morally.

1. He possessed a two-fold capacity which is not often found in combination—at least not to such an extent as in his case, viz., **the power to reflect and the power to act.** The world has had its great thinkers; and it has also had its men of action; but very, very few have been equally great in both departments. But witness Saul of Tarsus, the persecutor, entering into every house and hailing men and women to prison; hear him giving his voice against them, in order that they might be put to death; behold him on his journey to Damascus facing the heat of a mid-day sun and with madness in his heart against the followers of the Nazarene: and do you not see the man of action? Nor did this side of his nature develop only along the line of persecution. If we think of his long journeys and exhausting travels, scaling mountains, fording rivers, crossing burning plains by day and enduring exposure to cold by night; sometimes confronted by crowds that threatened his life, or standing alone before the Emperor Nero; at one time addressing an assembly of philosophers on Mars Hill; and on another occasion standing forth in the midst of a crowded and sinking ship and telling everybody what ought

to be done : we cannot fail to discover the energy, the concentration, the quickness to decide upon a certain course of conduct, the ability to grasp a situation, which mark the man of action. His contention with Barnabas, and when he withstood Peter to the face are only further illustrations along the same line.

But was he not equally great in the other department we have mentioned? He excelled as a thinker, teacher and writer. His letters are not a mere stringing together of words and phrases : there is a continuity of thought, an elaboration of argument, and a completeness of treatment that disclose a mind of the first order, and one which had been educated and disciplined. We are speaking now of Paul as a man, quite apart, for the moment, from any question of inspiration : for we must remember, there is the vessel, as well as the use God may make of it. We are now speaking of *the kind of vessel* Divine wisdom selected for its use. It had to be confessed, even by the cultured, that his letters were "weighty and powerful." And although he might be "rude in speech," yet not in knowledge. He was as much at home in disputing with philosophers as he was in making tents.

2. He was not only a man of action but one capable of great endurance. Mark had turned back on the first missionary journey, it is supposed on account of the hardships of the way. Not so Paul. And he is the one who suggests the second missionary journey. "Let us go again," he says, "and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the Word of the Lord." This most probably meant they were to face the same difficulties and dangers as on the previous occasion ; but, nothing daunted, Paul set out. In the prison at Philippi, his back smarting with stripes, and the whole situation, considering the character of his dungeon, calculated to cause depression, instead of being dejected he prayed and sang praises to God ; and even after suffering such hardship he shews his unconquerable spirit by refusing to leave the prison when permission was given to depart, demanding that having been beaten openly uncondemned the magistrates themselves should come and fetch him out. An incident such as this reveals the man.

It might be said the grace of God enabled him to endure in this fashion ; and that is true. But we must not overlook the fact that God selects his vessels upon whom he intends to bestow such abundant grace. And it is the vessel we are looking at for the

moment. When God has a work for a Luther to do He chooses a Luther to do it. And Luthers and Pauls are not met with every day.

3. **He was possessed of great courage.** He could, when he felt that necessity demanded it, separate from his companion in labours and travel—Barnabas: and he did not shrink from withstanding Peter to the face. Strange experiences never daunted him, and unknown dangers had no terrors for him. Even when he had to confess, "All they that are in Asia be turned away from me," he was unmoved. Only a man of supreme courage could have gone through the catalogue of perils he enumerates in 2 Cor. xi. "*Perils of waters, perils of robbers, perils by mine own countrymen, perils by the heathen, perils in the city, perils in the wilderness, perils in the sea, perils among false brethren.*" (ver. 26). And yet we must not think of him as one who never knew depression, and was impervious to fear. In one place he tells us "Without were fightings, within were fears." And in another, it is recorded of him, that, when after his last long and dangerous voyage he saw the brethren who came to meet him from Rome, "he thanked God and *took courage.*" His attempt to adventure himself into the theatre at Ephesus, during the uproar, from which he was only dissuaded by his friends, is a signal instance of his courage. Nor can we follow him through all the vicissitudes of his last visit to Jerusalem and the consequent imprisonment for two years, without being conscious that this courage never failed him.

4. It was not insensibility that gave Paul courage, nor was it mere brute force that carried him on, for he was evidently **a man of deep feeling.** Who can forget the opening of the ninth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans: "*I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.*" In his address to the Ephesian elders he speaks of "many tears": to those who tried to persuade him not to go up to Jerusalem he says, "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?"; while the parting described in the previous chapter tells the same tale, for had he been merely a stoic no tears would have been shed at his departure; whereas we read, "And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him." His strong feeling comes out again and again in his letters. "I long to see you," he says to the saints at Rome. He writes to Timothy that he is "mindful of his tears." He speaks

of his "beloved" Philippians; and to the Thessalonians he writes, "*So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.*" His sympathy and tenderness were as striking as his endurance and courage.

5. **He was a man of great determination.** Nothing turned him from his purpose. This was characteristic of him at all periods of his history, both as a persecutor of the Church and as its servant. "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks," seems to disclose to us an unbending resolution, even when his conscience began to warn him that he might be mistaken. His own words, too, towards the close of his active ministry, and with bonds and afflictions awaiting him, tell the same tale of determination: "*But none of these things move me,*" he says, "*neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus.*" But nowhere, perhaps, is this trait in his character more conspicuous than during the efforts of his friends to prevent him taking that last journey to Jerusalem. In spite of a threefold warning, he was undeterred. He seems to have had some inward premonition of what awaited him. To the Ephesian elders he says, "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city saying that bonds and afflictions abide me." Still he went forward. When he landed at Tyre, the disciples there, we read, "said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem." Even this did not cause him to alter his purpose. Nor even when Agabus "took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles,'" was it sufficient to turn him aside. Whether he was right in the face of these *repeated* warnings—warnings, too, which coincided with his own presentiments—is a matter of doubt. For these predictions came true; nor did the results in the end seem to justify the expedition. But whatever view we take of the matter, no one can question the Apostle's determination. Even when all joined in pleading with him to abandon his intended visit, his only reply was, "**I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus.**" This fine resolution wins our admiration even if it fails to silence all objections. In view of such an unalterable resolution the only course to pursue was that adopted by

his companions in travel: "*And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, 'The will of the Lord be done.'*"

6. Yet although on the occasion just referred to he was so unbending, he was, withal, **a man of sound judgment.** He knew there were times when it is necessary to give way. In the case of Timothy, he considered the prejudices of others and did not hesitate to circumcise him, because of the Jews in those quarters. In the case of Titus, he was equally firm the other way. He was willing, he tells us, to be "made all things to all men." But this was with a view to "gain" others. Not because he had no fixed doctrines or principles. He could be yielding as regards others, and indeed, carried out his own exhortation to the Philippians, "Let your moderation (yieldingness) be known unto all men;" but as regards himself there was no yielding to ease or self-indulgence. "*I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*"

7. **He was full of common-sense and exceedingly practical.** This is the more remarkable considering the nature of the themes that constantly engaged his attention. This aspect of the Apostle's character is well worthy of our careful attention. Here was one whose mind was occupied with the most exalted spiritual themes. He refers constantly to the heavenly portion of the Christian and to our being seated in heavenly places in Christ. He himself was at home in that scene and in dwelling upon such subjects. Yet he was equally at home in the common concerns of every day life, and always seemed equal to the occasion, whatever that occasion demanded. When Elymas the sorcerer sought to turn away the deputy from the faith, it was Paul who "set his eyes on him" and confronted him in such a manner that this "enemy of all righteousness" was completely overcome. When standing before the Council, by a stratagem, he set the Pharisees against the Sadducees. He gave directions and warnings to the captain of the ship in which he was sailing; and the sequel proved he was right. "Sirs," he said afterwards, when the storm he had predicted had come, "Ye should have hearkened unto me." But although God had told him there should be no loss of any man's life, but of the ship, he was no fatalist; and when the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, he "said to the centurion and to the soldiers, 'Except these

abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.' ” Moreover, he “ besought them all to take meat.” And yet the man who did this “ gave thanks to God in the presence of them all.”

What a combination of the spiritual and the practical we have here. There stood an angel of God by him and informed him as to all that would happen, and yet the man who receives these supernatural communications is the very one who loses sight of no detail which concerns the safety of the ship and the well-being of its occupants. How beautiful it is to see the natural and the spiritual co-operating ; and to learn that the invisible God employs visible agencies to carry out His purpose, even though independent of them all. We are too apt to regard natural and spiritual forces as independent or even antagonistic ; or we are content to rely solely on the one, or exclusively on the other. Paul was sane enough to see that the one is the handmaid of the other, and that they exist for each other. Later on, when they reach land, the same attitude reappears. He does not ask God to light a fire, but he himself gathers a bundle of sticks ; but he enters in and prays for the recovery of the father of Publius who was sick of a fever, and his prayer is heard.

8. This robust, energetic, determined man, so full of practical wisdom, was by no means deficient in finer qualities, for his utterances often denote **a rare delicacy**. Witness the opening of the Epistle to the Romans. He refrains from calling himself an Apostle ; he is only “ a servant of Jesus Christ.” The reason is, probably, that some other Apostle had been used to found this assembly in Rome. Yet he does not hide the fact that he is an Apostle (v. 5), but how anxious he seems to take a place along *with* them instead of occupying one of authority *over* them. He mentions that *their* “ faith is spoken of throughout the whole world ” ; and although he proceeds to speak of imparting to them some spiritual gift, he immediately explains : “ *That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.* ” And after unfolding to them the Gospel of God he returns at the close to the same standpoint. “ I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.” And he speaks of visiting Rome in order to “ be filled with their company.”

What could be more delicate than his letter to Philemon ? How common courtesy glows with a new splendour, elevated and

enriched by Christian grace. "Though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ." When we consider our natural fondness for making use of any authority we possess, the rare grace and beauty of such a style are the more wonderful; especially when it is remembered that he is not asking any favour for himself, but pleading on behalf of a runaway slave.

What love, gentleness, and refinement shine through every line of this letter. "My son Onesimus": "Whom I would have retained with me . . . but without thy mind would I do nothing." Calling upon Philemon to share a similar feeling of regard for this one, once "unprofitable," but now "a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee." Counting upon the master to receive back the slave, and putting himself in the place of the latter, offering to make good all damages; yet gently reminding Philemon: "How thou owest unto me even thine own self." And all this gentleness and good feeling flowed from the pen of the once implacable persecutor!

Such was the man—the chosen vessel to bear Christ's Name "before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel!" Is it too much to say, that Christ never did anything more wonderful than to lay hold of this man and make him His willing bond slave?

In him there existed a combination of intellectual, moral and physical qualities that have never been surpassed. We have seen that he was a man of action and a man of letters; conspicuous for courage and determination, and, equally so, for gentleness; he stood unabashed before kings and rulers or in the presence of a howling mob; and he could pen a letter of entreaty to a master about his runaway slave. He could make Felix tremble; and he could be as gentle amongst the Thessalonians as a nurse cherisheth her children. He could be independent of everyman, having learned in whatsoever state to be content; and yet the loving persistence of Onesiphorus, who sought him out very diligently and found him when a prisoner at Rome, touched him so deeply that he could not refrain from leaving it on record for all time.

We need not be surprised at the way such a man dies. His own account of how he faced the last great issue, brings us to his latest autobiographical record.

“ For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith ; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day ; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.”

In his address to the Ephesian elders some years before he had expressed his one great desire. It was that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus. He had now accomplished both. The end is reached ; the course is finished ; and the passion of his soul, which had prompted him ever since he became the servant of Christ, is as strong as ever. How his last thoughts seem to linger round the message which had long been the mainspring of his life. He places his doctrine before everything ; for that he knew was of God ; he exhorts Timothy to continue in the things which he had learned and been assured of ; and reminds him of the Holy Scriptures ; and then he comes to his final charge. **“ I CHARGE THEE THEREFORE BEFORE GOD, AND THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO SHALL JUDGE THE QUICK AND THE DEAD AT HIS APPEARING AND HIS KINGDOM: preach the Word.”** That is the all important matter. Timothy is set in the very presence of God and of Christ and the Judgment Day, and told to do one thing—**“ preach the word.”** And as if this were not enough, so dear to the heart of the Apostle is this work, he adds, **“ do the work of an evangelist.”** But his beloved work has fastened itself upon his soul, and all his thoughts turn upon the Gospel, and so a little further, and he is back again to the same subject: **“ Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry.”** And with his closing breath, almost, he is again speaking of the same theme. **“ At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me . . . notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me : that by me the preaching might be fully known.**

“ Preach the WORD ” : “ Do the work of an EVANGELIST ” : “ Profitable to me for the MINISTRY ” : “ That by me the PREACHING might be fully known ” : these are the closing utterances of Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles. The warrior dies, clad in the armour of God, and with the sword still in his right hand. He has fought a good fight ; he has finished his course ; he has kept the faith.