

any human aid or preparation; so the grace of Christ comes directly without human mediation to the soul. The olive trees represent the two anointed ones, Joshua the high priest, and Zerubbabel the prince, who typified the priesthood and the royalty which are combined in Christ, the great "Anointed One." Through Jesus as our High Priest and our King all grace in unfailing supplies comes to men. The two great truths of Christianity are both set forth here, the work of the Spirit, and the work of Jesus. Through the mediation of Christ the Spirit is given, and the Spirit in turn applies to our heart and consciences the grace of Christ, the grace of the atonement which has been made by our High Priest, and the grace of sanctification by which Jesus reigns in us and over us.

### III. THE PROMISE—Vers. 7-10.

Having shown the true source of strength and power, the angel adds to the vision a promise of the sufficiency of the grace revealed and the assurance of success. The difficulties which confronted Zerubbabel were like a great mountain, and whoever undertakes a great work for God must expect to meet with obstacles neither few nor small. But the mountain shall become a plain, all obstacles shall be swept away. The work shall go on, the temple shall be built. At length the capstone shall crown the summit of the completed building, while the people shout grace, grace, unto it, at once an acknowledgment of the grace which was wrought in the past, and an entreaty for the same grace and blessing to abide upon it, and to keep it in the years to come. An encouraging assurance is given to Zerubbabel not only of the completion of the work, but of his own share in it. Twelve years before he had laid the foundation, his own hands shall finish it, even though seven years longer were needed for its fulfilment. Herein could men see a pledge of the Divine faithfulness, and those who despised the day of small things would be rebuked.

Ver. 10 is very obscure. For they shall rejoice, etc. Who? Those seven (compare chap. iii. 9); the eyes of Jehovah are they, ranging through the whole earth. God who sees everything, sees Zerubbabel in this work. And because God's eyes are upon him, the perfect accomplishment is guaranteed; let not therefore the timid be despondent.

God rewards with success those who work for Him, although He may not always permit them to see that success here.

The greatest results flow from the smallest beginnings. God observes and cares for His workers, and when He smiles upon us what need we care for the frowns of men.

Each one of us is called to be a light-bearer for God. As the candlestick represents the Church, so the lamps represent individual Christians—Prov. iv. 18; Matt. v. 16; Phil. ii. 15; Ephes. v. 8.

That our lamp may shine we must have oil. All life and light come from the Spirit—John iii. 5, 6; Rom. viii. 5, 9, 14; 1 Cor. xii. 3. This oil is abundant. We have but to ask for it. It is given through Jesus Christ—John vii. 39; Ps. lxxviii. 18; 2 Cor. ix. 8; Phil. iv. 18, 19; Luke ii. 13; Jas. i. 5.

### Abbott's Commentary—John.

New York: A. S. Barnes & Co. Toronto: Hart & Rawlinson.

This is a book of 245 pages, octavo, well printed, tastefully and strongly bound, and copiously illustrated. The full title is "An Illustrated Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John; for family use and reference, and for the great body of Christian Workers of all Denominations." The author, Lyman Abbott, D.D., son of Jacob Abbott, the well known writer, is himself already well known as a commentator. The commentary now before us, from the brief and fragmentary perusal which we have hitherto been able to give it, appears to be one of the best for general use which we have seen. Few will dispute the principles of interpretation enunciated in the introduction, and these principles are well carried out in the body of the work. The author does not occupy space in detailing the processes of thought, but he gives the results; and although he states the conclusions of scholars, he troubles his readers as little as possible with their controversies. In order to render the work intelligible and serviceable to all classes, even to those who know no language but the English, the many references to the original Greek which are to be found on every page are in every case accompanied by the English equivalent; and all quotations from foreign or ancient writers are translated. In this way the book adapts itself to the unlearned, while at the same time it preserves its character as a learned work. The spirit in which Dr. Abbott approaches his work, and the feeling with which he regards it, are plainly manifested in the concluding paragraph of his Preface, which is as follows:

"No work is more delightful than that which throws us into fellowship with great minds; of all work the most delightful is that which brings us into association with the mind of God. This is the fellowship to which the student of

the Bible aspires. I can have for those who use this work no higher hope than that they may find in its employment some of the happiness which I have found in its preparation, and that it may serve them as it has served me, as a guide to the Word of God, and through that Word to a better acquaintance with God himself."

A commentator who thus feels will do his work faithfully, heartily, and with due respect for the sacred character of the material in his hands. The illustrations in the book are numerous and well executed, and they are always of such a nature as to throw considerable light on the text. Intending purchasers can be supplied by Messrs. Hart & Rawlinson, King street, Toronto.

### ONE GOOD LESSON.

Captain Webb, who, next to our Captain Boyton, is the greatest swimmer in the world, tells how he learned one lesson which is worth every boy's learning. You remember the old proverb, that it is wiser to learn by the experience of others than by your own.

"My first public swim was in July, 1875, when I swam from Blackwall to Gravesend, a feat then though wonderful—just as Weston walking 110 miles in twenty-four hours was thought very wonderful shortly afterwards, simply because it was not known how much fatigue a man was capable of undergoing. A repetition of either of these feats now would be thought nothing of."

"In this first swim I learned one good lesson, which, thanks to some good advice I got afterwards from one who had been a great friend of mine ever since I swam across the Channel, I believe has been the cause of my ultimate success. When I swam from Blackwall to Gravesend, I very nearly failed, owing to some persons on board the little boat which accompanied me, as well as a steamer, insisting on giving me brandy. Now, I am no teetotaler, and I am happy to say I can keep sober without bragging about it; at the same time having a genuine and heartfelt pity for those who can't."

"Of one thing, however, I am assured, and that is, no really great feat of endurance can be performed unless next door to total abstinence is adhered to. When young men go on long walking tours, a glass of beer at every village inn means failure, and as to spirits, they are simply poison. If I had really taken nothing, I should have reached Gravesend without any difficulty whatever; as it was, I was in kind, but stupid hands, and although I succeeded in my first public attempt, it was with difficulty, and I then determined, from what I felt from sipping brandy during the swim, in the foolish hope of getting good, coupled with what I afterwards heard, never again to take spirits while undergoing prolonged exertions. Weston, the great walker, fully coincides in my opinion on this point."

### Around the Table.

#### THE DAYS OF THE WEEK.

WHO named them? Our forefathers ever so far back, before the missionaries brought the knowledge of God and His Son Jesus Christ to England. England was once pagan; she worshipped several gods. The days of the week are named after the old English gods and goddesses; for the people kept time by weeks, as the Jews did. Let us see how the names came about.

They saw the sun. What is more beautiful than the sun. The sun gives light and heat. All living things grow and thrive under his brightness and warmth. The sun must surely be a god. So they worshipped the sun, and called the first day of the week Sunday.

Next the moon. Nothing except the Sun is so beautiful as the moon; and so they worshipped the moon, and Monday was named in honour of her.

Tuesday was named after Tuisco, their god of strife and war.

Then the wind; what mighty things it did, and yet nobody saw it. It was always moving and nobody knew how. They said it was a spirit, and they called him Woden, the mover, the inspirer, and named Wednesday after him.

There was thunder. Thunder must be a

god too, and they called him Thor. The dark thunder-cloud was Thor's frowning eyebrow, and the lightning was Thor's hammer splitting the trees and rocks. They said, too, that he drove away the winter cold and melted the ice. They loved him for doing so, and Thursday was named after him.

Spring was a goddess; for does she not make everything beautiful after the dreary winter? The flowers blossom and the birds build their nests, and everybody is happy. She was called Friga, the free one, the cheerful one; and Friday was named after her.

Then came the harvest. How wonderful was it, and is it, that the corn, and the wheat, which are put into the ground and die, should rise again and grow and ripen into golden corn and waving harvests! This must surely be the work of some kind spirit who loves people, they thought; and they called him Sater, the setter, the planter, the god of the seed-field and the harvest; and after him Saturday is named.

How much more do we know! We can look up to the great creator of them all, and exclaim, "The sun and the moon, the wind and the thunder, spring and autumn, are thy works, O Lord God Almighty." And, best of all, Jesus tells us that he is "our Father in heaven," loving us very much, and caring for us every moment of our lives.

### THE FIVE PENNIES.

I AM ashamed to say I was a drunkard once; but I'll tell you what turned me round: I was terribly dry one morning, and I wanted some rum. So I handed my youngest boy, only six years old, some coppers and a jug, and told him to go and get me a pint of rum. It was a cold morning, and Willie's trousers were thin and ragged, and he had no overcoat nor mittens. Willie didn't want to go; but I scolded him, and said:

"Father, I wish you would give me a penny to buy a stick of candy."

I told him to go along, and not bother me about a stick of candy. The little fellow began to cry, and stammered out:

"Father, you never give me any money to buy candy. Tommy Jones (he was the rum-seller's boy) has candy every day, and he says I can't have any because my father is a drunkard."

I felt as though lightning had struck me. "Oh, God!" said I, "has it come to this? Have I been paying my money to support the rum-seller and his family in luxury, while my own little boy could not have a single penny for candy? Yes, I am a drunkard. But old Jones' children won't sneer at Willie or me any more."

I called my boy back, and took the jug and the money. Here are the pennies. I will keep them as long as I live, and leave them as a sacred legacy to my children. I have got six, and a good wife besides. Thank God, I am saved, and my home is happy! I will do what I can to save others.