

THE MYSTERY OF AFFLICTION

BY REV. WM. COCHRANE, M. A. BRANTFORD.

The world in which we live is full of mystery. The vast majority of truths taught us in Nature, in Providence, and in Redemption must be received and believed, although but imperfectly understood.

To all such interrogations, it may be sufficient to reply in the words of the Saviour addressed to Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter."

At the same time, it is lawful for us, within certain limits, to enquire into some of the reasons why God sends affliction. Even to the best of Christians these afflictions are painful and unwholesome.

I. It is very evident from the Word of God that afflictions experienced by the people of God are sent reluctantly. "He doth not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men."

It is easy to admonish others, "not to trust in promises nor in men's sons," but hard to apply this maxim to ourselves. So long as the Lake of Galilee was calm and peaceful the disciples had no need for the Saviour's protection, but when the storm arose, and the waves swept over their feeble bark, then they cried for mercy and deliverance.

II. The afflictions of the righteous are disciplinary. The world is for the Christian a school of discipline, where he is trained and educated for future glory. The tender vine must be pruned and trained. The young plant must be headed back, again and again, in order to increase its fruitfulness.

But apart from the Word of God altogether, many circumstances connected with these providential dispensations prove them to be disciplinary in their character. "They are never sent so heavy as to utterly crush us."

III. Afflictions are intended to teach us lessons of heavenly wisdom. In the school of affliction we learn by experience divine truth. The doctrines of the Bible must be brought home to our soul.

then our faith in God and Scripture is wonderfully increased. It was so with the Psalmist David, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy statutes."

IV. Afflictions are intended to afford time for serious reflection. To many Christians this is the turning point of their life. It is true that every believer reflects more or less in the time of health.

V. Affliction is sent by God as an instrument for our sanctification. The Holy Spirit uses affliction for this end, "that we may be made partakers of His holiness."

VI. Afflictions are sent to increase our dependence upon God—to wean us from the things of time, and cause us more earnestly to long for eternity.

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE BIBLE. DR DAWSON'S CLOSING LECTURE.

Yesterday afternoon, in Erskine Church, Dr. Dawson delivered his closing lecture on the Anthropology of the Bible.

The next Scripture statement to be noticed is that after the fall, and sin had time to corrupt the human race, it was divided into tribes or peoples—the Canites and the Sothites. Cain, the first murderer, was branded as an outcast, became a wanderer, and his children being adventurous, active, and sharp-witted, rapidly improved their condition.

THE DELUGE.

Before the flood it is likely the earth was larger and ruder than subsequently. There were mighty forests in those days where are now seas. The vast plains over which sweep the German Ocean and Irish Sea, were inhabited, while the basin of the Mediterranean was an immense river valley—perhaps that of the Gihon.

Men did the same as before. They fought, speculated, and invented, grew wicked, forgot God, and oppressed the poor and needy. The Hamites took the position before occupied by the Canites, and became the leading race. Another class, the Horites, or cave-dwellers, were a tall, muscular people. Skeletons answering to this description have been found in the North of Italy, resembling the forms of Mongolians, or our Indians.

THE REV. DR. WYLIE ON ULTRAMONTANISM.

The Rev. Dr. Wylie is well known as a very able man who has for many years made the Romish controversy a speciality. For twelve years he has presided over the Protestant Institute of Scotland, and has delivered lectures to different classes of students all that time.

Gentlemen, before proceeding to declare the result of the competition, and to award the prizes, permit me to cast a glance back upon the history of the Institute within whose walls you have this winter been studying the great controversy between Protestant truth and Popish error.

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In conclusion the lecturer compared the times of the Antediluvians with our own. There was the same struggle amid the over-crowded people in centres of civilization for subsistence; immigrants wandered off to the ends of the earth in search of it, and necessarily this caused the same mixture of races, as described in Genesis.

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positions of the doctrines of Popery; the political course, or the bearing of the Popish principles on civil liberty and national independence; and the ritualistic course, or exposition of the new Popery, or rather old Popery with a new name that is rising in England. This permits a tolerably complete discussion, or, I ought to say, diagnosis of the whole subject.

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