

and the same throne, equal in power, dignity, and glory. And from this throne proceeds the exhaustless river of life—that is, the Divine Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son, and bears the divine love and grace to the souls of redeemed men. He brings them into fellowship and communion with the blessed Trinity, the Eternal Family, from which all true family life is derived. "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." He takes of the things of Christ and shows them His people. He brings all things to their remembrance which they had been taught. He pours into their hearts the light of truth, and drives away the darkness of error and doubt. Hence, He is the Comforter. He shows the weary pilgrim the way which he had lost. In the Church on earth He reigns as the God of sanctification, and flows as the River of Life over the hearts of men.

God's eternal and unchangeable love is exhibited in this beautiful symbolical representation. A river flowing through a valley is a great temporal blessing. But here we see a river issuing from the very throne of God and the Lamb—a river of love going forth, bearing on its crystal bosom blessing, joy, delight and substance to all the family of God. It is freighted with the precious fruits of Christ's redeeming work completed when He had ascended to the throne, and now made effectual and carried forward by the Spirit going out in His seven fold fullness, not only through the heavenly country, but into all the earth also, to fill all the people of God with the life and virtues of Christ. The river of divine love issuing from the eternal Fountain in the highest heaven—how it burst forth on the first Christian Pentecost on this lower world, expelling the ignorance of the disciples, removing every vestige of unbelief, and filling every humble soul with joy and peace! The love of God stays not with His beloved Son's humble birth in the manger, nor with the sacrificial blood on Calvary, nor with the glorious revelation of Christ risen and exalted; but is revealed in the substantial fruit of the Spirit's mighty work, by which the light and life of God are conveyed, as on heaven's unfailing River, to the souls of the redeemed.—*The Messenger.*

THE BEECHER SUNDAY.

We endorse the following remarks of the "Montreal Witness:"

"It is not pleasant to criticise one who has been a guest of the city, and as citizens of Montreal we most heartily own the friendliness and good feeling toward our city and country which prompted the recent visit of the Brooklyn 13th regiment, as well as the happiness that visit has caused. Speaking, however, as fellow-citizens of Christendom, we are bound to say that had Mr. Beecher planned a scheme to undermine the usages which surround and 'keep holy' the Lord's day, and to lessen the general respect for Puritan Protestantism, he could hardly have invented any means more ingenious than by coming to a country of mixed population like ours, where he is regarded by the majority as the very presiding genius of Puritanism, with a following composed largely of the members of a church which has named itself after the shrine of the Pilgrim Fathers, and then leaving our streets in broad daylight on Sunday afternoon, and departing from the station amid uproarious hilarity, almost at the very hour which is consecrated to the holy calm of our summer evening service. It is easy to answer that the way in which the people of Montreal turned out to give them their parting cheer, shows that the evening services was not very important to them, but Mr. Beecher has no doubt read the text: 'Woe unto him by whom the offense cometh.' The coming of the Brooklyn regiment under Mr. Beecher's 'spiritual' oversight, must have been looked upon by a large portion of our people as a fair representation of Protestantism in its highest development. And what have they learned? They have seen high honours paid to a man of whom they have heard strange things. There may have been those among them ready to disbelieve those strange things, so diligently told them, had they seen in his bearing the evidences of holiness, modesty and conscientiousness. Instead of that there has been a boisterous indifference to those things which Puritanism is reputed to hold most sacred. Montreal, has, on the whole, a quiet Sunday, and we hope it will be long before it prefers to its present Sabbath of rest either the Parisian or the Beecher Sunday. We are glad to find the Roman Catholic clergy joining heartily in the defence of the

holy day, and we hope their influence will be exerted until it prevails over the circuses, merry-go-rounds, and other unseemly things which in this city prevail chiefly among the members of their own flock."

MIRACLES IN BIBLE TIMES.

If miracles were so plentiful in Bible times, why are they not of common occurrence still? Let us consider for a moment. "Plentiful in Bible times." What are Bible times? One would like to know within a few thousand years, or a trifle like that, what times are meant. If you think miracles were abundant during all the centuries and millenniums of Bible times, you are greatly mistaken. There is a general impression that the Bible is a book full of miracles, which come in at random as they do in the old heathen mythologies; but those who pay any attention to Bible perspective know better. Have you ever considered that in the book of Genesis, covering more than 2,000 years at the lowest computation, there is not a single miracle wrought by human agency? Adam works no miracle; Abel works no miracle; Enoch works no miracle; even Abraham works no miracle. Nor one of all the patriarchs. How different from all the old mythologies, and how different from what it would have been if this book had come to us merely from some dim mythological past. Even when God himself is represented as doing things out of the general course of nature, it is only at long intervals, and very rarely, as in the translation of Enoch, the judgment of the flood, the confusion of tongues, the birth of Isaac. Remember that these events were centuries apart from each other. Even if there had been a miracle for every century, which there is not, you could scarcely say that they were "very plentiful." If you look at the history perspective, you will learn first, that all through Bible times, miracles were not the rule, but the exception; and more particularly that the miracles cluster around particular epochs, when there was special need for such signs of divine presence and power; as at the time of the Exodus, after the long, dark interval of Egyptian bondage. At the time of Israel's deepest declension, when the prophets Elijah and Elisha were called in a special way to witness for the Lord; and above all in the times of Christ and the founding of the Church, after the long and silent interval from the Restoration to the Advent. Does not this way of looking at the sacred history put the Bible miracles in a very different and altogether reasonable light? *From Rev. Dr. J. M. Gibson's "Ages Before Moses."*

SHUN THE SCEPTIC.

First, I warn you to shun the sceptic—the young man who puts his fingers in his vest and laughs at your old-fashioned religion and turns over to some mystery in the Bible and says, "Explain that, my friend; explain that;" and who says, "Nobody shall scare me; I am not afraid of the future; I used to believe in such things, and so did my father and mother; but I have got over it." Yes, he has got over it, and if you sit in his company a little longer, you will get over it too. Without presenting an argument against the Christian religion such men will by their jeers, and scoffs, and caricatures, destroy your respect for that religion which was the strength of your father in his declining years, and the pillow of your old mother when she lay dying.

Alas! a time will come when that blustering young infidel will have to die, and his diamond ring will flash no splendour in the eyes of Death as he stands over his couch waiting for his soul. Those beautiful locks will lie uncombed upon the pillow, and the dying man will say, "I cannot die—I cannot die." Death standing upon the couch says, "You must die; you have only half a minute to live; let me have it right away—your soul." "No," says the young infidel, "here are all my gold rings, and these pictures, take them all." "No," says Death, "what do I care for pictures?—your soul." "Stand back," says the dying infidel. "I will not stand back," says Death, "for you have only ten seconds now to live; I want your soul." The dying man says, "Don't breathe that cold air into my face. You crowd me too hard. It is getting dark in the room. O God!" "Hush," says Death, "you said there was no God." "Pray for me!" exclaims the dying infidel. "Too late to pray," says Death; "but three more seconds to live, and I will count them off—one, two, three." He has gone! Where? Where? Carry him out and bury him beside his father and

mother, who died while holding fast the Christian religion. They died singing; but the young infidel only said, "Don't breathe that cold air into my face. You crowd me too hard. It is getting dark in the room."

THE SILENCE OF SYMPATHY.

Great sorrow is silent. The soul is overwhelmed. It sinks under the hand of God into helplessness. In the presence of His power, and under the sense of His righteousness, there is a terrible dread of other and still greater sorrow. When His hand is upon us, we know that it is in justice; but conscious of sinfulness, we know not the limit of pain He may inflict, and we are afraid. "I was dumb with silence; I held my peace even from good; I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." At such a time the language of ordinary life is meaningless, and seems by its feebleness to mock the heart whose sorrow seeks to burst forth like a torrent. There are groanings that cannot be uttered, emotions which are wordless until the terrible pressure gives new meanings to familiar words, and forces a channel in language which can be understood in its great depth and overflowing fullness only by those of like experience. We sit alone. The presence even of friends is an intrusion; their words jar our hearts, and their well meant sympathy is only an opening of the fresh wounds. After the first great tumult is over, after the shock of the blow has passed a little, after time has taught us the language of sorrow, or when we feel the touch of the hand of one whose sorrow has been greater, the lips speak; but until then the grief is too sacred to be shared with any one, and is hidden away in the secret chambers of the soul.

Therefore true sympathy is also silent. It respects this sacredness of sorrow and does not ask to share that which is not offered. With an instinctive knowledge of the unutterableness of too great emotion, it waits for the speaking of the crushed heart. As when one is found by the road side, wounded and bleeding and sinking, the hands are busy in needed service; every want is ministered unto; the flowing blood is staunch and the gaping wounds closed, but the story of the casualty is not asked for until the suffering one revives. So sympathy for the wounded, bleeding heart is silent. It serves, but waits until the fitting time for words. Job's friends were wise in their first overtures of comfort. They "sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him; for they saw that his grief was very great." See, also, how little Jesus spake to the sorrowful. When His heart was moved He rendered service such as was needed, but said little. When He came to the sisters, He went to the grave with them weeping. Their sorrow was His own, and His tears were a stronger expression of sympathy than any words could have been. "See how He loved him," they said who saw Him.

Not knowing the exact measure of the sorrow of others, our words even of kindness may grate upon their hearts by their inappropriateness. Our well-meant attempts to comfort may only irritate. The commonplace expressions of the mysteries of Providence, the greatness of the affliction, and the wise purpose of good to be wrought in us thereby, may at first fail to awaken any response and be useless, because the sufferer sees as yet only the sorrow and not the sovereign grace.

It is better, therefore, to be silent until we know what is fitting to be said. And when we do speak, let it be, not in explanation of the mysteries of God's ways, but in encouragement to simple faith in God and in Christ. "Believe, and thou shalt see the glory of God," was the message of Christ to the sisters. "Let not your heart be troubled," He said to the sorrowing disciples, "ye believe in God, believe also in Me." But until we know that the heart is ready to hear our words, let our tears and our tender and silent services express our sympathy with sorrow.

Blessed are they whom God so sustains in the very shock of sorrow, that their lips are at once opened to praise Him.—*United Presbyterian.*

DR. ROBERT MOFFATT says that "mission work all over South Africa has been thrown back fifty years by the present war with the Zulus."

HEART-WORK must be God's work. Only the great Heart-maker can be the great Heart-breaker. If I love Him my heart will be filled with His spirit and obedient to His commands.—*Baxter.*