

firmly believed there have been the noblest action and the happiest and most peaceful living.

Is the story true, then? We come back upon his question, which is the really essential one to consider. We must fix our attention upon the evidence. We must weigh it and sift it. It should be strong and clear to lead us to such unusual, such momentous conclusions. We must not say that no evidence will persuade us; if we do, we are weakly yielding to a habit of the mind, a mechanical impulse, instead of using scientific investigation. One of the disciples of Jesus described in the old Gospel history made a statement of the kind. When Christ's other companions declared that they had seen Him risen, Thomas said that he would not and could not believe unless he actually could put his fingers into the print of the nails that had fastened Him to the Cross. That incredulity was not philosophical, but the result of habit, prejudice, and perhaps a morbid and desponding disposition. If ever I am inclined to similar doubting, if the thought comes pressing upon me unbidden, "The supernatural is impossible," I believe it would be unreasonable weakness to yield to the impulse, as I do not know what the supernatural is, and have no means of judging as to its possibility.

But there are classes of phenomena which do come under the range of my experience, and with regard to which I am capable of judging as to their possibility or impossibility. And when I think of the evidence before my reason and conscience for the story of the crucified and risen Jesus, I feel it is impossible that such evidence could mislead. That the character of Jesus should have been invented by dishonest forgers or fanatical dreamers is, I am quite sure, impossible. That Paul and His other Apostles should have preached their noble, large minded, and holy doctrines, while they were propagating what they believed to be untrue is, impossible. That they should all have imagined Jesus to be alive while He was still mouldering in His grave under their feet is impossible. That they should have had their lifelong Jewish prejudices overcome, all their narrow-minded ideas swept away, all their earthly desires and longings crushed, by their deference to One whose life was a wild dream or a daring imposture, is impossible. That His companions, who loved Him, and lived with Him, and spent years in His society, should have been mistaken on the plain issue as to whether He did or did not do the things which the writer of our letters and His other disciples said He did, is impossible. That he could have taught as He did, that they could have taught as they did, if He and they were victims of an absurd delusion, is impossible. That there could be any kind of glamour, or enthusiasm, or sentimental imagining that would make a number of men think that a series of events happened within their experience which never had happened, and as they taught them teach at the same time the plainest, most sensible, as well as most beautiful morality, and be so sure they had seen things they never saw that they should let themselves be killed rather than cease to declare they had witnessed them—such delusion and such conduct my judgment unhesitatingly declares to be impossible.

When I think of all this, of all the evidence history gives, all the evidence my heart responds to in every fibre, as to the unique and glorious life of Jesus of Nazareth, I leave my attitude of inquiry. I have been inquiring and searching, but not in vain. I have found what I wanted. I have found a real religion. I have found a narrative of outward facts which the verdict of my understanding declares to be true. I have found a revelation from the great unseen God thrilling to my heart and conscience, satisfying my longings, strengthening me for the battle against evil, assuring me of the reality of righteousness, pointing me to

a Father above who loves me, to a Saviour who forgives me, to a Divine Spirit who comes and dwells in my heart and gives me a power for goodness sufficient for my needs. So I can live my life bravely. I have an object worth living for. The doing of duty to-day is the beginning of an eternal career of interesting service. My earthly friends and companions are bound to me by a tie that death is not to loose. We have a "Father's house" beyond the grave. The calamities of life cannot crush, nor the troubles and toils of life overshadow, our joy and hope. There is a Providence that "makes all things work together for good." "Verily there is a reward for the righteous; doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth." Though doubts may sometimes cloud our faith, though "the changes and chances of life" may sometimes make the tears "rise in the heart and gather to the eyes," though efforts for the right are often only imperfectly successful, yet we can still have ringing in our ears the cheery note of our old letter-writer, "Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. And beyond this voice we can hear the echo of another grander and sweeter still: "Let not your heart be troubled. Ye believe in God; believe also in me."—*Fragmentary Records of Jesus of Nazareth, by Rev. Canon F. R. Wyanne, A. M.*

THE MINISTER'S PAROCHIAL TEMPORATIONS.

When several parishes in a large city are "looking for a new rector," the question arises: "What does this mean?" It signifies that while the Methodist system of itinerancy has not been canonically adopted by our Church, to a growing extent many of our clergy are itinerants! Many parishes desire another rector, and many rectors desire a new sphere of labor. The former desire "a man of more attractive gifts," and the latter yearn for a field in which their clerical abilities may be more highly appreciated. "Feeble parishes" yearn for a rector whose talents may raise them into "strong and influential parishes," financially, if not spiritually; and large and wealthy parishes desire "a man possessed of brilliant gifts oratorically, financially and socially"; and if an unusually holy and self-sacrificing man, this will be no objection.

The terms and phrases used by some wardens and vestrymen who are "looking for a rector," indicate that the primary object for which parishes were originally organized is now subordinate. Financial and oratorical ability and polite manners are desirable; but Christ did not commission His ministers to "run a parish" financially, nor to be a parochial social ornament, nor to be a pulpit perotechnist, but to "Preach the Gospel," including the facts, precepts, promises and threatenings, according to their several degrees of ability.

But in view of what many parishes now crave, not willing to be unsettled, some rectors are perplexed and sorely tempted not to imitate St. Paul, who said: "I speak boldly as I ought to speak." Others realize that while they have no desire to displease hearers, "the offence of the cross has not ceased," and if their primary object be to please men they "cannot be the servants of God." Rectors naturally desire to be "successful," but a church edifice may be gothic, capacious, and all the pews rented, the music artistic and attractive, the sermons ornate and eloquent, and crowded congregations may applaud their excellence and brevity: and yet, if the minister substitute oratory or science

or "modern thought" for Apostolic doctrine and duty, and disobey the command, "Preach the word, reprove, rebuke, exhort," apparent success may conceal spiritual adversity.

The wheels of the modern parish system may revolve smoothly on the track of the ecclesiastical year, and the parish treasury overflow; but as God does not estimate a rector's success in accordance with modern parochial arithmetic, in His sight he only who upbuilds His spiritual temple with living stones is the successful minister; and independent of the number of his talents he will hear the approving words, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Some rectors of wealthy and influential parishes fearlessly and faithfully fulfil their mission as able ministers of Christ; and many hearts respect and love the minister who fearlessly proclaims their duties and shortcomings. A wealthy banker said, "I like my minister to hit me a whack, and knock me headlong occasionally;" and another admirer of ministerial moral courage said, "I like that preacher best who drives a man into the corner of his pew and makes him think the devil is after him."

In one of the lectures delivered to the students of the General Theological Seminary, by Bishop Huntington, he says: "It has pleased Providence to employ some eminent gifts in the service in all ages of the Church, but by far the greater portion of the actual and solid work of the Gospel and Kingdom of Christ has been done by men of moderate parts." The lectures are entitled "The Personal Christian Life in the Ministry," and published by request of students who were privileged to hear them. They embrace the duties and responsibilities of Christ's ministers, specifying the essential elements of ministerial faithfulness and efficiency. If read by rectors and missionaries they would recall the solemn vows of ordination, and incite to minister for Christ with God-pleasing motives and God-fearing determination. And if read by wardens and vestrymen, some may be moved to place no secular or other barrier in the way of their rector's usefulness. In one of the lectures the Bishop refers to the period in church history when "Satan had not wholly debauched the manliness of Christian parishes into the cowardice of dismissing a pastor for denouncing open iniquity."—*Church Press.*

GOD AS "ALL IN ALL."

1. God "all in all"—1 Cor. xv., 28: does not mean that God the Son shall be lost in the Father, that God the Father shall become absolutely and solely dominant, for Christ is one with the Father and the Holy Spirit. We can no more divide the Trinity than we can life: they are one, and indivisible. Christ spoke of Himself as being equal with the Father, "I and my Father are one." He taught that "all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father." Yea, this very expression—"all in all"—which is here used of God the Father is also used of Christ. He is spoken of as "the fulness of him that filleth all things," and as "all, and in all." God the Father is not "all in all" to the exclusion of the Son, but with the Son, and with the Holy Ghost.

2. It is the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that is here spoken of as "all in all." The mediatorial kingdom having come to an end, the relative position of Christ being no longer required, there is seen only the Divine absoluteness in the never divided Trinity. The kingdom remains, but the manner of administration is changed.—*D. W. T. in the Theological & Homiletic Magazine for May.*