

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

The study of the general features of this Gospel should have special interest just now. The Sabbath school lessons for six months will be taken from this part of the Bible. The preparation of these lessons will be much helped by a clear understanding of the book as a whole.

The Fourth Gospel is essentially different from the others, in date, occasion, purpose, method, form and nature of contents. Its right to a place in the sacred canon has been recently much contested. All the critics of the class who reject the divinity of Christ do their utmost to repudiate this Gospel. Their purpose is manifest. They cannot resist its wonderfully clear and emphatic proof of the fact that Jesus is the Son of God. Their only alternative is to cur the book out altogether. Critical arguments, therefore, from such a prejudiced source, should weigh but little. Sober-minded, impartial students of the canon show most plainly the groundlessness of the conclusions of these critics who reject John because they hate John's witness.

The book was written near the close of the first century. Both internal and external evidence shows this. It was after certain developments of doctrine had taken place, the beginnings of which are clearly indicated in Paul's writings, especially in the Epistle to the Colossians. The writer was that apostle of Christ who far outlived all the others. He was probably the youngest of those who were with Jesus, and lived, according to the best evidence, to a great old age. John was more than the gentle, tender man usually pictured. He was no weakling or sentimentalist. His constancy, if nothing else, tells of a sturdiness of character which must have made him a marked man in the apostolate and afterwards. His attachment to his Master was no mere clinging of a soft, dependent nature. It had a virile force and fervor far beyond the average. He was the first disciple to come to Christ. So ardent and intense was his nature that the Lord called him "Boanerges," "a son of thunder." With all his gentleness and tact he could speak with power. He did not mince words for instance, when he spoke in his first epistle of those who claimed to have no sin, pronouncing them to be both ignorant and liars. He was a fit man to be God's mouthpiece in defence of the great fact of the Saviour's divinity. And more still, from his intimacy with Christ, growing out of a tender affection, he was peculiarly fitted to tell of the inner life and thoughts of his Master, and to bring out those words of Jesus which bore upon the fact of his divine nature and mission.

A peculiar doctrinal situation had arisen. Greek thought was permeated with the fundamental principles of Gnosticism, a system of philosophy which held to the existence of the two great principles of good and evil, to the emanation from these of contest-

ing forces and spirits, called Eons, and to the final triumph of the good. At Alexandria, a Greek center, were gathered many scholarly Jews also. These took hold of the Greek philosophy and sought to combine with it their angel doctrine and messiah doctrine, making of the later the Logos, as Philo expressed it, the highest Eon. Then came the effort, especially manifested at Co losse, to join to this combination certain aspects of the Christian faith, and to make of Jesus merely the greatest Eon, a creature, though the greatest of all creatures. These conditions called for vigorous treatment, lest the church should be led astray. There was speciousness in the philosophical scheme, which was of close kin to that principle of eclecticism which is today the bane of our missionary work, notably in Japan. But it cut at the very root of the Christian faith, in that it reduced Christ to a mere creature. John rose to the occasion. Taking the very words out of Philo's mouth and turning them against him and all the followers of his faith, John declared that he had a Logos to proclaim, a Logos who was not from the beginning, but in the beginning, who was with God as long as God was, which was from eternity, who was God himself, and from whose hands every creature came, the Life, the Source of all other life and light. To prove this is the great purpose of his Gospel.—Southwestern Presbyterian.

THE SONG UNSUNG.

The song unsung
The song unsung more sweet shall ring
Than any note that yet has sung;
More sweet than any earthly thing.
The song unsung!

A harp there lies, untouched, unstrung
As yet by man, but time shall bring
A player by whose art and tongue
This song shall sound to God the King;
The world shall cling as ne'er it clung
To God and heaven, and all shall sing
The song unsung.

UNDER DISAPPOINTMENT.

We need not understand, in order to believe. When the bitter disappointment comes, unexpected, unaccountable, unnecessary from all our human knowledge, and just at a time when all had been well and God had been very near, we need not try to understand why it came, before we can believe that it was well that it should come. "I could not trust a God whom I could not understand," said a staunch Christian general and statesman in loving conversation with a friend about their common Saviour. God is no farther away when the disappointment strikes; he wants to be nearer because of our greater need of him then. The sorrow is rich with blessing, if we will let it be so. What a privilege to believe in the love and care of the Father, even when we cannot understand the workings of his love!

Happy is the man whose highest pleasure is in his work.

DISCOVERIES IN EGYPT.

A very remarkable find has been made in Egypt, consisting of 450 stone statues of kings and priests, together with over one thousand small bronze figures of Osiris. These were piled indiscriminately in a huge excavation at Thebes, now known to tourists as Karnak, where it is supposed they were thrown some time during the reigns of the Ptolemies. It is known that the Greeks restored the temple at Thebes, but it was impossible to use all of the archaic forms which were found on hand in a more or less ruinous condition, and at the same time it seemed impolitic to destroy them. It is supposed that the restoring Greeks cast the useless relics into this deep pit, where they were found this past season. As the statues are for the most part inscribed with their names it is possible to work out from them certain needed reconstructions of Egyptian chronology. This discovery confirms the affirmation of Herodotus that Hecataeus had seen at Thebes the statues of 245 successive priests of Ammon. This would make Egyptian history much longer than had been believed. The bulk of this extraordinary find is already conveyed to the Cairo Museum, while the work of exploration is continued in the confident expectation that many more treasures of antiquity remain in the same vicinity to be yet exhumed.

God hath a thousand keys to open a thousand doors for the deliverance of His own when it has come to the greatest extremity. Let us be faithful and care for our own part, which is to do and suffer for Him, and God's part on Himself and leave it there; duties are ours, events are the Lord's. When our faith goeth to meddle with events, and to hold a court (if I may so speak) upon God's providence, and beginneth to say, "How wilt thou do this or that?" we lose ground, we have nothing to do there; it is our part to let the Almighty exercise His own office and steer His own helm.—Samuel Rutherford.

The craving for sympathy is natural enough, and it ought never to be treated harshly, nor thought of as a fault; but it easily becomes ignoble and very morbid, because very selfish.—Charles G. Ames.

They are gladdening souls who mean exactly what they say and expect you to say exactly what you mean.—Elizabeth Sheppard.

Under the Patronage of His Excellency the Governor General.

The Fifth Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for the prevention of Consumption and other forms of Tuberculosis. Will be held

On WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15th, 1905

AFTERNOON:—Railway Committee Room, House of Commons. 3 o'clock.

EVENING:—Normal School Assembly Hall, 8 o'clock.

Lecture by Dr. Adami, Montreal, on
ADAPTATION AND TUBERCULOSIS.

W. Moore, Sec.