

THEIR BUSINESS.—In this early period began *division of labor* according to natural tastes. Cain was a farmer and Abel was a shepherd. Food and clothing, implements for tilling the soil, and for some kind of home, must have been needed for the first. Without doubt everything was of the rudest, and these men used such stone implements as are found now in connection with the remains of early man. It must have been some centuries before metals were discovered and used (4, 22). The Bible account thus exactly agrees with the modern discoveries of early man; and the earliest bones of men, "the tall Cromagnon men, agree with the giants of Genesis."—*Dawson*. The early men were not savages in nature, but only in implements of civilization.

THEIR CHARACTERS.—They doubtless had natural differences of dispositions, and yet not so great as to account for the results. They had similar training and home influences, but gradually, by their early choices, by the working out of natural tendencies, they must have grown very far apart in character. The only explanation of the difference between them lies in their freedom of choice. One chose the way of life, the other the way of death.

THE TWO OFFERINGS FOR WORSHIP.—Vs. 3-7. 3. *And in the process of time.* Literally, "at the end of days," an indefinite period after the brothers had entered upon their respective occupations as stated in the preceding verse.—*Green*. Others make it mean also the celebration of the end of some period, as a week or year. *Cain brought of the fruit of the ground.* Fruits, vegetables, grains. *An offering unto the Lord.* Jehovah, as always when printed in capitals. "This was a very natural method of expressing gratitude to God as the bountiful giver of all"—*Green*. It was an act of worship. Worship is natural to man, as the proper expression of his feelings toward God.

And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock. Either the firstborn, which God demanded (Ex. 13, 12), or the choicest and best (Job 18, 13).—*Cook*. *And of the fat thereof.* Literally, the fatness of them, i. e., the fattest of the firstlings, the best he had. *The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering.* It is impossible to know in what way the Lord showed his favor, but it was, in any case, a visible sign of satisfaction.—*Keil*. As the apostle (Heb., II., 4) informs us that God testified his approbation of Abel's offering, it is reasonable to suppose that this was done by the visible token of fire from heaven consuming it upon the altar. Theodotion, in his Greek version, renders it *kindled or set on fire.*—*Killo*.

LESSONS FROM THE STORY OF CAIN AND ABEL.—From the first there has been some communication between God and his earthly children, and this even after the fall. Every soul needs a divine revelation. Otherwise man is an orphan in God's world.

The great majority of quarrels arise and most bitter words are spoken among those who should love one another, because the most frequent occasions of difference exist among such.

Outward worship is not the only test of a man. To know a man, you must know him out of church as well as in it.

"Outwardly one sees no difference between Cain and Abel. Heaven and hell sometimes sit in the same pew, but they are celestial diameters apart."—*Christian Union*.

Bad men envy and hate the good on account of their receiving God's favor, which at the same time they themselves might have if they would do right. They are angry with others, when they should be angry with themselves.

Note the social nature of sin. Sins

grow in clusters. Here are unbelief, disobedience, envy, anger, falsehood, murder. A sin never lives alone in the human heart.

Adam and Eve experienced that bitterest punishment which parents undergo, when they see their own defects and infirmities and evil passions repeated in their children and leading them astray as they once led themselves.—*Dods*.

Anger, malice, hatred, are the soul of murder, and whosoever indulges in these is a murderer (Matt. 5, 21, 22).

Great sins are not so sudden as they seem. Familiarity with evil thought ripens us for evil action, and a moment of passion, an hour's loss of self-control, a tempting occasion, may hurry us into irremediable evil.—*ods*.

Punishment is as sure to follow sin as night the day, or harvest the sowing-time. "The coils of those twin serpents,—sin and suffering."

A Sign of the Times.

Editor of THE PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW:

SIR,—A most extraordinary meeting was held at Glasgow a few weeks ago. It was the first annual meeting of the Scottish Church Society. Over fifty ministers were present. Rev. Dr. Leighman, of East Linton, presided. The following were some of the utterances of the speakers on that occasion. Dr. Hamilton, of Hamilton, defended prayer for the dead. "The dead had left this world with many imperfections upon them, and their state was one of gradual advancement. Surely it was right to pray that they might advance." Dr. Cooper, of Aberdeen, congratulated Dr. Hamilton on his courage, and agreed with his views, "the blessed dead ought to be prayed for." Dr. MacLeod, of Govan, said; "They were not only entitled, but compelled to pray for the dead." Rev. M. P. Johnston, of Fraserburgh, referred to the voluntary as the most formidable animal in the disestablishment menagerie. Dr. John MacLeod took a much wilder sling at the Free Church. Rev. John Cromarty Smith said that the "Church should resort to the catholic practice of using the offertory sentences while the collection was taken up." Dr. Leighman urged "that prominence be given to the feast of Easter." Mr. Parker said: "he had received from Episcopalian brethren spiritual benefit he had received from no other source."

There are only a few specimens of which, if we consider who made them and where, must be called curious and interesting statements. What is the

trend of thought in the Scottish establishment? and under what form of Church government would a rigid classification place the majority of the speakers at the first annual meeting of the Scottish Church Society? M. S. Campbellford, 27th Dec., 1893.

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