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"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."—Psalm 137, 4-5.

Pardon the Portal to Peace.

BY THE REV. CANON BELL, D. D.

(Continued from our last.)

And our Lord attempted no denial of the charge when accused of blasphemy. He answered them in terms which must have confirmed them in the inference which they drew from His words. Instead of contradicting the accusation, He gave them a proof that it was no "robbery" on His part to lay claim to the right of loosing the bonds of sin from the soul. And what is the only just conclusion? Surely, that Jesus actually designed to vindicate His essential equality with God when, admitting that God alone could forgive sins. He yet asserted that such authority belonged to Himself. "That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (He said unto the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go into thine house." What words are these? "The Son of Man hath power to forgive sins." There is more in them than at the first glance meets the eye. How did that power become His? Is His the arbitrary power of a being who at will tramples on His own laws? Is it the power of might over right? Is it the essential omnipotence of Deity setting aside both truth and honour—saying one

thing to-day, and unsaying it to-morrow? No, verily. The power claimed by Christ is of a peculiar kind: belonging to Him in virtue of His finished work as the substitute of His people. It is an acquired right; lawfully made His, because He bore the law's curse, and exhausted the law's penalty, and by His obedience unto death "made an end of sin."

There are many who think that sin is a light thing, easily forgiven and put away. And we might have thought so had God pardoned it by a mere act of Almighty power. It is a little thing, if it cost Him nothing more than an expression of will; if, as in the creation of the world, he had only to "speak" that it might be "done," to "command" that it might "stand fast."

But if, before one sin could be pardoned, or one sinner saved, the Father must give up the only-begotten Son, and the Lord of Glory must leave heaven to die upon a cross; if justice accepts no meaner sacrifice; if "there is none other name under heaven given among men" but the name, nor other blood whereby we can be washed but the blood, of Jesus, sin is no light thing whose consequences may be easily put away.

"Hast thou seen this, O son of man?" God incarnate "wounded for our transgressions" and "bruised for our iniquities"