

The Berean.

THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL HEADINESS OF MIND, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO.—ACTS XVII. 11.

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SAFETY IN THE STORM.

Look aloft!—the raging storm
Hides the vessel's trembling form;
Dark beneath, the waters swell
From the deep's unfathom'd cell,
Raging tempests sweep the air—
Look aloft!—our hope is there.

Look aloft! the pilot's skill
Fails to heave the shatter'd wheel,
And the trembling needle veers
From the devious track he steers;
Let not fear our souls o'erwhelm,
Look aloft!—God holds the helm.

Look aloft!—see, God doth reign
O'er the wide and raging main,
He can chain the tempest's might,
He can make the darkness light,
He can quell the angry sea
Look aloft!—our God is He.

Look aloft! our Saviour knows
All our perils, wants and woes;
On the cross he died for us,
From on high he watches us;
Meekly to his heavenly throne
Look aloft!—He knows his own.

J. W. B.

From the "Wreck of the Sheffield."

MUSINGS IN CAMP.

THE RIGHT OF SEARCH.

In the administration of the affairs of this world, how often is it that some petty jealousy, or that the interest of an individual thwarts a scheme which, if carried out, would benefit the many. Thus it is with the Right of Search, where the rivalry of nations obstructs a measure, which if freely exercised, would be the means of releasing thousands of our fellow-men from the bonds of bitter slavery.

But, friends and comrades, there is a slavery—the thralldom of the mind, the bondage of the soul—a servitude far more galling and debasing to the human race—more dishonouring to God, than even the slave-trade, from which the Right of Search, if acted upon with a truth-seeking spirit, would be the means of emancipating hundreds, nay, millions of men. But to this the interest and influence of the great slaveholder, Satan, is opposed; wherefore he either positively prohibits, or by subtle devices causes men to neglect the God-given right of every man to "Search the Scriptures," lest "the light of the glorious Gospel should shine into their hearts," and enable his sin-bound slaves to see that the ransom has been paid for their souls (see 1 Tim. 2, 6), so that, casting off the "chains of darkness," they should stand in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free.

Before I urge you to the pursuit of this object, I will lay before you briefly some proof that those Scriptures which I so earnestly call upon you individually, my dear comrades, to search, were in fact "given by inspiration of God." I will then show you that "Search the Scriptures" is a divine command given to every man, and that this search, if made with a prayerful heart, will discover to you a prize of inestimable value, "the prize of your high calling." Can you then—will you—dare you, my dear fellow soldiers, neglect or disobey? Well then, passing over other conclusive evidence, I will rest the proof on the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible now extant, and to be met with in most theological libraries. It is mentioned by the Jewish Historian Josephus, who was a distinguished prisoner at the capture of Jerusalem, the events of which direful siege he narrates, and also tells that the Jewish Scriptures, taken from the Temple, were carried in the triumphal procession to Rome. He speaks of this translation as being made at the desire, and in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, King of Egypt, the history of which was handed down by Aristæus, a Captain of Ptolemy's guard. Thus we find that this Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures existed more than 200 years before Christ, because we learn from history that Philadelphus died 216 years B. C. Farther, most of the passages from the Old Testament cited by the writers of the New, excepting those of St. Matthew, who wrote his Gospel originally in Hebrew, are found verbatim quotations from the Septuagint, for you must know that the Evangelists, with the exception named, wrote in Greek for the information of the Heathen—Greek, since the conquest of Alexandria, being the language most generally known.

Unclasp then your Bibles, comrades: they were never intended, as you will find when you proceed to read, to be kept as a dead weight in your knapsacks, to be produced only at inspection of kits. What is this we read in the New Testament, in the fourth chapter of Galatians, at the fourth verse? "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons." Now turn to the 4th verse of the 7th chapter of the Prophet Isaiah, in the Old Testament, which we have proved to have existed in Greek, more than two centuries before Christ—in reality it existed a great many years before in the Hebrew language. Here it is written—"Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and call his name Immanuel," which in English is God with us. Refer now to the fifteenth verse of the third chapter of Genesis, and we learn that the seed of the woman (not of the man) shall bruise the serpent's head. Turn now to the ninth chapter of the Prophet Daniel, and at the twenty-fifth verse we find the exact year—the very "fulness of time"—predicted for the coming of the Messiah (or Christ, as the Greek has it,) the

Prince. And we learn from profane as well as from sacred history, that about this very time the notion of an advent of a universal king was entertained, not only by the Jews, but among heathen nations in the east and west. Well, at this very date, foretold by Daniel, Christ was born of the Virgin Mary. Here, then, we have the prediction and the wonderful accomplishment. Here, too, we see fore-knowledge; and as this belongs alone to Jehovah, it follows that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God;" in fact, that "prophecy came not in old time of the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy-Ghost." And so "to the Jews were committed the oracles of God."

Yes, brother soldiers, in the midst of judgment God remembereth mercy, for "He so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." We may then rest assured—for an inspired penman has recorded it—that "if we confess with our mouths the Lord Jesus, and believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead, we shall be saved." Here, then, indeed, are "tidings of great joy" to you and to me, fellow-sinners as we are, "for unto us is born a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Now, what says the Lord? "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." To whom was this said? To the priests only? Nay, to the Jews at large; and said now to laymen as well as to those priests who "bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders." And what, too, do we find recorded in the Acts of the Apostles? Why, that the Bereans are commended who "searched the Scriptures daily." And who were the Bereans?—Gentiles. So we see that the right of search belongs to the Gentile as well as the Jew—to the people as well as the clergy.

"Search the Scriptures," then, comrades, and you will learn that just before the Lord, in presence of his disciples, visibly ascended into Heaven, he said to his followers, "I go to prepare a place for you." Think you, my friends, that this place can be purgatory? Think you that He would go to prepare a place of torments for His believing people, not inferior to those of hell, as some teachers declare? This purgatory must be a fragment of heathen mythology, for Scripture says nothing of the kind. On the contrary, we read that "them who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (1 Thess. iv, 14). Is it credible then, that any one can "sleep (or die) in Jesus" and then pass into torments? Did the penitent thief on the cross go into this purgatory, or did he sup that night in paradise? Surely St. Paul, who had been in "the third heavens," must have passed through, or seen this purgatory in his passage, if there had been such a half-way abode. But so far from having any apprehensions about it, he thought "to depart and be with Christ was far better" than living in the flesh. Did Lazarus of Bethany go into the torments of a purgatory, when he died, and did he say nothing about it, when he was raised to life again? Be assured, comrades, that those who teach this are aware that there is no scriptural authority for such a hideous fable—a fable which makes Christ's atonement only half finished. It is the craft of men who seek to keep souls in subjection to them, and to extort money from those who have it to give, for prayers after their decease, pretending to extricate their souls from torments. Purgatory for the souls who "die in the state of grace united to Jesus Christ;" when the Lord hath laid on Him "the iniquity of us all" (see Isaiah liii, 6)—the idea is monstrous! But, dear friends, you who have faith in the crucified Son of God, that you may banish such terrors for ever from your minds, that your spirits may be calmed when you shall be lying on your death-bed, just hear what the Redeemer himself said when on earth: "Verily, verily, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life; and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." Mark that, I pray you: shall not come into condemnation, but is—observe is—passed from death unto life. Here then, we learn that the work of expiation is complete in Christ. The penalty for sin is too great for sinful men to pay, even in part, either here or in a "middle state."

"Search the Scriptures," then, comrades, and you will learn that salvation comes by unmerited goodness; that man is justified by faith alone. This you will see distinctly stated in the 2nd chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, at the eighth and ninth verses. (Pray do not take my word for it, but turn to it and see whether I am right.) "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast." And in the 3rd chapter of that to the Romans, at the 25th verse, we read: "A man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." It is clear, then, that pardon—that salvation from the wrath to come, is irrespective of any deeds, that we have done, or can do. I will try to illustrate this. Suppose a sovereign were, out of pure love, to quit his palace and visit a lonesome spot, full of rebels, bound hand and foot, and chained to the walls, and that he should take off their manacles, and release them from their chains, and say: "I forgive you. Go to your homes. Rebel no more." Now, it is evident that these men would be pardoned and set free, not because they did the work of going to their homes and rebelling no more, but that going to their homes and rebelling no more, was the consequence of their being pardoned and set free; that in fact they could not have obeyed until released. In this case,

however, the freed men, not being touched by the clemency of the king, might again join the forces of a rebel chief. But it is otherwise in this respect with those "whose iniquities are forgiven" by the King Eternal. For he not only gives His pardoning grace, but also gives grace to "sit no more." This you will see decidedly stated in the 3rd chapter of St. John's First Epistle, in the connexion of the 1st and 9th verses. And in the 10th chapter of the Epistle to the Corinthians, at the 13th verse, we are told that God "will not suffer you (true Christians, not nominal ones) to be tempted above what you are able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape." Again, in the sixth chapter of the Romans, it is written: "Sin shall not have the dominion over you, for ye are under grace."

"Search the Scriptures," then, that you may know what God's commandments are, and that you may see what sin really is. For, rest assured, if you be living in disobedience to "the powers that be"—in drunkenness, in fornication, and in cursing and swearing: if you be not contending against temptation, and wrestling with sin,—in fact, if sin have the dominion over you, you are not in the Faith—you are still the slave of Satan; for "Faith, if it hath not works" we are told by the Apostle James (chap. ii, 20), "is dead." Reader, if you say you have faith, and are thus living, your faith amounts to nothing more than a cold assent to the well-authenticated facts of Scripture—saying faith it is not—it is mere barren belief which you have in common with the devils, for they "believe and (do what you do not) tremble."

Well, then, turn to the 20th chapter of Exodus in any Bible issued from the Oxford or Cambridge presses. I particularize such editions, because I know they are faithful versions; and that you may be assured of this, just get some Jew to translate the passage to you from his Hebrew Bible. Here, then, we have given, as the second commandment, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them, &c." (this second commandment is altogether omitted in certain Catechisms, professing to give all the commandments, the last commandment being divided into two to make up the ten). Now, He who has said, "Thou shalt do no murder," has, as you see, said not only thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, but also, "thou shalt not bow down to it" (pray mark this, not bow down to it). Therefore, if any of us bow down to an image (as we see some falsely-taught people doing), we are clearly as much breakers of God's commandments, as if we had committed murder.

The Apostles to whom Christ delegated authority to preach the Gospel and to baptize all nations, and those, again, whom they ordained to the like office, and so on, have, as I conceive, authority unquestionably committed to them to regulate the affairs of the Church, "taking oversight thereof," as we may learn from the council held at Jerusalem, where James (not Peter, note this—not Peter), appears to have presided; still they are not to act "as being lords over God's heritage." But if you will look at the second verse of the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy, you will see distinctly that they have no authority either to "add to, or diminish aught" from the word of God, as some do, mutilating the Decalogue, for instance. Neither are they empowered to make, as it were, a tariff of sins—as some do—by saying you may go the length of stealing so much from one man and so much from another, and yet only commit a venial sin, by which, according to their teaching, the commandment is not broken. But—and I am speaking to soldiers who know how strictly military orders are enforced—He who gave the commandments (and we see Mark x, 19, even under the Christian dispensation they are to be observed as a rule of life), distinctly says, "thou shalt not steal." Nothing can be plainer or more explicit: nor do we find any softening off of this law in any subsequent part of Holy writ. Therefore he who steals—be the theft ever so trifling, as we may call it—breaks the eighth commandment. God also as distinctly forbids bearing "false witness;" therefore, should the lie be even of "no notable prejudice to our neighbour," it is bearing "false witness;" it is a lie nevertheless; and from Revelation xxi, 8, we learn that "all liars"—there is no exception—meet with the same condemnation as whoremongers. Therefore, dear comrades, "let no man deceive you"—be he priest or layman—"sin is the transgression of the law, and all "unrighteousness is sin." And remember, I beseech you, "the wages of sin is—death." For "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel xviii, 4.)

The soul that sinneth, it shall die. Ah! then, here we learn that sin may be committed mentally, without any act of the body. What, if I merely "look" upon a woman with an impure desire, even though I do not commit the physical act of fornication, am I an adulterer? What! will hatred of a brother-man constitute me a murderer in the sight of God, even if my hand do not plunge the knife or direct the murderous hall into the breast of that brother? Yes, brother-soldiers; "Search the Scriptures" (Matth. v, 28, and 1 John iii, 15), and you will find such to be the case. "An evil eye" and "evil thoughts" (Mark vii, 21, 22) are classed with those sins which exclude a man from the kingdom of God. For it is "the pure in heart, they (and they only) shall see God." But "Search the Scriptures," my dear fellow-sinners, and you will rejoice to learn that "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation (that is, the atonement) for our sins." Then how absurd, how dishonouring to Him, to invoke any inter-mediate intercessor, when He says "Come unto me all ye that do labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," when his is above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." Why invoke others when "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by Him." (Heb. vii, 25.) Did the Centurion go to the Blessed Virgin Mary, for "blessed among women" she is, to ask her to intercede with Jesus for the healing of his servant? Did not the lame and the blind go at once to Him, and not to Mary, when he was on earth, and their petitions were known were granted? Then why not go direct to Him now that "all power is given to Him in heaven and earth?" Remember the blessed Virgin was herself one of the apostate race of man, and needed to be washed in the blood of the Lamb as much as any child of Adam. And why invoke any saint whatever? How do you know that he whom you call upon is not even yet in purgatory, and himself needs the prayers of the faithful? And after all, what certainty have you that he whom you invoke is really a saint? The mere decreeing a man's holiness will not make him a saint; "for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." At the last day, possibly, it may be found that there have been accomplished hypocrites on earth, who are by men enrolled in the calendar of saints.

Now we may say the penitent thief on the cross was a saint, but we do not read in Holy writ of any one of the Apostles asking him to intercede with their Lord. Did the martyr Stephen invoke this or that saint, when he kneeled down to be stoned? Nay, nay, he appealed direct to Him whom he saw (and whom we know to be) "standing at the right hand of God" Him by whom alone we can be saved. With his last breath he cried, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Friends, be your sins "red as scarlet," go, God entreats you, go with a penitent heart direct to Christ, there is pardon for you. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." Recollect that at the day of Pentecost (Acts ii, 41), 3000 souls received evidence of their pardon, many of whom perhaps had but fifty days before been calling for crucifixion of the Son of God, or with ribald jeers had been "looking on him whom they had pierced." Comrades, let us then, in agonizing prayer, "go boldly to the throne of grace," as Stephen did, only on Jesus; "for through Him we have access by one spirit to the Father," and "He will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah lv, 7), and send the Comforter to bear witness with our spirits that we are "the sons of the Lord God Almighty." "Fear not," saith the Lord, "I have redeemed thee, thou art mine."

[The above "Musings" are taken from a late number of the Naval and Military Gazette which has happened to fall into the Editor's hands; he has felt the more interested in it as it is found in a publication where nothing of the kind was looked for. The familiar style in which it is written is not without its recommendation. A few slight alterations have been made, to render the article more suitable for these columns. The writer has adopted the name "Matross.,"]

PREACHING CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

My sermon seemed never to have finished its course, till by some road or other it had arrived at the cross. My weapons always felt as if they had no power, till by some means or other they had been dipped in the blood of the cross. No passage of Scripture has ever stood before me so much like a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, to guide me how and what to preach, as that which I have so often repeated, "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. i, 30.) Blessed be God, for all that I have learned from this one precious text! It has been my pole-star: I ascribe whatever precious fruits God has given to my ministry, to my having been led to steer, amidst all varieties of modes and doctrines, by the unfailing light of this one truth, that Christ is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that to lead sinners to Christ is the only way to lead them to wisdom and holiness, as well as to justification and redemption; and consequently that nothing can be done to make men holy in heart and life, or happy in the hope of peace with God, but in proportion as they are led to set their affections directly upon Christ. Faith and works, pardon and purity, are one in Christ Jesus. Out of his precious side came both water and blood. The same spear drew them both. Thus will he that cometh to Jesus derive from his death, by the same act of faith, as well the purification of his heart from the pollution of sin, as the justification of his soul from his guilt. Thus has it been my endeavour, by the help of God, constantly to preach.—From the Rev. Dr. McNeill's Farewell Sermon to his flock, St. Ann's Church, Brooklyn, on his election to the Episcopate of Ohio.

EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING.

From the Life of the Right Rev. Richard Channing Moore, D. D., Bishop of the Prot. Episcopal Church in Virginia; by the Rev. Dr. Henshaw (now Bishop of Rhode Island). Soon after Dr. Moore's settlement on Staten Island, a circumstance took place which exerted an important influence upon his whole

future ministry, adding greatly to its acceptableness and efficiency: I mean one by which he was driven, without any such purpose of his own, to adopt the habit of extemporaneous speaking. It was what he had never attempted while at Rye; and had never thought of doing so, because it was not customary with the clergy of the Church at that day. But he seems to have been drawn into it against his will. We here recite the facts, learned from his own lips, as an addition to the many instances on record in which God has employed strange and apparently trifling incidents as means of accomplishing most important results. Being at the house of one of his parishioners, where he had been invited to spend the evening, after tea several of the neighbours came in: at dusk, very much to his surprise, the master of the house placed a stand with a Bible on it before him, at the same time requesting that he would give them a word of exhortation. He found himself placed in a most embarrassing position. It seemed very much like the scene exhibited at the house of Cornelius, when the devout Centurion, having called together his near kinsmen and friends, said to Peter, "Now, therefore, we are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." What could be done? He was indeed the ambassador of God, charged with a message of peace and reconciliation to man, but he never presumed to deliver the heavenly message except in the form of a written communication. But would it do for him to dishonour his commission in the view of the people, by pleading inability to discharge it? Could he answer it to God, if he were to refuse the word of pious instruction thus solicited of him by a waiting assembly? No! Necessity was laid upon him, and he felt that he could not, without disgrace or guilt, evade the duty thus strangely and unexpectedly demanded of him. He might be filled with trembling and fear at the prospect of failure, but there was no other alternative but to nerve himself for the undertaking. He gave out a hymn, and while it was being sung, selected a chapter for exposition, at the same time, doubtless, lifting his heart in fervent prayer to God for grace to do his duty. His month was opened, and the Lord enabled him, as he did St. Peter, to preach peace by Jesus Christ, and to say to his hearers, with tenderness, fidelity, and affection, "To you is the word of this salvation sent."

His success in this first effort so far exceeded his expectations, that he "purchased to himself great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus;" and ever afterwards was ready to improve every opportunity of usefulness that was afforded, and whether "in season" or "out of season," to preach the word without fear, relying upon the sure promises: "My grace is sufficient for thee," and "as the day, so shall thy strength be."

Would it not be well if others of our clergy should, by the like means, be forced into the discovery and exercise of ministerial gifts which the Lord has conferred upon them, not to lie idle and unimproved, but to be freely used for the conversion of sinners and the edifying of the Church.

Bishop Moore was at no period of his ministry a purely extemporaneous preacher. His sermons were the result of studious and careful preparation, and his general habit was to take his manuscripts into the pulpit with him, although his attention was not much confined to them during the progress of delivery; and his manner had much of the ease and animation which characterize that of the extemporaneous speaker. When he was so far advanced in life as to render glasses necessary in the use of his written discourses, some of the most intelligent and pious of his hearers were accustomed to say, "We are always glad to see him push his spectacles up; for we are certain that we shall then have something peculiarly impressive." Who that has ever listened to his lecture-room addresses, or to those fervid and eloquent appeals after sermons by other preachers, which he was in the habit of describing as "codicils," and which he so much delighted in, would hesitate to reckon them among his happiest efforts? Their pathos melted the hearts—their persuasiveness moved the wills—and swayed the decisions of his auditory: and while all gazed with admiration at those brilliant scintillations which sprang out like sparks from the glowing furnace of his soul—the trembling sinner was invited to flee from the wrath to come, and the mourning penitent was inspired with consolation and hope. Undersuch affecting exhibitions of the Gospel, none could doubt its truth, or fail to realize its power.

EVERYBODY, ALWAYS, EVERYWHERE.

Since public attention has been more directed to antiquity, we have been inundated with papers, and letters, and remarks, especially in the periodical publications, laying down this or that doctrine with all the calm dignity of an oracular response, as what "everybody always everywhere" in the primitive Church from the beginning proclaimed and maintained with one consent, and showing nothing more than that their authors need to go to school on the subject on which they would fain be teachers of others. One might suppose, from the tone of some of these writers, that all that has been done or said in all past ages of the Church was to be ascertained without the smallest difficulty or uncertainty, and could "even be gathered second-hand from the notices of a few modern divines. For my own part, I freely confess to being in no small degree sceptical as to the possibility of any man knowing what "everybody always everywhere" in the primitive Church thought on any point; even from a careful perusal of the records of antiquity themselves that remain to us. Indeed,