

keep us out of it (that were to take us out of the world altogether), but, according to our prayer, though it be defective in faith, He "supports us in all dangers, and carries us through all temptations." Let us not fear, then, because (naturally, being only men) we "cannot always stand upright;" we are sure at last of His support and rescue. Our souls are safe, however much our bodies suffer from dangers. The second part of the Gospel illustrates the far-reaching character of Christ's power, in that He controls at will even the *evil spirits*, as well as the elements of nature. The skill and science of man may do much to foresee and provide against coming dangers by land and sea, but the evil spirits are quite beyond our reach. Unless we have God's help against them, we are indeed helpless. The Epistle for the day contains a further reminder that the "powers that be," the ruling elements of kingdoms, empires, states, republics, are all under God's control, as well as evil spirits and the powers of nature. There is, therefore, absolutely nothing beyond His control; therefore, also, there is nothing that we need fear, having Him on our side, if we be faithful.

This week occurs the festival of the Purification of the Virgin Mary, or Presentation of Christ in the Temple, forty days after His birth. The ceremonies then observed have been described in a former paper. This is said to have been the first day observed in the calendar of the early Church in remembrance of events in the life of St. Mary, the mother of our Lord; and in this one, she is closely united with Him. The day used to be called "Candlemas," because of a symbolical procession of people carrying lights in their hands, in remembrance of the parable of the Wise Virgins—the Virgin Mary being regarded as the wisest of all virgins.

Blasius, whose name occurs in our calendar this week, was Bishop of Sebaste, in the fourth century. It is said that he suffered martyrdom in the Diocletian Persecution, having his flesh first torn to pieces with an iron comb.

THE CATECHISM.

Q. Say the Fourth Commandment.

Q. What is the meaning of this Commandment?

A. That we should consecrate a fixed portion of our time in a special manner to God—one day in seven; and should devote the other six days to the works of our calling.

Q. How else might this be said?

A. It forbids idleness on working days, and unnecessary labour on the Lord's day.

Q. How does the Catechism say this?

A. That we are to serve God truly all the days of our life.

Q. Why is the word "remember" used here?

A. Because the Jews were ordered to observe the Sabbath before the other commandments were given. See also Gen. ii. 3.

Q. On what grounds were the Jews to keep the seventh day?

A. Because of God's work of creation and rest.

Q. How were they to keep it?

A. By rest from work; by double sacrifices, Num. xviii. 9, 10; and by the renewal of the shewbread, Lev. xxiv. 6-8.

Q. Why do we observe the first day?

A. Because thereon we celebrate the redemption of the world, which is more than its creation: a word created, but we were redeemed by the incarnation of God; and now it would be unsuitable to commemorate the inferior event after the far greater work had been done. Moreover, we celebrate on the day of the Resurrection, the triumph of Christ, not His mere rest.

Q. On what authority was this change made?

A. That of Christ and His inspired apostles, known to the primitive Church.

Q. What intimations have we in Scripture of the will of Christ?

A. Our Lord's appearances to His disciples on this day. John xx. 19-26; Acts ii. 1; xx. 7; Rev. i. 10. "The Lord's day"—the day dedicated to the Lord Jesus.

Q. What marked the apostolical and primitive observance of the Lord's day?

A. The invariable celebration of the Eucharist. Acts xx. 7; Justin Martyr's Apology for the Christians, A.D. 140; and Pliny's Letter to the Emperor Trajan, A.D. 104.

Q. What works are lawful on the Sunday?

A. Works of necessity; such as lighting fires, cooking food, and attending cattle. Luke xiii. 15.

Q. What other works are lawful on this day?

A. All works of charity and mercy; such as feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, and teaching the ignorant the truths of religion.

Q. Is this commandment moral or ceremonial? [Explain these words].

A. Moral; because some such law is necessary for the maintenance of the public worship and recognition of God.

Q. On what grounds is it to be reckoned among the moral precepts?

A. Because it requires a humane consideration for the bodily and spiritual wants of others, and even for the relief of cattle. Deut. v. 14.

Q. Is there any command in the New Testament to observe the first day of the week?

A. No; on the authority of the Church, which received this change from the apostles, it is observed.

Q. What are the two great grounds of observing Sunday?

A. Godliness and humanity: the honour of God, the good of men.

Q. Does the Fourth Commandment oblige us to observe religiously any other days than Sunday?

A. Not with cessation from labour; but the moral principle explained requires us to observe with religious worship the memory of the Nativity, the Crucifixion, and Ascension, as well as the memory of the Resurrection. This is an evangelical obligation.

Q. What if we cannot go to Church on those days?

A. Then we must join ourselves in spirit to the worshipping Church, communicate spiritually, and long for the privilege we have not. We should also ever be careful to choose such masters and employments as may least interfere with the religious duties of the Lord's day.

JESUS IN THE TEMPLE.

The age of twelve was a critical age for a Jewish boy. At this age, no matter what his rank, he was obliged, by the injunction of the Rabbis, and the custom of his nation, to learn a trade for his own support. At this age he became a son of the Law, and was no longer called "katan," or little, but "gadol" or grown up. And so was treated more as a man; henceforth he began to wear the tephillin, or Phylacteries, and was presented by his father in the Synagogue on a Sabbath, which was called from this circumstance the Shabbath Tephillin. This corresponds with, and was probably the origin of Confirmation.

Now it was the custom of the parents of our Lord to visit Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. It was indeed only the males who were commanded to attend the three great yearly feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles; but Mary, in pious observance of the rule recommended by Hillel, accompanied her husband every year, and on this occasion they took with them the boy Jesus, who had come to the age to assume the responsibilities of the Law. We can easily imagine how powerful must have been the effect produced upon His mind by this break in His hitherto secluded life; this glimpse into the outer world; this journey through a land of which every hill and every village teemed with sacred memories; of this first visit to the Temple of His Father.

Nazareth is about eighty miles distant from Jerusalem. And it has been thought probable that in spite of the intense and jealous hostility of the Samaritans, the vast Gallilean caravan would take the direct and least dangerous route, through the old territories of Manasseh and Ephraim, now called Samaria. As the Passover falls at the end of April and the beginning of May, the country would be wearing its brightest, greenest, loveliest aspect, filling the hearts of all with gladness as they journeyed on their way. Over the streams of that ancient river—the river Kishon—past Shunem, recalling memories of Elisha; past Royal Jezreel; past the picturesque outline of the bare and dewless Gilboa; past Taanach, with its memories of Sisera and Barak; past Megiddo, the famous battlefield where the Saviour perhaps saw for the first time the helmets and broadswords and eagles of the Roman Legion. And so on through scenes of ever-increasing interest, until as they ascended the hills in the neighbourhood of Beeroth, they caught the first sight of the towers of Jerusalem, and towering above its walls still glittered the great Temple with its gilded roofs and marble colonnades. Who shall fathom the unspeakable emotions with which Jesus our Lord gazed for the first time with human eyes upon that never to be forgotten scene. The numbers who flocked to the Passover might be counted by tens of thousands, far more than the city could possibly accommodate, and so vast numbers provided shelter for themselves in the neighbourhood of the city by erecting booths of mat and wicker work interwoven with leaves. The feast lasted for a week, a week probably of deep happiness and strong religious emotion; and then with their mules and asses and horses, and camels, the vast caravans would clear away their temporary dwellings and begin their homeward way. The journey was enlivened by mirth and music. They often beguiled the tedium of travel with the sound of drums and timbrels, and paused to refresh themselves with dates, or melons, or cucumbers, and water drawn in skins and water-pots from every springing well and running stream. The veiled

women, and the stately old men were generally mounted, while their sons or brothers led along their beasts of burden, the boys and children sometimes walk and play by the side of their parents, and sometimes when weary, get a lift on horse and mule. Among such a sea of human beings it was easy to lose sight of a boy who had never gone astray, never caused them a moment's watchfulness before. The Evangelist tells us that Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem. A day elapsed before the parents discovered their loss. This they would not do until they arrived at their place of rest for the night; and all day long they would be free from anxiety, supposing that he was with some other group of friends or relatives in that long caravan. But when evening came they would learn the bitter fact that He was altogether missing. The next day, in alarm and anguish, perhaps too with some sense of self-reproach that they had not been more thoughtful, they retraced their steps to Jerusalem. The country was in a wild and unsettled state. The ethnarch Archelaus, after ten years of cruel and disgraceful reign, had just been deposed and banished. The Romans had annexed the province, and the introduction of their system of taxation had kindled a revolt, which under Judas, of Gamala, and Sadoc the Pharisee, had wrapped the whole country in a storm of sword and flame. This must have filled His parents' hearts with burning anxiety lest amid all the warring elements which at such a time were assembled about the walls of Jerusalem, their son should have met with harm.

Neither in that day, nor during the night, nor throughout a considerable part of the third day, did they discover any trace of Him. Till at last they found Him in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. Sitting, as St. Luke's narrative shows in, all humility and reverence to His elders, as an eager-hearted and gifted learner, whose enthusiasm kindled their admiration, and whose bearing won their esteem and love. Here His parents found Him calm, and happy, and self-possessed in the presence of the great men of His day. His mother it is who alone ventures to address Him in the language of tender reproach. His answer is full of touching simplicity and unfathomable depth, and is notable as furnishing the first recorded words of the Lord Jesus. The perfect dignity and perfect humility which it combines lie wholly beyond the possibility of invention. It is in harmony too with all His ministry, with His utterance to the Tempter: "Man shall not live by bread alone," with His answer to the disciples in Samaria: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me." Mary said "Thy father," but in His answer He proclaims and that henceforth he knows no father except His Father in heaven.

Biblical Notes and Queries.

Question.

In comparing the Revised Version of the New Testament with the Authorized Version, I find what seems to me, rather a remarkable omission in the former. The passage I refer to is Matt. v. 44. Tischendorf's and Wordsworth's Greek Testaments, and Roberts' Companion to the Revised Version throw no light upon it. Perhaps some of your readers will kindly explain the difference in the two versions. "H. S."

Correspondence.

All Letters will appear with the names of the writers in full and we do not hold ourselves responsible for their opinions.

THE VAGARIES OF THE LEARNED.

SIR,—From St. Peter's time to the present day it has been matter of complaint that "the unlearned and unstable wrest the Scriptures;" but it has not been equally observed that the learned might put in a claim for quite as much distinction in the same line. What is half the learning of the learned but the invention and defence of theories that can never be reconciled with sound sense. And when men of acknowledged learning err, they will never be without a goodly train of obsequious followers: men, themselves almost incapable of judgment, think to derive a factitious reputation from following a learned leader. Let me give in this letter a first-rate illustration of this learned crankiness. The Bishop of Durham, Com. on Phil., p. 265, n. 2, thinks it "surprising that some should have interpreted *thusiasterion* in Heb. xiii. 10, of the Lord's Table." Now I am not at all insisting that this is the true meaning and intent of the phrase "we have an altar;" but I do strenuously contend that there is nothing "surprising" in such an