

THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

From a Sermon by Rev. Dr. Fairbairn, of Oxford.

He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not, I am the first and the last; I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.—*Revelations i., 17-18.*

Dr. Fairbairn described John on the island of Patmos, where, to him, and through him to us, the word of God came. John was an exile, and the lonely rock was, perhaps, only the more desolate because of the bright skies that smiled upon it. The minister described John's affection for Ephesus, his home where Paul had sown, and he had watered a city of learning, and, of old, devoted to religion. Here John proposed to remain; but man proposes and God does not always seem to dispose. John loved to be among men and, in Patmos, he was in deep solitude; but solitude, for a man who loves God, becomes full of God. Dr. Fairbairn told how the sea which had caused a blind poet of the ancients to write, "The loud sounding sea," and a later one to speak of "multitudinous laughter of the sea," had made John, when he came to tell of the voice of God, to describe it "as a sound of many waters."

The heavenly city was a sea of burnished brass. John in Patmos became more receptive of God, and of God's truth than he had ever been in Ephesus. This harkening to the voice of God he called being in the spirit. Man is in the spirit of God when the spirit is in him. To a heart vacant of God the universe is a godless vacancy. To an atheistic reason there is an atheism in all things. It needs a God within man to discover a God without. So John came to those supreme visions of the Eternal that live for all time. At Ephesus he was for a day; at Patmos he was for eternity. Promise is the glory of youth; performance is the honor of age. Here John's hopeful youth was translated into experienced age; and this experience was preserved for all time. Dr. Fairbairn pictured John resting on the Master's bosom, and in the happiness of that moment realized that an eternity of happiness was but a moment.

The minister took up the words of the text, "I am the first and the last." In this personal form of speech "I am" He expressed His eternity. Of created things man alone has the right to say "I am." Only the spirit really exists. Matter is through mind, and not mind through matter. Subtract mind from matter, and where would be matter? Mind is; matter appears. The spirit abides; matter disappears. Matter changes every moment, and is never what it was the moment before. Here God says He is, and that He is the first. There had never been a time when He was not. Dr. Fairbairn said that, as a youth, he had often been puzzled by the old, hard saying that God acted from His own good pleasure. But the question should be put, whether it would be better for man to be the subject of mere blind, inexorable law, or that he should be ruled by the ever-living God, full of mercy and goodness, and ready to listen to the appeals of man's weakness.

The minister then expounded the text, "I have the keys of hell and death." Here hell evidently does not mean the place of punishment. God does not speak of himself as the keeper of a dungeon. The revised version distinguishes between the terms gehenna and hades. In the text the word "hell" could not be used in the sense in which it is used in the sentence, "Ye generation of vipers, ye shall not escape the punishment of hell." Evidently in that sentence the word does not mean what it does when Christ says, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." Christ could never have feared that His soul would be sent to a place of punishment. But the word "hell" so used means the entire unseen world, all that is beyond our material perceptions. So, too, death can not be shadowed any more than hell. It means simply the passing from the known to the unknown. It is not a ceasing to her. Over two thousand years ago a philosopher had written works which to-day stand on the shelves of every scholar. There were immortal thoughts about government, about poetry, about death, and many other subjects. To-day there are minds that never knew Plato, yet feel his power. Is it possible for a mind that made these imperishable thoughts to perish? Could such a thing be thought of? If God made men He made them worthy of God, and for an eternal God to have men less than eternal would have been to make them less than worthy.

Also the keys of hell and death are symbolical. They speak of power. The throne and the crown speak of power and glory. The keys speak of the right to judge and the power to execute the judgments. Christ is, also, enthroned and crowned. Dr. Fairbairn asked his auditors if they had honor-



FIG. 66.—No. 4740.—LADIES' PRINCESSE DRESS. PRICE 35 CENTS.

Quantity of Material (21 inches wide) for 32, 34, 36 inches, 11 yards; 38, 40 inches, 11½ yards; 42, 44 inches, 11¾ yards.

Quantity of Material (42 inches wide) for 32, 34, 36 inches, 5½ yards; 38, 40 inches, 5¾ yards; 42, 44 inches, 5¾ yards.

If made of materials on the bias as illustrated, 4 yards of 41-inch plaid material, 2½ yards of velvet, and if the ruching is made double, 9¾ yards of 21-inch silk will be required for the medium size.

FIG. 66, Pattern No. 4740, price 35 cents, furnishes the design for this graceful illustration which is shown in brown and tan plaid, brown surah and a darker shade of velvet.

The surah silk forms the triple pleated and pinked ruche, which trims the neck, front, and lower edge. The back has a one-piece basque laid in pleats at the waist-line, and the skirt gathered to the edge, while the fronts are in the princess style, with the right one lapped in a diagonal style over the left, which is of a contrasting material. The dart fullness is laid in tapering pleats, and the fronts are hooked under the frilling. The sleeves are gathered high and full over the shoulders, and plain below. The plaid material is prettily made up on the bias, to do which requires nearly half as much again goods as to cut it straight, but the bias style is far more attractive and newer. The design is shown elsewhere in issue, giving a back view.

ed the King as they had honored the Crucified. Were we not all too apt to think only of Christ as on the cross?

The minister narrated an allegory of a spirit, stripped of its mortality and left only its weak human heart, sent out by God through the boundless universe, a great angel being its guide. On and on their flight carried them, out of the region of worlds into infinite spaces where the only light was that of the cosmic dust made bright by its rapid motion, the atoms attracting and repelling each other, collecting here and there and forming into new worlds, preparing for the conditions of life and some of them just ready to burst into bloom. Finally the weak human heart of the traveler cries out for relief, for relief from the oppression of the infinite and eternal. It cries out to be put in some grave where it can rest. But now it is taken to the sheltering breast of Christ, and there finds the place that it craves. There is no end to the universe of God, and there is no beginning. In Christ alone is there rest.

At the Turn of the Road.

BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

The glory has passed from the goldenrod's plume,
The purple-hued asters still linger in bloom;
The birch is bright yellow, the sumachs are red,
The maples like torches aflame overhead.

But what if the joy of the summer is past,
And winter's wild herald is blowing his blast?

For me dull November is sweeter than May,
For my Love is its sunshine—she meets me to-day!

Will she come? Will the ring-dove return to her nest?

Will the needle swing back from the east or the west?

At the stroke of the hour she will be at her gate;

A friend may prove laggard—love never comes late.

Do I see her afar in the distance? Not yet.
Too early! Too early! She could not forget!

When I cross the old bridge where the brook overflowed,

She will flash full in sight at the turn of the road.

I pass the low wall where the ivy entwines;
I tread the brown pathway that leads through the pines;

I haste by the boulder that lies in the field,
Where her promise at parting was lovingly sealed.

Will she come by the hillside or round through the wood?

Will she wear her brown dress or her mantle or hood?

The minute draws near—but her watch may go wrong;

My heart will be asking: What keeps her so long?

Why doubt for a moment? More shame if I do!

Why question? Why tremble? Are angels more true?

She would come to the lover who calls her his own

Though she trod in the track of a whirling cyclone!

—I crossed the old bridge ere the minute had passed.

I looked; lo! my Love stood before me at last.

Her eyes, how they sparkled, her cheeks, how they glowed,

As we met, face to face, at the turn of the road!

Why It is Twelfth Day.

Tradition says that the twelfth day from Christmas Day was remarkable for having been that upon which the visit of the Magi took place, upon which Christ was baptized, the water at Cana turned into wine and the five thousand fed. For 300 years it was kept by Eastern Christians as the day upon which Christ was born, and among ourselves it was long observed with great festivities. We are told that in the reign of King Alfred a law was passed by "virtue of which the twelve days after the nativity of our Saviour were made festivals." The last day was accounted the greatest of the twelve, and especially given up to "Christmas gambols" and the visiting of friends. The custom seems long to have continued in force, for in the sixteenth century Twelfth Day seems to have been kept with as much zeal as Christmas. The royal family at Court led the way, the Universities and the Inns of Court following them in the extent of their festivities. At the Temple the whole twelve days were kept with great care, and many of the country gentlemen followed the same custom. In some parts of England the very poorest people contrived to keep the twelve days with such good cheer for themselves and their neighbors as their means would allow.

Carpet Insects.

To any who has had experience with the insect variously known as the carpet bug or buffalo moth the following recipe will be invaluable, for it is said to be sure death to them: One ounce of alum, one ounce of chloride zinc three ounces of salt. Mix with two quarts of water and let it stand over night in a covered vessel. In the morning pour it carefully into another vessel, so that all sediment may be left behind. Dilute this with two quarts of water and apply by sprinkling the edges of the carpet for the distance of a foot from the wall. This is all that is necessary.

The LADIES JOURNAL Bible Competition on another page is well worth perusal.

"Do you say that any man dies by chance," exclaimed Dr. Fairbairn, "accidents concern man, not God." A man dies at the moment it seems best to God. The Savior is the judge. The person who redeems is the person who metes out the final reward. The speaker spoke of the compassionate sadness of God, and said that it was more availing than sternness. He closes his sermon by relating a dream, in which he said various types of mankind come before the great white throne to be received into eternal joy or met by the awful sentence: "I know you not." The closing scene was that of a mother receiving her babe from Christ's arms and of the joy of that union in their heavenly home.

An expensive gum-pot for a desk is of cut glass and silver, imitating a flower, stem, and leaves.

Take away my first letter; take away my second letter; take away all my letters, and I am still the same. What am I?—The postman.