

where there was only heathenism, dark, intensely dark, and to-day there is light there. I have baptised hundreds of converts, and it is all by the power of the Gospel.

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth."

—J. M.

### OUR LORD'S TEMPTATION.

MATTHEW iv.

This scene stands quite alone. It cannot be classed along, or placed in comparison, with any other.

We find the blessed Son of God before us in all the moral perfection of manhood. It is correct to say of man, that he lives, moves, and has his being in God, that the highest glory of man as a creature is absolute dependence on, and obedience to, that God by whom he was created. Aught else is sin and alienation.

But here we see the absolute dependence of the Son of man on "every word" that God had spoken. His life, as man, His every movement, was assuredly in that God in whom He had His being. He presents to us man as he should have been in relation to God.

The scene is laid, however in the wilderness; and what is that? How comes there to be such a place as a wilderness? Is that the normal idea, the proper or natural abode of man? Certainly not.

The garden of Eden, in the wealth of its provision, was the home of man. That garden knew no lack, no desert existed within its charming domain. All that nature could desire was abundantly supplied, and God Himself deigned to enter its precincts. A wilderness then was unknown.

But, alas! the serpent entered, plied his wily snares, and first the woman, deceived thereby, sinned and fell, quickly to be followed by the man.

Then all was changed. The fair garden, or rather God's holy presence there, could no longer be endured—nor indeed might sinners remain within—and God drove them out.

If outside the garden, where could man be but in the wilderness?

The earth, devoid of God's presence, is a wilderness, and that is Satan's sphere. It is there man is now placed, and though he may endeavour to alter its character, and to close his eyes to the fact of God's absence, it is a wilderness still. No amount of human embellishments, no resources of science, no achievements of skill, no medical relief, no philosophic sentiments, can undo the awful facts that God is not here, and that the earth is therefore a wilderness. Mercy may kindly remember, and cause the sun to shine, and the rain to fall, and thus in a thousand ways tells of a God of long-suffering pity. Still sin has turned the earth into a wilderness.

Now the blessed Lord was led of the Spirit into the wilderness, into the domain of Satan's special power, into the very stronghold of the enemy.

It was there—the exact locality is not told—He met the foe on his own ground. Forty days of fasting were succeeded by hunger. There is nothing sinful in that. Man even as to his bodily wants is dependent on God's supply, and that moment of need was chosen for the first assault.

"If thou be the Son of God com-