

answer to Pastor Fisch's inquiry if he had fulfilled his promise to read the book once more, Professor T. said: 'I have, but it is perfect nonsense. I read the first chapter and found it unintelligible. The second chapter was worse; when I reached the third I threw the book on the ground in disgust. If anything were wanting to show that this religion is a juggle and a delusion, this Epistle of Paul is sufficient; wherever it seems at all intelligent it is full of contradictions; this fact goes far to disprove your principles.'

'A religion coming from God should be so easily understood, that the most ignorant could at once comprehend it. I once thought it was good enough for old women and peasants, but now I know it is impossible for them to understand it, for I who have been all my lifetime in intellectual pursuits and have been elevated to a professorship in the University of Paris, can make nothing of it. Your Bible is a thousand times worse.'

To this sally it was replied that human learning and human ignorance were both opposed to a real scriptural acquaintance with the Scriptures, the former more conspicuously than the latter, and in any case the Spirit of God must open the heart and understanding before he could receive the word of life.

'This,' said Pastor Fisch, 'is what the Scriptures themselves teach, and I sometimes find under this teaching, the illiterate understand the Bible better than I do. I will give you proof of this if you will accompany me this morning to the workshops of the lowest and most unlettered of my flock, a poor cobbler in Lyons.'

'A good joke, truly,' said the self-confident professor, but was assured that the proposal was made in good earnest. 'Well,' he added, 'I shall be glad to see one of those wonderful ignoramuses, who understands the Epistle to the Romans better than you do. You may rely on it, I shall put him to the test in accepting your invitation.'

Accordingly the Christian Pastor and skeptic philosopher set out on a visit to the poor cobbler's stall.

On introducing the scholar to the stall and its occupant, Pastor Fisch remarked that there was but one vacant stool, and scarcely standing room for three persons.

'Well, friend,' said Professor T., when they were left alone, 'Pastor Fisch tells me you profess to know something of the Scriptures. We are here alone and I will tell no one of what will pass, but just confess that you do not understand that book, for it stands to reason that if I, an educated man and a teacher in the university can make nothing out of it, still less can you, whom I perceive to be an illiterate man.'

'Oh! but I have something that you have not with all your learning,' said the cobbler.

'And what is that, I pray?'

'The Holy Spirit,' said the Christian solemnly, 'and if you are brought to ask for light from him, you, too, will understand the Scriptures.' He then told, in his own simple way, the story of God's dealing with his soul; how he had shown him that he was a ruined and helpless sinner, and how, when he saw this he was led to see in Jesus a perfect Saviour, just as he needed, and how, in looking to Jesus, he found all his sins washed away, received a new nature, and became a temple of the Holy Ghost, who taught him the things of God out of the Scriptures.

Professor T. remained all the morning in conversation with his humble instructor.

On entering the dining-room at the cha-teau at a late hour, he exclaimed to Pastor Fisch, with an emotion he could not conceal, 'I thought that you were well acquainted with the Bible, but I find that you spoke the truth when you said your cobbler knows it far better than you do. I have had a lesson to-day such as I never had before.'

In truth the Lord had opened the skeptic's heart, and the Scriptures became his delight.

'I have studied again,' he said, 'these three chapters of the Epistle to the Romans that once so displeased me, but this time I did so in dependence on God for enlightenment. In the first chapter I saw how man had lost the knowledge of God, and had framed a deity after his own imagination, and had become utterly corrupt. In the second I saw how the chosen people, with his revelation in their minds, had followed the same course and that the whole race was involved in a common ruin. In the third chapter I saw that I, with the rest, high and low, ignorant and learned, was a ruined, hopeless sinner before God. That was the truth which I would not see before and which provoked my indignation. But I saw also that Jesus Christ was indeed sent to be a propitiation for my sins. Was it the Holy Spirit that showed me all this?'

'Yes,' was the reply, 'none else could show you your ruin or your salvation.'

'Then,' said he with solid tenderness, 'I am a son of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and, because I am a son, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son in my heart.' Sitting at the feet of Jesus, he has ever since been placing himself on the lowest form, learning of spiritual things.

Although regarded with contemptuous pity in circles where he once was distinguished and honored, he esteems the reproach of Christ greater riches than all he relinquishes for him.

He now understands the paradox of Paul: 'If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise.'—Union Gospel News.

### Prepare Ourselves For a Prepared Place.

(Ram's Horn.)

'I wish I knew; I wish I knew!' murmured the Girl-Who-Dreams.

'What is it you want to know?' asked Uncle Bez, who had overheard her wish.

'Why, it seems to me,' replied the Girl-Who-Dreams, 'that the trials and troubles of this life might be borne a great deal more easily, if we only knew what heaven and the hereafter are like. I wish the Bible was a little more explicit on some points.'

'My dear girl,' replied Uncle Bez, 'don't you worry about heaven. It doesn't require very much faith to believe that heaven will be a place plenty good enough for the souls of the men and women we are. The thing for us to be really concerned about is not whether heaven is good enough for us, but whether we are good enough for heaven. I have heard folks talk about heaven like it was a summer resort, and the Almighty was a hotel keeper: they have said they would like this and would not like that, and they hoped it was thus and so, just like they were picking out a house to rent, forgetting all the time that heaven is perfection, and their business is not to pick out the kind of heaven they'd like to have—a man-made heaven—but to try to attain to that degree of righteousness which

will enable them to enjoy a God-made heaven.

'You remember that Christ told his disciples that he went to prepare a place for them, that where he is they may be also, and it has always seemed to me that that is pretty much the whole of heaven—where Christ is. It doesn't matter what it is like, nor what we will do; Christ is there, and he has promised for those who love and follow him. I'm willing to leave the details of the preparation to him; I will take the place he prepares for me, on trust. I won't demand specifications in advance. It wasn't wise to draw up a contract with the Almighty; for the best we can imagine or dream of to ask for, is very small and trifling beside what God has to give us.'

'And as Christ has prepared the place, so does he show us the way to it. He, himself, is the way—that is, it is only through and by Christ that man may be saved; there is none other name under heaven.'

'But, Uncle Bez,' said the Girl-Who-Dreams, 'I can't see what difference it would make to the great God of the universe whether some poor weak little man "believed" on him or not. I wouldn't want to punish a person forever and forever, just because she didn't "believe" in me.'

'No,' replied Uncle Bez, 'you wouldn't. But suppose you have decided to feed the birds, and you scatter crumbs in the back yard where they can all come and eat your crumbs, except one young bird who thinks he's very wise, and who cocks up one eye and says he doesn't believe any such girl as you exists, and that there aren't any crumbs in the yard, and they aren't good, anyway. Suppose there were no other crumbs in the neighborhood excepting those you scattered and that the bird sat on the fence and didn't believe, until he died of starvation. You would think that very just, wouldn't you? Well, it's just the same way with men and women. Christ is the way to eternal life; there is no other way; if men and women will not walk in that way, then they must suffer the consequences which they bring upon themselves. If they will not love good things, they cannot be good; if they do not know Christ, they cannot walk with him; they cannot feel his presence, they cannot find the way to God.'

'And more than that,' Uncle Bez went on, 'Christ is not only the revelation of the way—he is also the source of the power by which men walk in it. He is both a guide and a stay; he leads and supports. And that is why I said that if I were you I would not worry about what heaven is like; I would try to find Christ on earth, to feel his presence, and so be sure of having heaven here and now resting assured that all is right in the place that he has prepared for them who love him.'—Johnstone Murray.

### The Find-the-Place Almanac.

TEXTS IN HEBREWS.

Sept. 23, Sun.—Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the children of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Sept. 24, Mon.—He endured as seeing him who is invisible.

Sept. 25, Tues.—Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.

Sept. 26, Wed.—Partakers of his holiness.

Sept. 27, Thurs.—Make straight paths for your feet.

Sept. 28, Fri.—Follow peace with all men.

Sept. 29, Sat.—Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.