

POETRY.

GOD'S GIFTS.

Keep thou my heart, for oft I fear
Thy gifts, dear Lord, to me,
So much delight the eye, the ear,
The scents in me,
That thou art hidden from my sight
Behind material worth,
As is the sun, with its pure light,
Behind the clouds of earth.

The gladness of the free, fresh air,
That stirs the pulse anew,
The simple joy of living, care
Can never quite undo;
The bright day beaming overhead,
Each charm of sight and sound,
The dulceness of dally bread,
The warm life all around.

The courtesies bestowed unsought
That empty cravings fill;
The interchange of generous thought,
The sacrifice of will—
Ah! Lord, thy hills with help abound,
Thy vales with harvests teem—
No spot where beauty is not found,
Where blessings do not stream.

Thy gifts profuse, with jewels set,
Love, deathless and intense;
Why do we seize them and forget
Their mute munificence?
Thy treasures showered o'er all the land
So lavishly and free,
We eager snatch them from thy hand,
Yet look not up to thee.

For this dost thou sometimes permit
Estrangements deep and wide,
Hearts that were once so strongly knit,
To wither and divide;
And gentle tones no more are heard,
And loving smiles are missed;
We long in vain for one kind word
From lips that we have kissed.

Thy mercies all misunderstood,
Seem empty as the grave;
Thy favor void of every good
Without the love we crave,
Till we perceive this meaning of
Thy mercies, precious and true,
If, more than jewels, human love
Is precious, priceless thing.

R. G. PLUMMER, in Standard.

SELECTIONS.

AT THE LORD'S TABLE.

As with administering baptism so with this; both institutions are full of Divine solemnity and should be attended to with profoundest reverence. By reason of such solemnity everything approximating irreverence or carelessness is not only obtrusive but is positively painful.

A few men possess the native dignity which enables them to assist in filling the worshippers with reverence. But as native dignity is a rare gift, the great majority of elders and preachers who preside at the Lord's table need to train themselves in order that nothing may occur which will in any wise shock or even disturb a Scriptural sense of propriety. I say "Scriptural sense," because there is a fastidiousness often found which is not inculcated nor permitted by the word of God. For instance, we learned of a case some years ago where special objections were urged against a certain elder presiding by reason of what was called "his black hands." In character reputation and behavior that elder was all right, but he was a blacksmith by trade, and, of course, it was impossible for him to have the tidy hands of a modern kid-gloved gentleman.

Then in the second place, instead of making a lengthy or rambling speech about matters large-foreign or distantly related to the worship (as is often done) it becomes the one presiding at the table to say only what is necessary to direct the worshippers, who may need his help, into those channels of thought and feeling which will enable them rejoicingly to appreciate the occasion. Sometimes, of course, by reason of the audience present it is altogether becoming to make a few remarks about the reasons why we differ from our religious neighbors in observing the institution. Yet even then nothing should be said in controversial way. The bearing of all remarks should be to assist all present to understand and appreciate the important truth, that worship is communion with God and Christ through their own Divine appointments. Frequently this can be best accomplished by reading some appropriate portion of Scripture without a word of comment.

As for giving thanks for the cup or loaf, whether done by those presiding or others, it should be in a few words. As with the remarks made at the table so with this: A few words fitly chosen should be used. It is not the time or place for lengthy praying. Besides, the one who undertakes an extensive prayer for thanksgiving will very likely forget the very something for which thanks were to be given.

Another thought deserves mention. Some begin to give thanks (as is right) by addressing God the Father, and then thank him that his body was offered, or that his blood was shed. This is incorrect. Let all things be said and done Scripturally; then God and Christ will be glorified.—*Océograph*.

THE MISTAKES OF MOSES.

A. P. COBB.

Forasmuch as some have taken in hand to set forth in order, a declaration of the mistakes of Moses, it seemed good unto me also, having access unto a certain Book of which the aforementioned critics are woefully ignorant, to suggest a few mistakes which they have inadvertently overlooked:

There once lived a boy who was born in slavery; a member of a tribe which for centuries had been slaves. By a curious chance as some would say; by a special providence as we hold, he became the adopted son of a princess whose father ruled a mighty nation—a nation which in the gray morning of history, gave to the world a wonderful civilization.

Rearing as heir apparent to the mightiest throne on earth, the lad became a scholar, a statesman, and a mighty warrior. Rejecting all this power and glory, thrusting aside the glittering diadem which kings of high renown had worn, he cast his lot with his oppressed kindred, bore with their cowardice and ingratitude, infused into them his own heroic courage, led them into freedom, and gained for himself an unknown grave.

He died. His bones have long since mouldered to dust. From his mold the last sweet violet has sprung. On his grave has faded the last anemone that nodded to the breeze.

Unkept by human love, unknown, save to God and the guardian angels, that grave has nestled amidst the crags of Bethpeor, kissed by the suns and shrouded by the snows of five and thirty centuries.

O lonely tomb in Meab's land,
O dark Bethpeor's hill,
Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
And teach them to be still."

Since that strange burial a hundred generations have flourished and failed. The silent ages like a vast ocean, unrocked by tempest, unruffled by zephyr, stretch between that man and us. It has been reserved for our century, and for a man whose fame shall be as evanescent as the fragrance of a rose, to point out the mistakes of Moses! Ages of evolution—a tedious and painful "wriggling from the monad up to man"—were required to produce a mind capable of discovering perfection in the author of "The Age of Reason," and gross inaccuracy in the author of the Pentateuch!

Actuated by interest for the welfare of humanity, the brilliant advocate of the Star Route criminals determines to warn the world against trusting in Moses. In no way can this be so well done as by pointing out his mistakes.

But it is not in accordance with the laws of evolution that perfection should be reached *at once*. It need not, therefore, surprise us that the list is not complete. The "scientific method" shows us "a more excellent way." We can complete the good work so auspiciously begun. We now call attention to several mistakes which have been accidentally (?) overlooked:

1. Moses "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." Heb. xi, 21. By this step he incurred the wrath of the princess and her brother, who could see in it nothing but ingratitude to them.

2. He chose affliction with God's people, in preference to the "transient pleasures of sin." vs. 25. This, like the foregoing, is in direct opposition to the views of "Mr. Worldly Wiseman," whose maxims are: "One world at a time;" "Enjoy this life while you have it." It is also opposed to Mr. Wiseman's Jewish friend (see Luke xii: 19) whose philosophy is very simple—so simple that God called *him* a fool. "Soul,

thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry." Unfortunately, too, it directly antagonizes the favorite maxims of Mr. Wiseman's Epicurean relative:—"Carpe diem; quam minimum credula postero." (Horace, Carmen I. 11, v, 8) "*Manducemus et bibamus, eras enim moriemur.*" 1 Cor. xv: 32.

Now it must be evident to a first cousin of the *orang-outang*, that a man makes a serious, if no fatal mistake when he antagonizes the symposium of the worldly, the fool, the Epicurean and the atheist.

3. He esteemed the "reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." (vs. 26). This strange step, Mr. W. Wiseman can account for only on the principle of reversion, scientifically known as "*atavism*." Moses reverted to the pure faith and spiritual insight of Abraham.

This led to the fourth mistake:

4. He feared not the wrath of the king of Egypt, "for he endured as seeing Him (i. e. that King) who is invisible."

Glorious mistakes, these, which gave to us the scholar and statesman, the liberator and lawgiver! Noble man, whom these mistakes have made a prophet, a patriot, a prince with God!

Pharaoh is gone. His nation is trampled in the dust. A Foreigner rules the degraded people. But Moses lives in the genius of his laws; lives as the great type of Christ; lives in the three greatest religions the world has ever seen; lives in the hearts of uncounted millions, who revere him because of his "mistakes."—A. P. COBB, in *Christian Evangelist*.

IS THE BIBLE REASONABLE?

In a former article we have shown that the spirit of the Bible is reasonable and that God challenges men to bring their reason to the investigation of its teaching. In this, and perhaps other articles, we want to show that its alleged facts are rational.

Of the alleged facts the self-existent, all-creative God is the greatest, and the first sentence of the Bible calls attention to him and his work. "In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth." The world never greeted a sublimer declaration. But the Atheist and the unbeliever claim that it is unreasonable to suppose a self-existent Creator, hence, he affirms the eternity of matter. Which is the more reasonable, to affirm that matter is self-existent and eternal, or to affirm the eternity of mind? As far as affirmations and suppositions are concerned, surely the Christian has the advantage. It is much more reasonable to suppose that a Supreme Intelligence created man than to suppose that he has been evolved from a lower order of beings, such as the monkey, ape, etc. etc. The lamented Burgess was wont to say, "It is better to suppose the monkey a degenerated man, than man to be a regenerated monkey." I do not claim that man, without the Bible, could ever come to a knowledge of God, but with its teaching before us, everything in Nature confirms it, and the Bible idea of God is in accord with the highest reason.

Paley's familiar illustration is reasonable. Who can look at a watch and examine its parts, all perfectly adjusted to each other and all working together, accurately marking the passing seconds, minutes, hours and days and yet say that this is a hap-hazard work, the result of evolution or of some fortuitous circumstances? The man who so decides is a fool, or insane, and should be taken forthwith to an asylum for the feeble minded or to the hospital for the insane. And yet how much more insane is he than the man who affirms the same of the material world? Atheism is no more reasonable than Topsy in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," who, when asked who made her, replied "S'pect I growed." Atheism "s'pects" the world "growed." It is not as reasonable as heathenism, for the heathen did try to account for the world. They supposed the gods made a big rock, and a big turtle to rest upon the rock, and the world to rest upon the back of the turtle! "Absurd!" methinks you are ready to say. How much more absurd than the Atheistical idea? A believing and unbelieving warmist were fast friends. They had had many warm discussions of the Bible idea of God. One day the Christian Scientist found a very beautiful and complicated machine. He purchased it and placed it in his studio and anxiously awaited a visit from his friend. He did not wait long. His

friend no sooner entered the room than his eyes fell on the quaint machine. After carefully examining it but failing to determine what it was and its design, he said to the Christian, "What is it?" "I do not know," replied the Christian. "Who made it?" said the sceptic. "I suppose no one made it," replied his friend; "it is the result of chance or of evolution." "Well," said the sceptic, "you are mocking me." "True," said the other, "I am mocking you; but why do you think I am mocking you when I affirm that no intelligent mind planned and made this little machine; but you affirm the same of the much more complicated machinery of this material universe?"

The argument was effectual. The Atheist saw the absurdity of his position and forever abandoned it. Order is written everywhere. Harmony and beauty are upon every hand. Design is impressed upon everything, animate and inanimate, and where there is design there must of necessity be a designer. That designer is the one living and true God.

David says, the fool saith in his heart: "There is no God." That is the secret of Atheism. Men feel the weight and guilt of their sins. They shudder at the thought of coming before God with sinful hearts and polluted lives, hence, they wish in their hearts that God is not. The wish becomes father to the thought. No man ever said in his reason, there is no God. Daniel Webster said he tried to disbelieve the Bible but he was confronted on every hand by evidences of its truth.

We once heard of a blatant Atheist in Pennsylvania who was met one day by a simple-minded Christian Dutchman who said to him, "Do you believe der ish no Got?" "Yes," said the Atheist, "there is no God," "Oh, vell den," said the Dutchman, "you musht be von fery schmart man. I have heard tell apout you. My Bible tells apout you. My Bible says, 'The fool says, *in his heart* der ish no Got,' but you big fool you, you just blab it right out."—*In Christian Evangelist*.

SIMPSON ELY.

"PREACH THE WORD."

This was Paul's charge to Timothy; and it is a charge which applies with as great force to every minister of Christ to-day. It would be a good thing to have these words printed in large letters, and hung up directly before the eyes of every preacher in his study. They would be a constant reminder that his chief business is to herald the Word of God rather than the opinions of men. If this charge were faithfully obeyed by every one who claims to be Christ's minister, there would be far less said in the pulpit about what councils have decreed, and what denominational creeds and standards declare. I do not inveigh against all decisions of councils and declarations of creeds; but I protest against giving such things the prominence which they, too often, receive in pulpit ministrations. Instead of prayerfully studying to know just what God has intended to convey to us, in the Bible, there is, many times, an effort to make the Bible substantiate purely human conceptions of truth. All of our theories of truth should be candidly submitted to the Word of God, in its entirety, for a decision of the truthfulness or falsity of our theories. If anything must suffer any apparent defeat, let it be our opinions and predilections rather than God's Word. Let nothing stand in the way of our preaching the pure Word. It were better for us to sacrifice every desire to ventilate our pet notions of doctrine and fanciful interpretations of the Scriptures, than that our preaching should be without gracious effect. Men are not saved through the preaching of human opinions of Divine truth; nor are they delivered from sin by the mere history of Divine truth. Neither are Christians spiritually refreshed and edified, to any marked extent, by essays about the Word. It is the plain, undiluted Word of God, proclaimed with an unction from the Holy Spirit, that converts the soul and then builds it up in wholesome life and Divine vigor and Christly sympathy. What the people need is not elaborate disquisitions upon social problems and sanitary laws—these belong to the forum—but the Word of God, preached in simplicity and with all fidelity, is the paramount need of the hour. Preach the Word and God will bless both the Word and the preacher.—*Hom. Review*.