

The Berean.

THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS OF MIND, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO.—Acts xvii. 11.

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THE STRIFE WITH WANDERING THOUGHTS.

There's wisdom in this volume :—let me trace
The page for deep instruction. 'Woe is me!
My wilful heart for wisdom hath no place ;
Some glowing thought, some word of melody,
Some gem of lustrous radiance, meets my eyes :
And then loud fancy haunts me ; and I stray
In magic worlds ;—but I will strive and pray
That the new awakened thought may upward rise,
And make celestial song, though poor and weak ;
Up ! upward still my strain be thou ascending,
And not with things of this low earth be blending.
The good, the wise, the holy may I seek ;
And eye in hallowed song—O my weak heart—
Cease not to pray and strive to bear thy part.

E. L. A.
(Christian Observer.)

MEDITATION FOR LENT.

Repentance and true conversion are the work of God the Holy Ghost, whereby man, through the law, comes to know his sinfulness and the wrath of God against sin, and so penitential sorrow is wrought in the heart :—and man, through the Gospel, comes to know the grace of God, and by faith obtains the forgiveness of sin in Christ. Now such repentance also works both the mortification and crucifixion of the flesh with all its lusts and corrupt affections, and brings about the quickening of the Spirit. Thus Adam and all that belong to his corruption dies in us through sorrow, but Christ becomes alive in us through faith. (Gal. ii. 20.) The two things hang together : upon mortification of the flesh there followeth the quickening and renewing of the Spirit ; and upon the renewing of the Spirit there followeth mortification of the flesh. As the old Adam is deadened, the new man is made alive ; and as the new man is made alive, the old man perishes. (2 Cor. iv. 16.)

The reason why mortification of the flesh must be brought about by genuine repentance, is to be learned thus. Through Adam's fall man is become altogether devilish, earthly, carnal, estranged from God, and destitute of love. His affection is averse from God and is set upon the world, and chiefly upon himself ; so that in all things he seeks and loves and honours himself, and his efforts are directed to this, how he may be exalted in the sight of all the world. All this springs from Adam's fall, in that man desired to be even God himself—the abomination which now is inborn in every man. This perverse disposition of man must be corrected by repentance, which consists in real godly sorrow ; and by faith, which lays hold on the forgiveness of sins ; and by the mortification of self, of pride, and of fleshly lusts.

But repentance is not simply the forsaking and abstaining from gross outward sins : it is an interior work in which the inmost depth of the heart is altered and amended, and it turns from the love of self to the love of God—from the world and all worldly lusts to a spiritual and heavenly life ;—a work in which faith gives participation in the merits of Christ.

Hence it follows that man must deny himself ; (Luke ix. 23) his own will must be broken, he must surrender himself entirely to the will of God, not love himself, but esteem himself the most unworthy and wretched of men—renounce every thing that he calls his own (Luke 14, 26) that is, despite the world with its pomp and glory, set at naught his own wisdom and ability, depend upon no created thing ; but depend upon God simply and alone. He has to hate his own life, that is, to mortify fleshly lusts and desires, such as pride, avarice, lasciviousness, anger, envy ;—seek no satisfaction in himself, count all his doings nothing worth, glory in none of his own things, take no credit to himself, but rather blame himself. He has to die to himself, to the lusts of the eye and of the flesh, and to the pride of life : he is to be crucified unto the world. (Gal. vi. 14.)

Such is the deadening of the flesh, without which no one can be a disciple of Jesus. Such is real conversion from the world, from self, and from Satan unto God, and without it no man can obtain forgiveness of sin or be blessed. (Acts xvii. 18.)

Now this denial of self is the true cross, and the yoke of which Christ says : "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart." (Matth. xi. 29.) By deep lowliness of the heart within, thou art to quench thy self-love and self-esteem—by meekness thy angry passions and desire of revenge. Now this is an easy yoke and a light burden to the new man, but a heavy cross to the flesh. Such, however, is the crucifying of the flesh with its affections and lusts, required of them that are Christians. (Gal. v. 21.)

Those, therefore, are greatly mistaken, who understand by the cross nothing but temporal loss and adversity, not considering that inward penitence and deadening of the flesh are the true cross which we have to take up and bear after Christ every day ; that we are to hear with our enemies in great patience ; and to overcome our slanderers by holy meekness, the pride and arrogance of our opposers by genuine humility. Christ has thus gone before us, in much meekness renouncing and dying unto the world and all the things that are in this world.—From TRUE CHRISTIANITY by Johann Arnd, General Superintendent of the Clergy of Zelle, died 1621.

To be continued.

THE BITTERNESS OF DESERTION.

O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not ; and in the night-season, and am not silent. Ps. XXII, 2.

How like the expostulation of a human child with an earthly parent ! It proceeds on the ground of relationship—"I am thine ; I cry day and night ; yet thou art not heard. Thou art my God, yet nothing is done to silence

me. In the day-time of my life, I cried ; in this night-season of my death, I entreat. In the garden of Gethsemane I occupied the night with prayers ; with continual ejaculation have I passed through this eventful morning. O my God, thou hast not yet heard me, therefore am I not yet silent : I cannot cease till thou answerest." Here Christ urges his suit in a manner which none but filial hearts adopt. The child knows that the parent yearns over him. His importunity is strengthened by confidence in his love. He keeps not silence ; he gives him no rest, because he confides in his power and willingness to grant the desired relief. This is natural. It is the argument of the heart—an appeal to the inward yearning of our nature. It is also scriptural, and is thus stated, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children ; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Luke xi. 13.

Our Lord seems to refer to Gethsemane by these words, "I cry in the night-season." Many a night had he spent with God in prayer, but never one like that. Here on the cross, he identifies the subject of his petition, with that which he thrice presented there in his agony. He complains to God that he is not yet silenced, and that what he there asked, has not yet been granted. If this view be correct, it enables us to understand the cause of that great agony, and it explains the bitterness of that mysterious cup. We know what the subject matter of his prayer was on the cross, and we hence learn on what his holy human will was fixed in his threefold prayer. It was neither relief from fear of death, nor deliverance from the expected cross ; it was not mitigation of pain—nor escape from his persecutors—nor safety from Satan's assaults, for which he prayed. All these were as nothing to him. To be under such oppressive sorrow because of any one or more, or all, of these causes, were unworthy the Captain of our salvation, unlike him who said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." But here is a worthy and a noble reason. Here is a matter, in every sense becoming the "will" of him who never felt, or thought, or spoke, but in perfect harmony with the "will" of his Father. Here is a prayer in which even Christ may possess, as assuredly he did, two wills, and yet be free from sin. That prayer is, that he may enjoy the light of his Father's countenance. What language can be conceived more appropriate in the mouth of a Son? What prayer more agreeable to the ear of a Father? This was the prayer which Jesus presented in the garden, and on the cross. In the one he deprecated a trial to which he was looking forward ; in the other he prays under its pressure when already come. We all know how dreadful is the apprehension of evil. It is magnified by distance. We have time to think of its aggravations, and even the smallest appear large by being dimly discerned. When, too, the trial is of a strange, and unknown nature ; of a kind which we have never yet passed through ; its strangeness invests it with exciting and mysteriously fascinating power over us, which engages the whole mind, and often overwhelms it. Such, in some measure, we apprehend, was that sensation which made our blessed Saviour "exceeding sorrowful even unto death," when in the garden of Gethsemane ; and which, with the excruciating reality and intensity of its presence, made him forget even the death itself when he was hanging on the cross. It is something which, before it came, Christ can liken to nothing but the last evil which humanity contemplates. No greater comparison, as to this world, can be employed. But when it is come, it proves, like death, to be enough of itself, and swallows up every other consideration. Therefore, throughout this psalm, and in all his words on the cross recorded in the Gospels, there is not the slightest allusion to, or the remotest intimation of, desire for deliverance from death. Oh no : it was something infinitely beyond mortal death which our Immanuel dreaded, and for deliverance from the oppressive horror of which he so importunately prayed. Exclusion, as our Surety, from a sense of his Father's presence, was the last and bitterest affliction which Christ was called to endure ; and it was the one only trial which his holy filial heart must wish and rightly wish to be shortened—to be removed. To be passively contented in such a condition, is as sinful as it is fatal. It proves that we care not for Him from whom we are secluded ; that we are indifferent whether he be pleased or angry with us. To the Father who orders the infliction, such an exhibition must be even more wounding and hateful than the original offence. That parent can answer who has been tried by a wilful and rebellious son. What cut deepest into thy wounded heart? Was it not this, that when ordered to leave thy house, and see thy face no more, he was still unmelted, and seemed as well satisfied with banishment, as if he were abiding under his father's blessing? The revolting picture which a prodigal thus presents, is the very reverse of what Jesus exhibited. His heart burned with love to his Father ; his whole soul was occupied with an intense desire to please him, to be with him, to be near him. Christ was, to the utmost point of perfection, what a son ought to be. His happiness lay where his duty lay, his desires and delight were all centered in obedience. He had no separate interests, no selfish considerations, no personal gratifications, to further and attend to. His will was entirely one with the will of his Father ; and that single passage in history which discloses the identity of his own separate and personal will, divulges, not only its holiness by the object on which it fixed, but also at the same

time its full acquiescence and harmony therein with the Father's will.

The vast importance of this subject demands the fullest consideration. It opens a path to the removal of all, or most of, those difficulties which encompass the mysterious scene in the garden. It presents the Saviour in an attitude which must have exceedingly endeared him to his Father, and at the very moment when he was pleading for the removal of that cup, which the Father had determined should not be withdrawn. What was that cup? It was the last, the bitterest, which the law had sentenced him to drink. Its dreadful ingredient was exclusion from the Divine presence. It was not put into his hand till he had hung some considerable time on the cross. The sun hid itself in darkness whilst this cup was administered. If such a darkness and horror spread itself over the whole land at the solemn and awful period, no wonder that an exceeding and overwhelming sorrow came upon the soul of Jesus, when he contemplated it in the garden. On the night previous to its being tasted. As the last sentence of the law, there was every reason for him to suppose that he was to die under it. Justice seemed to require this. As the Surety of sinners, he must undergo its sentence. The ignominy of the cross, the pains of the body, the assaults of devils, and the curse of the law, were to be continued till death ensued. Was the remaining part of the sentence—even exclusion from the Divine presence—to be similarly executed? No reason appeared why it should not. Awful thought! Did under the hidings of my Father's face? O dreadful sentence! The more he thought of it when he retired into the shades of Gethsemane, the more horrifying it appeared. No wonder, then, that it is recorded, "He began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy."—Mark xiv. 33. He began to think of it with renewed attention, and consequently to feel it with greater acuteness. His sensations correspond with the nature of their cause. That cause is of a most strange and inexperienced kind, therefore he is "sore amazed." It is also dreadful, therefore "He began to be very sorrowful." It is awfully oppressive, therefore is he "very heavy." Must I be separated from my Father? Am I to die without the light of his presence? Is this the irrevocable sentence! I cannot bear the thought. "O my Father! if it be possible : Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee : take away this cup from me ; nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt." (compare Matth. xxvi. 39, with Mark xiv. 36.) The sore "amazement" of his spirit was exhibited in his actions. He rose from his knees—he went to the disciples—he returned a second time to pray. Again he rose—again he came to the disciples—a third time he returned to pray. The amazement increased, "He fell upon his face." His "sorrow" became "exceeding" and "being in agony, he prayed more earnestly." The oppression had become so great—the mental pressure so "very heavy"—that "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood." But what is the subject of this last, this agonizing prayer? Is it not the same with the first? Does he not use the same words? Does he not deprecate the same cup? Yet he never names it. So sensitively does he recoil from it ; so abhorrent is it to his nature ; that it seems as if he cannot bear to mention it. Never till the darkness actually enveloped him on the cross, could his dreadful name be wrung forth in words. Then it was he gave utterance to it. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" is a cry which burst from the inmost heart of the Saviour, and divulged the secret that oppressed it. What else was worthy to affect that sacred heart to such a degree? What else became the holy will of a Son, either while differing from, or acquiescing in, a Father's will? On what subject could Christ have a will of his own, which should yet gain the approbation of him before whom he stood? That Christ set his mind on an object, and prayed for it with threefold earnestness, yet never obtained it, is no pleasing thought to the Christian mind. That he desired that for which he ought not to have asked, is not for a moment to be believed. We conclude, then, that our Saviour "in the night season" in Gethsemane, entreated that he might not die under the hiding of his Father's countenance ; but that his love and obedience were so great, that even in this he would submit, if it were the Father's will : and that God, acting towards Christ as a Judge, did not then answer his petition, but was so well pleased as a Father, with his earnest desire to be admitted to his presence, that he sent an angel to strengthen him : and we learn by this Psalm, that the Saviour renewed his supplications on the cross with such a vehement importunity, that the Father granted his petition to the uttermost, and filled his expiring soul with light, and peace, and triumph.—Christ on the Cross, by the Rev. John Stevenson.

THE PLEASANTNESS OF TRUE RELIGION.

Of all the paradoxes that are maintained in this paradoxical world, the saddest and strangest is perhaps the most prevalent, namely, that godliness and gloom are so identified, that they mean one and the same thing—that is, in other words, that the service of that Being, who is the fountain of all happiness, is a melancholy service—that the light of His countenance, whose smile is to archangels the source of all their bliss, will here overshadow with gloom the spirit on which it shines ; and that the well-founded hope of eternal happiness in heaven, if habitually cherished, will incapacitate its possessor for the enjoyment of present happiness upon earth. In opposition to this insulting libel on true religion, I would observe, in the words

of a profound and powerful writer, that there is necessarily "no melancholy in religion, and no religion in melancholy." I would appeal to higher than human testimony, even that of the Angels, who, on ushering in, at the Redeemer's birth, the dispensation of the Gospel, proclaimed it to be "good tidings, glad tidings of great joy!" Yea, I would appeal to the very highest authority in the Universe, that of the Lord of Angels, who declares—"Blessed (or, as the word might be rendered, happy) are the meek, the merciful, the poor in spirit, the pure in heart ;" and surely those whom he esteems happy must be truly so—those whom he calls blessed must be blessed indeed!

Were I then called upon to embody and delineate the spirit of the religion of the Gospel, I would not dip my pencil in the black dye of melancholy, to paint a dark and dismal figure, with clouded countenance, and gloomy brow ; clothed in sables, and heaving sighs ; with down-cast look and a mournful step, as if the world were one wide burial ground, and her pathway was continually among graves ; and the only light that gleamed upon the path, was the ghastly light that glimmers in the charnel-house ; and the only sounds that meet her ear, were the shriek of the death-struggle, and the chant of the funeral dirge! No, I would dip my pencil in the loveliest hues of heaven, to paint a bright and beautiful spirit from the skies, with the love of God sparkling on her countenance, and the glory of God beaming on her brow ; clothed in garments of light, and crowned with a wreath of Ananath ; with a smile of such sweetserenity as would tell, that all within was peace—the peace of God ; and an aspect of holy gladness, caught from every sight of beauty and every sound of melody, of which a benevolent Creator has made our earth so full : with a buoyant step, becoming a traveller to the skies ; and an upward look, raised rejoicingly to Him, who is all her hope, and all her happiness, and to that heaven from whence she came, and to which she is returning. And when she does look down to earth, it is that she may walk circumspectly amidst its snares, and keep her white robes unspotted by its defilements ; or that she may descend from her high and holy communings with her God, as heaven's ministering spirit of mercy, to enter the abode of rejoicing, and hallow all their happiness by the smile of God ; or to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, to wipe away the orphans' tears, and make even the broken heart to sing for joy! Such is the spirit of that religion which so many misapprehend or misrepresent as a system of moping melancholy.

Now, remember, that the believer's hope of eternal happiness, resting on the word and oath of Him, who will not change, and cannot lie, is itself the source of present happiness, the most abundant, exalted and unshaking. Remember too, this happiness is out of the reach of all earthly chance or change—that the strongest blasts of adversity only make it strike its roots deeper into the rock of ages—that sickness and sorrow, which cloud and chill all earthly enjoyments, only enhance and endear this—that death, the destroyer of all earthly felicity, only stamps on this the seal of heaven, the impress of eternity. Surely, when thus regarded as the exclusive spring of a happiness, so superior to all earth's joys, so unassailable by all earth's sorrows ; which, rainbow-like, shines brightest amidst the darkest gloom ; and which death itself can only make celestial and immortal ; godliness must be admitted, in this respect, even by her enemies, to have the promise of "the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come."—Rev. Hugh White.—Selected by A WANDERER.

SUBSCRIPTION TO THE ARTICLES.

From a Charge to Candidates for Ordination, delivered December 21st, by the Right Rev. Samuel Wilberforce, D.D., Lord Bishop of Oxford.

If you are conscious to yourselves that you are about to sign the Articles in a sense of your own, and one which really differs from that in which they are proposed to you as the rule of your teaching, and the condition of receiving your credentials, you are most truly obtaining the office of a teacher under false pretences, and cannot expect God's blessing on your course. These may sound hard words, but they are unhelpfully necessary. So much labour has been spent, and so much perverted ingenuity employed in mystifying the requirements of common honesty in this matter, that they who are charged to enforce subscription as a preliminary to conferring orders, seem to me to be compelled to be even painfully explicit. I would not, indeed, strain the rule so as to require from all an absolutely passive uniformity of view on every several proposition of the articles as the test of a conscientious subscription ; such conduct would be very unlike the moderation and wisdom of the Church of England, which has always (witness her 17th article) allowed a certain, nay, even a large, license to different minds ; but I repeat my judgment, that unless you are honestly convinced that, in the main tone and tenor of your mind and opinions, you do thoroughly and heartily agree with the Thirty-nine Articles, as to what they assert and what they condemn, in the sense in which they are propounded to you, you cannot honestly subscribe them ; and I will add, that I believe you could not more deeply injure yourselves than by allowing yourselves to sign documents at such a time with subtleties and reservations. I am sure that a more deadly blow could not be inflicted on our Church than that a people of whose character, thank God, sterling honesty is the distinctive feature, should have reason to suspect that

their clergy believed one thing whilst they taught another.

SUPREMACY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

From the same.

His [God's] word must be our meditation, our study, the subject of our prayers, the matter for our self-examination, the instructor of our praises, our guide, our light, our refreshment, our teacher. We must scrupulously exclude all rival teachers ; the holiest and best must not come into any competition with it. Not in the early Church, not in the holiest fathers, not in recorded visions ; not in any, or all of these, are we to learn the witness of Jesus, but in his word. It is at this day of the greatest moment to be explicit here. Want of clearness on this point, more, I believe, than anything besides, has tended to the unsettlement and fall of those who once seemed to be pillars of the faith amongst us. Once let the mind begin to allow itself to look out of God's word for some clearer light than is there to be found, and it is the prey of every phantom and delusion. Once begin to set your scriptural faith right by your gleanings amongst fathers and councils, and there is no amount of error which you may not most logically develop.

THE LONDON TIMES

UPON
DR. PUSEY'S RECENT SERMON.

It is now nearly three years since Dr. Pusey, Canon of Christ-church, was suspended from office by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford. The cause of such suspension is universally known. In a sermon preached before the University the Rev. Canon thought fit to broach and to approve the twin heresies of the "corporeal presence," and the "sacrifice of the mass in the Eucharist." So, at least, stood the general belief up to Saturday last. We learned yesterday, however, upon the authority of Dr. Pusey himself, that punishment proceeded not from the Vice-Chancellor, but from Heaven ; was inflicted not for flagrant rebellion against the Church of England, but "for secret Faults which God knew in him, and from which, he trusted, He desired to cleanse him." It is with pain we confess that we cannot implicitly rely upon the sincerity of this statement. With such a trust at heart, the Rev. offender would have learned wisdom from adversity, contrition from punishment. To be conscious of error is already to advance towards truth ; to aspire to purity is already to enjoy it. The sentence of banishment pronounced against Dr. Pusey is fulfilled. On Sunday morning last he was permitted to re-enter upon the duties he had formerly violated, and to become again the teacher of the youth whom heretofore he had wilfully or blindly misled. We have looked with something more than mere curiosity towards the re-appearance of Dr. Pusey upon that scene which has acquired no enviable notoriety in connexion with his name. We could not but hope that all that has transpired since his forced, but necessary exile, would have had due weight with one intrusted with a solemn and a high responsibility, and anxious, as he somewhat ostentatiously professes, to acquit himself in the sight of Heaven. Dr. Pusey cannot have been insensible to the effects of his own cherished but mischievous opinions, during the last few months. He has seen those who acknowledge themselves with pride and gratitude his pupils and disciples passing through every stage of duplicity, until desertion from the church has crowned their lamentable career of retrogression. We did expect that duty to the University and love to the Church would, at the very earliest opportunity, have urged the parent of this great calamity to express his sorrow for the past, and to utter a word of warning for the future ; to fling away, at least, those gloomy crudities and that worse than useless mysticism with which he has ever delighted to invest baleful error, and to captivate the minds of the thoughtless and the weak. Nothing of the kind has happened. In a tone of spiritual defiance Dr. Pusey takes up the thread of his discourse at the point at which he quitted it upon the occasion of his summary dismissal. The sermon which he preached on Sunday last, so far from evincing a healthier state of thought and feeling, may be read in connexion with that which obtained for him the grave censure of the University, and be regarded only as its fit and natural conclusion. It betrays the same leaning towards doctrines repudiated by the Church of England,—it exhibits the same cloud and darkness, and deals in the like subtle and abstruse enigmas. Lowly as the style may look, there is no mistaking the animus that flows beneath it. Priestly self-satisfaction and sufficiency creep to the very surface ; an unconquered will pervades it. The text of the sermon already announces the assumption of the old position, and proclaims the tenacity with which the holy warrior is prepared to fight for sacerdotal rights.

"Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted to them ; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." It is in illustrating these words that Dr. Pusey, in his first sermon after re-admission, remarks as follows :—
"The greatness of the power thus intrusted to man might well exceed our belief, and make us tremble to execute it, and almost doubt as men had doubted whether we had it. But our Lord premised his commission with these few brief words, conveying at once its extent, and the rule and guidance of it :—'As my Father hath sent me, so send I you.'
We are loath to enter in these columns upon any religious discussion whatever, but we do feel urged by the necessities of the case to step for once between the public and the acceptance of a doctrine that involves the spiritual independence and possibly the happiness of every member of the state. We need