

a great stir in England, and the Bishops of Winchester and Zanzibar have written on the one side, and the Bishops of Derry and Uganda and Dean Henson on the other. The matter is now occupying the attention of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Church Missionary Society, and it may well prove to be the spark which will set aflame many combustible elements in the Church of England to-day. Canadian Churchmen will watch with interest and with no little prayer the outcome of these consultations, because whatever happens the result must affect the Anglican Communion, and it will have a very definite bearing on our Church in Canada. It is particularly interesting to observe all these things in view of the circular on Church Unity put forth in Canada a year or so ago.

M. S. C. C.

While we are on the subject of Missions we wish to call renewed attention to the important journey which our Secretary, Canon Gould, commenced on Christmas Day, with Mr. L. A. Hamilton accompanying him. As already mentioned in our columns, it is proposed to make a tour of examination of the various Canadian Mission Stations in Africa, India, China, and Japan, and many prayers will follow our two representatives as they travel from place to place and get in touch with our workers in the various fields. We hope and fully believe that the outcome of this tour will be a fresh impetus to missionary effort on the part of the Church at home. As we contemplate life and work during the New Year let us settle as one of the deepest convictions to be cherished by clergy and laity everywhere that the evangelization of the world is the supreme task laid upon the people of God.

The Latest on Genesis

In a paper in the "Guardian" by a well-known Cambridge scholar, Dr. Foakes-Jackson, who accepts the general critical view of the Old Testament, the following words occur:—

When we have cut up the Abrahams of Genesis into the Abrahams of "J E P" and their revisers we have only a collection of disiecta membra, and not a man at all. The critical method may have the merit of being scientific, but its results are not particularly satisfactory. . . . Critics talk glibly of sources; but no one can tell us what the Jehovistic or the Elohist Books were actually like, or even give us any definite information about the famous "Priestly Code." We do not know whether the author had always "sources" at his disposal, or whether he trusted to memory for stories he had heard, or even to memory assisted by the imagination. The fact is that the more one studies the problem of the Old Testament and its origin, the more unwilling one is to form a definite opinion on the subject.

Those who, while believing that Genesis shows itself to be a compilation of family documents, do not hold that the present critical methods of dissection are true, or even possible, will find no little support in this frank confession. Criticism must really try again. Conservative scholarship is more and more coming to its own, and one of the most striking testimonies to this effect is found in the "Expositor" for December, in which Dr. Welch, himself a definite critic, makes admissions about the Wellhausen school that tend to shake belief in its judgment, and, what is more, to destroy confidence in its treatment of the Bible. "Truth is mighty and prevails."

Respice, Aspice, Prospice

Look back! Look round! Look ahead! A very appropriate suggestion for the close of the year. A Christian woman not long ago dreamed that she saw herself encircled above, beneath, and all around, as with a blaze of light. Brilliance inconceivable made a pavilion for her, and while standing there she saw all her cares, her troubles, and her sins wandering about outside that wall of light, unable to come near her. But what if we could not merely dream this, but know it for a great reality? Let us think for a moment what it would mean. We see on every side of us that which betokens the presence of God. The God of omnipotent power, the God of unsearchable wisdom, the God of unfathomable love: for Him to be round about us, protecting us on every hand, would be safety and rest, indeed. No fiery dart of the enemy, no accusing voice, no sentence of doom could reach us through that wall of defence. But is this only a fantasy, a mere supposition, a beautiful dream? The Psalmist says: "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." What is meant by "the angel of the Lord"? It conveys the thought of the felt, manifested, recognized presence of the Lord. When the children of Israel encamped by the Red Sea and trembled at the approach of Pharaoh's hosts, the angel of God stood between them and their foes (Exod. xiv. 19). And a reference was made to this hundreds of years afterwards in Isaiah, "I will mention the lovingkindness of the Lord," and the great goodness toward the house of Israel which He hath bestowed on them. . . . He was their Saviour . . . the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them." So "the angel of the Lord" is the Lord Himself in manifested presence, and the Psalm tells us that He encampeth round about those that fear Him. Then, fearing Him, what else is there to fear? Having regard to Him, our Saviour-God, our Protector, our Shield, our Defence, to what danger from without need we have regard?

A voyager remembers once sleeping with the possibility of a hungry shark being within a few inches of his head. Was sleep possible under such circumstances? It was, for his head was on a pillow against the *inside* wall of an iron-built liner, and the shark was outside. Only the thickness of the iron plate between, but it was enough. Have we not enough between us and the dangers we fear? If God is between us and them, is He not sufficient? What He was to Abraham, when He said, "I am Thy shield," that He is to us. Those who have visited the land of Judea have been struck with the beauty of Jerusalem's situation, girt with a ring of mountains on every side. And we read: "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people." Those mountains have not saved Jerusalem from the hand of her foes. Again and again the desolator has laid siege to the city with his engines of war, planted his standard upon her battlements, and slain her defenders with the sword. But the Anti-type, as always, surpasses the type. The mountains may fail as a defence, but the Lord—never!

What about our sins? Divine love has dealt with them in such a way that they can never be laid to our charge. They were all brought into remembrance before God, and laid upon the head of our blessed Substitute when He hung as the Sin-bearer upon the tree. He bore their penalty. He endured the judgment for which they cried aloud. He suffered for

those sins of ours, and silenced their accusing voice for ever. In this way God has put those sins outside, and ourselves inside, with Himself in between. If His face shines upon us with unclouded favour and unspeakable love, behind His back our many sins are cast (Isa. 38:17). "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Note the question. It is not "What shall heavenly beings or infernal powers say?" Nor "What shall Satan say?" Nor "What shall men who know us, and are well acquainted with the devious and crooked course of our lives, say?" God has said something about us, namely, that He has justified us and is for us. Now the question is, "What shall we then say?" Let our answer be, with the triumphant tone of absolute certainty ringing in our voice: "If God be for us who against us? He that spared not His own son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Having given such a gift for us, the thought is impossible that there should exist anything for our good that He would refuse us. Salvation? Justification? These are, of course, included. But much more than these. "All things."

What about the trials of life from which none are exempt? Does God place Himself between us and these? We are certainly taught so by that verse in Philippians, filled with heavenly comfort and cheer. It is possible to read this verse in several of our English versions, besides that in common use. Each one seems to bring some new beauty into prominence.

"The peace of God, which is surpassing all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus."

"The peace of God, which surpasses every understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts by Christ Jesus."

"The peace of God, that surpasseth every understanding, shall keep your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus."

"The peace of God, which transcends all our powers of thought, will be a garrison to guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

"The peace of God, which is beyond all human understanding, will stand guard over your hearts and thoughts through . . . Christ Jesus."

Does not the wonder of the truth contained in this verse begin to take hold of us? Let us imagine some costly treasure, guarded day and night by a garrison of soldiers. Could any thief obtain access to that treasure? It would be impossible—almost impossible. But in connection with the matter we are considering, the "almost" becomes "absolutely." We are the costly treasure (our Saviour, and none but He, knows how costly). Around us as a vigilant guard, keeping incessant watch against every foe, is that which is infinite, "which transcends all our powers of thought"—the peace of God. The conditions laid down are simplicity itself. We have but to make known to God everything that would cause us trouble; everything, whether small or great. With all confidence, confidence that begets thanksgiving even while we utter our requests, we are to lay our difficulties before Him who knows them all. Then the matter is in His hands. His peace stands guard over our hearts and our very thoughts. Truly, "the Lord is round about His people." Let us then go on our happy way into another year. The lady's dream is no dream, but a transcendent reality. God is round about us. Underneath are His everlasting arms. Over our heads floats His banner of love. He Himself marches before, and His glory is our reward. Happy are the people who have such a God for their Shield and their exceeding great Reward.