

For Dominion Presbyterian.

"Mother of God."

BY T. FENWICK.

This month's number of the "Presbyterian Record" has an article on "Rome in England," in which mention is made of Lord Halifax, a leader among the ritualists, advocating the use of the title "Mother of God" to the Virgin Mary. As is well known, it is one which Roman Catholics often give her. Let us examine it.

I have no doubt that to most of my readers, the views which I am about to express will be quite new and startling. Perhaps they will appear to them worthy of severe censure. I ask of them a calm consideration of what I shall say—which is not asking what is unreasonable.

It is quite true that we never find in the Bible the title "Mother of God." But do we ever find there any language like it? That is an important question. Now, what is meant by the expression "Mother of God?" As far as I have seen, Protestants invariably understand it as meaning that the Virgin Mary was the Mother of God, the same as Elizabeth was the mother of John the Baptist. Hence, they say: "God has His being of Himself; therefore, He could not be born of anyone. Therefore, to call any one His mother, is alike absurd and blasphemous." Intelligent Roman Catholics do not use the expression in the sense stated. But in what other meaning can we understand it? Theologians have a term "koinonia idiomaton" to describe the closeness of the union of the human nature and the divine natures in Christ, on account of which, in Scripture, sometimes that is affirmed of the one which is properly true only of the other. Of this we shall presently have illustrations. I believe, therefore, that intelligent Roman Catholics, by the term "Mother of God," mean that the "Virgin Mary" was the mother, as regards the humanity, of Him who was also "very God." Let us now consider like expressions which we find in Scripture.

The angel Gabriel really called her the "Mother of God," though not in these very words. Luke tells us that he said to her: "Thou shalt bring forth a son, He shall be called the Son of the Highest." That is, he whose mother thou shalt be, shall be so called. But Christ is the Son of the Highest only as God. He further said to her: "That holy thing which shall be born of thee" (that is, whose mother thou shalt be) "shall be called the son of God." Christ is the Son of God only in His divine nature. The Jews rightly maintained that Christ by saying that God was His Father, made Himself equal with God. Elizabeth also really called the Virgin Mary the "Mother of God," though not in these very words. She addresses her as "the mother of my Lord." Only as God was Christ Elizabeth's Lord. Peter said to the Jews that they had killed the "Prince of Life." Christ was such only as God. Therefore, as such, He could no more be killed than He could be born. Paul says that the princes of this world crucified the "Lord of glory." What I have just said on the words of Peter is equally true here.

The views which I have expressed above are, no doubt, as I have already said, quite new to my readers. No

doubt, also, many will look on me as defending the Romanists in their use of an expression which to them appears alike absurd and blasphemous. For my own part I never apply the title "Mother of God" to the Virgin Mary. I shrink from doing so. But I wish to show what can be said in defence of the use of it. We should be willing to listen to what can be said in defence of even an infidel. It seems to me that one like, for example, Bernard of Clairvaux, might, in imitation of such Scriptural expressions as those which I have quoted, apply with very becoming feelings, the title "Mother of God" to the Virgin Mary, even though the use of it may not be commendable.

For Dominion Presbyterian.

The Book of Nature.

BY GEO. W. ARMSTRONG.

Volume of Nature; many pages,
Read through Time's successive ages,
On each revolving sphere;
Written in characters divine,
Sun, moon and stars are words that shine,
Writings of God most clear.

They tell of power, of wisdom great,
Of universe of vast estate;
Indelible the lines;
And every planet that we view,
Set in ethereal vellum blue,
Are hieroglyphic signs.

The same great book we also read,
In plant and fruit and flowery mead,
And verdure's emerald shade;
Which are to earth as stars to heaven,
Rich jewels by our Father given,
On every hill and glade.

When Nature's book we read aright,
And faith is coupled with the sight,
Each page reveals our God;
Great, mighty, wise in all His ways,
Fit object of our highest praise,
Beneficent and good.

London, Ont.

All the Same.

In a New England poem which has become one of the classics of the school-room, a dear little child "hates to go above" her school-mate, and gives as her reason: "Because, you see, I love you."

The incident was lately repeated in a class of children in China, one of whom was able to make the Golden Rule his guide in a trying situation.

The youngest of the children had, by hard study, contrived to keep his place so long that he seemed to claim it by right of possession. Growing self-confident, he missed a word, which was immediately spelled by the boy standing next him. The face of the victor expressed the triumph he felt, yet he made no move toward taking the place, and when urged to do so, firmly refused, saying, "No, me not go; me not make Ah Fun's heart sorry."

That little act implied great self-denial, yet it was done so thoughtfully and kindly that spontaneously from several lips came the quick remark: "He do all same as Jesus' Golden Rule."—The Gleaner.

Brethren, we are all sailing home; and by and by, when we are not thinking of it, some shadowy thing (men call it death), at midnight, will pass by, and will call us by name, and will say, "I have a message for you from home; God wants you; heaven waits for you.—H. W. Beecher.

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A General Gordon Story.

During the Crimean war there was a sortie, and the Russians actually reached the English trench. Gordon stood on the parapet in great danger of his life, with nothing save his stick in his hand, encouraging the soldiers to drive out the Russians. "Gordon," they cried, "come down! You'll be killed!" But he took no notice, and a soldier who was near said: "It's all right; 'e don't mind being killed. 'E's one of those blessed Christians!"

Many are sick of evil without the courage to be well.