

## SCRIPTURE CLASS NOTES.

## I. Timothy.

While the epistles to the Colossians and the Ephesians deal to some extent with perverted ideas of Gnostic teachings which had been partly disclosed and almost entirely misunderstood, and the false conceptions of which Paul very properly condemns, in the pastoral epistles the same conditions are to some extent the subjects of discussion, though the transitional state of religious thought at the time, half-way between Judaism, influenced by Essenian teaching, and Gnosticism, perhaps renders the treatment more exoteric. Timothy, "ennobled by God," aged 34, stands in the relation of a chela to the initiate Paul, and he receives instruction concerning his bearing towards the assembly in his charge, and at the same time in veiled symbolism more direct personal instruction which must be sought between the lines.

The "fables and endless genealogies" which are the delight of some students to the present day, and upon which, as in Matthew and Luke's gospels, some earnest people profess to base the whole religious edifice, are to receive no heed, but these are vastly different from the Gnostic teachings of eons and emanations, such as Paul himself expounds as in Colossians i: 16. People miss the mark in running after an intellectual appreciation of such things, storing up lists of names, and mental accumulations of statements of fact which can never be realized. "The end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned" i: 5. The use of the form "Christ Jesus" is notable in this epistle; the man glorified, the anointed deliverer; that is the man in whom God is manifested (iii: 16), for it is God always in Paul's teachings, who is the Saviour, ii: 3-4. Satan is merely the adversary, disciplinary Karma, if desired, as in i: 20; otherwise the idea of a personal devil is inconsistent, this Satan being a minister of righteousness who will teach men to do right. Four kinds of prayer are noted, ii: 1; supplication, implying a sense of need; prayer, in the sense of devotion, or worship; intercession, displaying confidence in God, or as in iv: 5, where the word means intercourse, communion with God;

and fourthly, thanksgiving, the eucharistic praise. Men are to pray, also, without wrath or reasoning. True prayer is of the Buddhic and not of the Kamic or Manasic faculty. Chap. iv: 1-5, affords occasion for many to fall foul of theosophy and occultism with very little reason. A misconception with regard to Paul's allusions to abstinence from meats, not flesh meats only, as many suppose, but "victuals," as the word is rendered Matthew xiv: 14; and to marriage, which he elsewhere expressly deprecates, as in I. Cor. vii.; besides his condemnation of the teachings of demons, whose existence, contrary to modern ideas, he at the same time recognizes; will not support any objection to the properly understood teachings of the wisdom religion, which are those of Paul himself.

The local conditions dealt with in chap. v. are of slight interest to moderns, though they are useful when read as illustrating the relations between chelas and masters. The true idea of the hire due the laborer is enunciated in v. 17; good rulers are counted worthy of double honor. Verse 23 in this chapter is clearly an interpolation. The subject being dealt with is Karma. As Karma acts, so must its minister, without prejudice or partiality. There is danger in the duty of another, v: 22. Some Karma is of the present, and apparent; in other cases it is suspended, and may continue into a future, as it may spring from a past life, v: 24-25. When a man is cranky (vi: 4) about verbal disputes and catch-questions of doctrine, he is not in the path, for all this arises from the puffing up of the personality, the lower manas. Trying to be like God with contentment in the possession of food and covering is the way to avoid crucifying the Christ, piercing Him through with many sorrows, vi: 6-10. They that serve well gain to themselves a good "degree," iii: 13. They lay up a good foundation against the time to come that they may lay hold on the Life that is Life indeed, vi: 19. The Epistle is distinguished by the magnificent apostrophe, vi: 11-16, which, in its esoteric sense, embodies the essentials of all religious attainment.

The truths of mysticism have a strange privilege over ordinary truths; they can neither grow old nor die.—M. Maeterlinck.