

dated and attested, in one of which Belshazzar is mentioned and in the other Gobryas (identified with Darius) is spoken of. The details are exceedingly interesting, and according to Dr. Pinches they show that "the Book of Daniel may not be incorrect, historically, as it is commonly held to be." This is a very mild way of putting what has been known for several years past. Every fact which has come to light and also the steady growth of real knowledge constitute a confirmation of this Book which is one of the most striking justifications of the conservative position. It is an impressive fact that of all the archaeological discoveries of the last sixty years not a single one has gone to show the truth of any of the distinctive positions of the modern critical view of the Bible. Truth is indeed mighty

The Limits of Criticism

In a recent number of "The Expositor" a writer makes the following remarks:—

We have discovered at last that the New Testament cannot be kept sacrosanct from criticism. For years the Church has comforted itself with the thought: "Let criticism do its worst with the Old Testament—the New Testament at any rate is safe. Nothing can impugn its veracity or invalidate its authority." That illusion is now completely dissipated. It has been a rude shock to those who felt that criticism would never violate the sanctity of the New Testament any more than Germany would precipitate a European war, to find a race of scholars suddenly spring up and assail the inner fortress of the Christian faith—the reality of the person of Jesus.

It is a little surprising that this discovery has taken the writer so long to make, for not a few people have realized for many years past the utter impossibility of limiting criticism to the Old Testament. Similar treatment of the New was bound to come, and now that it has come, the people who are most surprised are those who have so readily accepted the modern Critical view of the Old Testament. Indeed, the writer says that "the last generation solved the problem of the Old Testament and transformed it into a new book." In our judgment, there has been no solution at all, and the only "transformation" is that in many minds the Old Testament is no longer an authoritative record of a Divine revelation. But this is not a "transformation" that can be welcomed and there can be no doubt that the very same principles are now being applied to the New Testament and will bring about the same inevitable results. It is an utter illusion, not to say delusion, that modern criticism of the purely naturalistic type can avoid impugning the veracity or invalidating the authority, either of the Old or the New Testament. All criticism, to be worthy of the name, must make room for, and constantly keep in view, the supernatural element in both parts of the Bible.

A Serious Question

The time of ordination with the settlement of men in new spheres gives special point to a typical story of a church which is located in the country, two miles from a village. It consists of twenty-five members, and not far away is another church of a few more members. In the village itself are two other churches, and all four are not very different in their beliefs. Each has a place of worship, each has a small house for the clergyman, and each maintains as full a list of services and societies as a membership under 100 in each case will allow. To one of these churches came a young man straight from the Theological Seminary. He had spent seven years in direct preparation for his work. His stipend is \$300. The mission

board of his church gives him one-third, which he receives regularly. The other \$200 he is supposed to receive from his church, but they find the amount difficult to raise in view of the expenses of maintaining the buildings. The result is that he receives this part of his stipend with great irregularity, but by living alone and doing his own cooking, and visiting around among the people, he has managed to live for a year. At no time do his congregations number fifty people, and, as is usual with a small body, they are keen about having everything done exactly as they desire. The man does not complain, but unfortunately takes everything as a matter of course. Now the question at once arises whether such a state of affairs can possibly be right. No denomination should take a young man with such a preparation and set him at so small a task. No mere handful of Christians has a right to assert itself in this way. Not only so, but no mission organization has a right to expend its money in such a method. In view, therefore, of conditions, especially in the Western part of the Dominion, the issue is at once raised whether such miserable overlapping is to be continued and whether it does not behove the leaders of the various denominations to arrive at some working agreement. One thing is perfectly certain, that under such circumstances there will be no real and abiding testimony given to the great uniting and victorious Gospel of Christ.

The Comforter

The believer is apt to lose sight of the wonderfulness of the things that belong to his "common salvation." These things may be to him as familiar as household words, but the wonder of them should abide. It is very wonderful, for instance, that he should commit his soul's eternal welfare, without the least fear or misgiving, to One whom the unbelieving world holds as dead for nineteen hundred years. It is very wonderful that he should be absolutely certain that he has a vital individual interest in an action that took place centuries ago. It is very wonderful that he should enjoy communion with the One who was the centre of that action, and that He should be to him a "living, bright reality." It is very wonderful that, apart from the study of evidences, the believer should have the unshakable conviction that the Book called the Bible is the Word of God. It is very wonderful, in short, that he should seek to "walk by faith" and to have his life governed by unseen realities which, before his conversion, seemed to him vague and uncertain, and even utopian and foolish. These are the things which he now lives for; they are to him the real things of life. All this, we repeat, is very wonderful, and would be utterly beyond explanation were we not taught in the Word to attribute it all to the presence and workings of the Holy Spirit, the One who has created us anew in Christ Jesus. It is often overlooked that the unique feature in Christianity is the Holy Ghost.

Our Lord called Him the "Comforter." In His farewell address to His sorrowing disciples He promises them another Comforter, who was to take His place when He had left them. He told them, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you," that is, in the Person of the other "Comforter." It was expedient for them that He should go away, for unless He did so the Spirit would not come. The Holy Spirit, then, takes the place on earth of our absent Lord. He is to be to us all that Christ was to His disciples when among them. And far more than this, for the Lord Jesus was restricted, as to His personal presence, by His body, whereas the Holy Spirit knows no such

limitations, being present in and with every believer in every part of the world.

The English word "Comforter," as it appears to an ordinary twentieth-century reader, conveys a totally inadequate idea of the original, which means "one called to our side to help and energize." It is blessedly true, indeed, that the Spirit does minister consolation to the sorrowing heart, but He does far more. His work includes the ideas of strength, courage and cheer, as the etymology of the word "comfort" suggests. He it is who energizes the "inner man" so that we are enabled to overcome sin. He is the author of every effectual movement of soul Godward, of all spiritual strength and hope and love, of joy and praise, of every acceptable prayer, of every success in service, of every grace that manifests itself in the life. He is the other Advocate who maketh intercession for the saints according to God, who fights our battles, defeats our enemies. He is the only effectual Teacher of the things of God. What a glorious privilege to be the object of the Divine Spirit's never-failing love, watchful care, and gracious leadings! What holy confidence would be ours in our walk and service if we but trusted the Lord to quicken by the indwelling Spirit the heart's affections, stimulate the powers of the mind, and energize all the faculties of the soul. Let us honour the Holy Spirit more by recognizing His Deity and Personality, obeying His leadings and submitting to His teachings. He it is who enables us to abide in Christ, and it is as we are controlled by Him that we do not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

In the foregoing we have merely attempted to remind the reader of some of the things which the Holy Spirit does for and in the believer. What we need is to learn to trust Him practically day by day. He has been well called, let it be said in all reverence, the "Executive of the Godhead." In this dispensation the Spirit is willingly subordinate to the Son, just as the Son became willingly subordinate to the Father. And these wonderful arrangements on the part of the Persons of the Godhead were all in order to the salvation of sinners. Well may we wonder and adore when we contemplate the marvellous grace of our Triune God.

It is impossible for the Spirit to usurp the place in our thoughts which Christ should have, for we must ever remember that the "Comforter" testifies to the Lord Jesus. Some, indeed, have become engrossed with what has been termed the "cult of the Spirit," and have become ensnared in errors of doctrine and practice. But while guarding ourselves from this mistake, let us honour the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity by constantly keeping the thought of His gracious operations at the back, so to speak, of our minds. The believer should ever be alive to the presence and energizing and guiding influences of the Holy "Comforter."

LOOKING TOWARD THE LIGHT.

I asked the robin as he sprang
From branch to branch and sweetly sang,
What made his breast so round and red.
"Twas looking toward the sun," he said.

I asked the violets sweet and blue,
Sparkling with the morning dew,
Whence came their colour. Then, so shy,
They answered, "Looking toward the sky."

I saw the roses one by one
Unfold their petals to the sun,
I asked what made their tints so bright,
They answered, "Looking toward the light."

I asked the thrush whose silvery note
Came like a song from angel's throat,
What made him sing in the twilight dim.
He answered, "Looking up to Him."

—S. D. STOCKTON.