

## LIGHT ON SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS FROM RECENT SCIENCE AND HISTORY.

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### "I WILL GIVE THEE THE UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE EARTH FOR THINE INHERITANCE."

This is one of the promises of Christ's Church which has not yet been entirely fulfilled.

While almost every portion of the inhabited globe has been reached by the Gospel, it still remains a fact that nearly one-quarter of the globe is altogether unknown to us. It is therefore of vast interest to observe the untiring efforts made to reach these unexplored regions, to bring to them the light and benefits of Christian civilization.

Thus the exploits of Nansen and Peary in the Arctic zone, of Bauman in Africa, to say nothing of those few but intrepid hearts who are seeking to penetrate into the new sections of the Kuen-Lun and the Sulimani Mountains and vast areas of Arabia, fill us with anticipation. Tibet also, and Afghanistan, with Beloochistan, Mongolia, and sections of Siberia, South America, and the Phillippine group, wait their natal hour, which by Divine grace we trust is not far distant. As yet, however, only the promise is ours.

"THERE BE FOUR THINGS WHICH ARE BUT LITTLE UPON THE EARTH, BUT THEY ARE EXCEEDING WISE."—Prov. xxx. 24.

The ant, the cony, the locust, and the spider are the four "little" but "wise" things referred to.

The truth of the wise man's observation has recently been most beautifully shown, for Mr. L. N. Badenoeh, in his "Romance of the Insect World," gives us the following interesting facts concerning the ant.

He tells us that in nothing is the wisdom of the ant so clearly demonstrated as in his wonderful house-building. Take, for example, the instance of the tree ant (*Ecophylla smaragdina*), which builds its nest of leaves. "The leaves utilized," says Mr. Badenoeh, "were as broad as one's hand, and were bent and glued to each other at their tips. How the ant manages to bring the leaves into the required position was never ascertained, but thousands were once seen uniting their strength to hold them down, while other busy multitudes were employed within in applying the gluten that was to prevent them turning back."

So, again, "in the forests of Cayenne, the nests of *Formica bispinosa* are remarkably like a sponge or an overgrown fungus. The down or cottony matter enveloping the seeds in the pods of the *Bombax ceiba* is used for their construction—vegetable fibers that are too short to convert into fabrics, but which the ants contrive to felt and weave into a compact and uniform mass so dexterously that all trace of the individuality of the threads is lost. The material much resembles amadou, and, like that substance, is valuable for stopping violent discharges of blood. In size, the nests generally have a diameter of eight or nine inches. The ant itself is little and dark, and noted for two long spines of great sharpness on its thorax, one on either side; hence its scientific name of *bispinosa*. Popularly, it has been called the fungus ant.

The genus *Chartargus*, one of the important groups of the cardboard or paper-making insects, includes insects apparently similar, which practice two strangely different forms of nidification. The nests of *C. chartarius*, the most common in collections, are of frequent occurrence in tropical America. Their cardboard is white, gray, or of a buff color tending to yellow,

very fine, and of a polished smoothness; at the same time it is strong, and so solid as to be impervious to the weather.

"It cannot be urged sufficiently," says Reaumur, "that this kind of envelope is indeed a veritable cardboard, as beautiful as any that man knows how to make." Reaumur once showed a piece to a cardboard manufacturer, and not the slightest suspicion of its real nature was suggested to his mind. He turned it over and over; he examined it thoroughly by the touch; he tore it, and after all declared it to be made by one of his own profession, mentioning manufacturers in Orleans as the probable producers.

"DOETH THE HAWK FLY BY THY WISDOM, AND STRETCH HER WINGS TOWARD THE SOUTH?"

In experimenting upon the possibilities of, at some near period, finding means to navigate the air, scientists have been led to study more and more closely the structure of a bird's wing. The marvelous wisdom of the Creator is shown in the following description by Prof. Joseph Le Conte. He says:

"The structure of a bird's wing is a marvel of exquisite contrivance—a wonderful combination of lightness, elasticity, and strength. The hollow quill, the tapering shaft, the vane composed of barbs clinging together by elastic hooks, making thus an impermeable yet flexible plane—all this has been often insisted on by writers on design in nature. But there are two points not often noticed, which especially concern us here. Of the two vanes of each feather, the hinder one is much the broader. This, together with the manner of overlapping, causes the feathers to rotate and close up into an impervious plane in the down-stroke, and to open and allow the air to pass freely through in the up-stroke. This structure and arrangement produce the greatest possible effectiveness of the down-stroke and the least possible loss in recovery for another stroke. The plane of the wing, also, is supported not along the middle, but along the extreme anterior border, as shown in any diagrammatic cross-section of a wing.

The same admirable adaptation is carried out in every part of the bird. The whole bird is an exquisitely constructed flying-machine. The smallness of the head, the feet, and the viscera, the lightness and the strength of the bones, all show that everything is subordinated to this one supreme function.

But it is the use of the wing as an aeroplane that the most wonderful feats of bird locomotion consist. If we are ever to achieve artificial flight, it must be by the application of the principles underlying these. There are four of these feats of bird flight which require special notice as bearing upon the subject of artificial flight. These are hovering, poising, soaring and sailing."—*The Homiletic Review*.

### THE OCTOBER MINOR HOLY DAYS.

(From the American Church S. S. Magazine.)

We have a few Minor Holy Days during the month of October, and the Saints commemorated are neither eminent nor catholic. Therefore our article will be brief.

The first of the month has been dedicated to Remigius, Bishop of Rheims, and familiarly known as St. Remi, the "Apostle of France," from the fact of his having converted Clovis, King of the Franks, and many of his nobles. It is from this circumstance that the subsequent French kings appear to have derived the titles, "Eldest Son of the Church," and "Most Christian King." He was so eminent for his spirituality as to be made Bishop of Rheims at the age of twenty-one, and after the conversion of Clovis became Primate of Gaul. The *ampulla* with which he anointed Clovis at his baptism may still be seen at Rheims, and the relic is of

considerable historical importance, as having been used at the coronations of most of the French kings. He died on January 13, 533, in the ninety-sixth year of his age, and was buried in the Church of St. Christopher at Rheims; but his body having been translated to the Benedictine Abbey on October 1, 1049, this has since been the day of his festival. His distinguishing emblem is a dove bearing the *ampulla*.

St. Faith, known also as Virgin and Martyr, is commemorated on the 6th. She is also associated with Gaul, where she suffered severe persecution in the latter part of the third century, for boldly refusing to sacrifice to Diana, and was finally beheaded. She is generally represented with the instruments of her martyrdom, and wears the crown of victory. Sixteen churches in England are dedicated to her, one being the mortuary church under the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral.

The 9th is dedicated to St. Denys Areop, being a contraction for "Dionysius the Areopagite," of whose conversion we read in Acts 17: 34. Eusebius mentions him as having been first Bishop of Athens, where he is related to have suffered martyrdom under Domitian. Thus the titles "Bishop and Martyr" are associated with his name. Nothing definite is known of him, however, beyond the important record in the Acts—"So Paul departed from among them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was *Dionysius the Areopagite*." The Patron of France, bearing the same name, and martyred about 275, has been confounded with this Dionysius in both the Roman and Sarum missals.

The 13th is dedicated to one who is regarded by our English brethren as pre-eminently their national saint—Edward the Confessor. He had vowed in his youth to make a pilgrimage to Rome, and make a full confession of his faults if he ever became King, and when in 1041, he succeeded his father Ethelred, on the throne, he at once prepared to fulfil the vow. But Pope Leo IX felt that his absence from England would be attended with such great danger that he accepted his confessions, granted him absolution, and released him from his vow, on condition that he would give to the poor the money that would have been spent in his pilgrimage, and found or re-found a monastery in honor of St. Peter. Thus the re-establishment of the then ancient Abbey of Westminster on a new and magnificent footing and its solemn dedication to St. Peter on Holy Innocents' Day, 1065. The King was unable, through sickness, to be present at the dedication, and having died during the ensuing week, was buried with great pomp and ceremony in the new Abbey Church before the high altar. His tomb was richly adorned by William the Conqueror, and enclosed in a shrine; and on October 13, 1163, his body was removed by Thomas a Becket to a richer shrine still. It is this Translation of King Edward the Confessor which is celebrated in the Calendar.

St. Ethelreda, Virgin Queen, is commemorated on the 17th. Being left a widow she retired to Ely and founded a convent over which she presided as abbess for many years. She was popularly known as St. Audry, and the word *tawdry* is said to be derived from the name given to the cheap finery sold at St. Audry's fair. She died in 679.

The 25th is dedicated to St. Crispin, Martyr; and in the ancient Calendar his twin brother, Crispinian, was associated with him. They were famous among the missionaries who came from Rome into Gaul in the third century. Fixing their abode at Soissons they preached and instructed the people by day, and exercised the trade of shoemaking at night, supplying the poor free of charge. Thus they have been considered as the tutelar saints or patrons of that craft. They were beheaded after severe tortures on October 25, 288; and in the sixth century a church was built and dedicated to them, over their probable place of interment at Soissons.