

### THERE IS TREASURE TO BE DESIRED.

Prov. xxi. 20.

The treasures of men are wine, oil, honey, wheat, gold, silver, etc. The treasures of God are snow, hail, wind, waters. "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?"

Treasures are frequently hidden, and call for search, patience, ingenuity. Very often men work long and wait long; sometimes very short.

In the early days of the Pilgrim Fathers they suffered much; the store ships were long in coming, and they were in sore straits, still they looked to the sea, ever bountiful. One day on the beach someone picked up a clam, found it good for food, searched for more and found abundance, so that when the relief ship arrived, instead of finding lean and haggard men, they found them fat and well favoured.

This was according to ancient prophecy, "They shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand," Deut. xxxiii. 19, a scripture ever memorable to these hardy pioneers. Treasures of earth are often treasures of wickedness. They "treasure up wrath against the day of wrath." Treasures of earth are a ladder to climb by, a promise of something better. The Christian is the true alchemist; he turns common things to gold. "In the home of the righteous is much treasure," but very seldom is there much earthly gold. "God hath chosen Israel for His peculiar treasure; these shall be mine when I make up my special treasures." This gold does not become dim; the fine gold is not changed. In the heart of the child of God common things are made precious; pure thoughts, like jewels, shine in the light of God. Now we see Him letting go all, then we see Him grasping all. "Go sell all that thou hast, let all go, and come follow me," saith the Master, "and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." Let go with one hand, lay up with the other treasures in heaven, where moth doth not corrupt, where thieves do not break through and steal.

What a gathering that will be!

1. God will gather us all who are in the covenant of grace, and gather into one. John ii. 52.

2. We also shall gather. Oh, the baskets full of fragments! Thoughts, influence, character, tears, sufferings, service.

3. Angels will gather. "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Matt. xiii. 41.

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### THE ATONING DEATH.

By the REV. W. J. ARMITAGE, Rector St. Paul's and Rural Dean of Halifax.

I. Cor. ii. 2: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

There were many truths of the Christian religion which must have appealed to the mind of St. Paul with peculiar force, for he was a philosopher as well as a theologian—a deep thinker in the region of metaphysical inquiry. There must have been a fascination to him in the discussion of such subjects as the being and attributes of God, His providential dealings with mankind, the origin and destiny of man and the high moral teaching of Christ.

And yet he declares that there is one subject of such pre-eminent importance that he has determined to shut all else out from his teaching in Corinth, and to know nothing but Christ and Him crucified.

And St. Paul who takes this position is one of the wisest of men. He is an opportunist, in a good, a Christian, sense. He is willing to become all things to all men, if by any means he may save some. He is a man of affairs, a trained speaker who desires to win his audience to his views without exciting their prejudices. He is tempted to gain a way for the reception of the gospel by the use of worldly policy, that is, by eliminating from his message that which was particularly distasteful to his hearers. And leaving out of account His cruci-

fixion, Jesus Christ appealed with irresistible force to the men of His time. For was He not a Jew of the Jews, connected with their royal house and embodying their national hopes and aspirations; a zealous advocate of their law and a teacher of their sacred Scriptures? And as for the Gentile world, did He not rise above the narrow exclusiveness of His race? Was He not an advocate of law and order, a loyal subject, rendering unto Cæsar his due? And as a teacher in the school of truth did He not throw light upon the problems of philosophic thought?

We can well imagine the influence of the personality and of the teaching of Jesus Christ upon any unprejudiced mind brought in contact with either. Richard Watson Gilder has well explained it in his "Song of a Heathen Sojourning in Galilee A.D. 32."

"If Jesus Christ is a man—  
And only a man—I say  
That of all mankind I cleave to Him,  
And to Him will I cleave away."

But what is St. Paul's settled policy as a preacher of the gospel; what is the great theme of his discourse? It is Jesus Christ and Him crucified. He brushes aside attractions of rhetoric, and makes no appeal upon questions in which there is mutual agreement, but deliberately speaks of the cross, the gallows of the day, with all its awful associations of shame and infamy and disgrace.

There is to his mind one central person, Jesus Christ; one great fact, His crucifixion; one all-important truth arising from His death, which is a sacrifice for the sin of the whole world. And although St. Paul concentrated his teaching in a ministry marked by singleness of aim, "This one thing I do," yet it must not be supposed that his course had a narrowing influence upon the mind. For all life's richest blessings centre in the person of Christ, and its greatest gains may be traced to His cross.

There is first, then, the central figure, Jesus Christ. Our religion is not simply a philosophy, nor yet a system of teaching to be studied, accepted and received, but a life. It brings to bear upon human