

by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass" cannot be successfully controverted. The sovereignty of God is not a deduction of systematic theologians, it is a doctrine clearly taught in Scripture. Neither can it be doubted that the offer is freely made to all without distinction. Both these are glorious truths of Scripture, though it may be beyond the range of the human logical faculty to formulate a comprehensive and accurate definition of them in systematic form. It is on this third chapter that the revisers have expended their skill and ingenuity, and to all appearance they have been no more successful than the many who have long since earnestly wrestled with the problem.

The chapter in the Confession that treats of creation has again been carefully considered, and in its latest amended form it reads thus:—

It pleased God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of His eternal power, wisdom and goodness, in the beginning to create of nothing all things visible and invisible, and all very good; the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, being made by Him in six days.

Here there is a return to the use of Scriptural expression, in place of the terms "universe," and the vague "creative" as descriptive of the days mentioned in Genesis.

The other article, the third section in the Chapter on Effectual Calling, to which much attention has been given both by revisers and critics, relating to elect "infants" in the second revision, now reads:—

Infants, dying in infancy, and all other persons who are not guilty of actual transgression, are included in the election of grace, and are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh where and where and how He pleaseth; so also are all other elect persons who are not outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.

The two new chapters added by the revisers have undergone comparatively little alteration in this second revision. These two new chapters it will be remembered relate to the work of the Holy Spirit, and to the universal offer of the Gospel. It may be of interest to the reader to present the last named chapter as the revisers propose to submit it for the consideration of the Church:—

God having provided in the covenant of grace, through the mediation and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, a way of life and salvation sufficient for and adapted to the whole lost race of man, doth freely offer this salvation to all men in the Gospel.

In the Gospel God declares His love for the world, and His desire that all men should be saved. It sets forth fully and clearly the only way of salvation; promises eternal life to all who truly repent and believe in Christ; invites and commands all to embrace the offered mercy; by His Spirit accompanying the Word, pleads with men to accept His gracious invitation.

It is the duty and privilege of every one who hears the Gospel immediately to accept its merciful provisions. And they who continue in impenitence and unbelief incur aggravated guilt and perish by their own fault.

Since there is no other way of salvation than that revealed in the Gospel, and since in the divinely established and ordinary method of grace, faith cometh by hearing the Word of God, Christ hath commissioned His Church to go into all the world and to make disciples of all nations. All believers are therefore under obligation to sustain the means of grace where they are already established, and to contribute by their prayers, gifts and personal efforts to the extension of the Kingdom of Christ throughout the whole earth.

The last article of this chapter gives symbolic expression to a Scriptural truth the framers of the original Confession did not apprehend so clearly as is now done by the evangelical Church—the duty of sustaining Christian missions to the heathen. The good men of the seventeenth century were so intent on the consolidation of the Reformed Church that they did not realize so fully as is now done the world-wide claims of the Gospel. From the past experience of the revisers it may be inferred that it will be some time yet before their labours are completed. It is well that should be so. If their work is to have a permanent character it is best for them to hasten slowly.

#### CHARLES H. SPURGEON.

THERE passed away late on the evening of Sabbath last the greatest of the evangelical preachers of the age. Charles Haddon Spurgeon, a name honoured and respected wherever the English language is spoken, had suffered long with meekness and resignation from a serious and painful illness. For a number of years past he had to relinquish the active duties of his ministry and betake himself to the south of France for rest and recuperation. When some months ago he was stricken down by the fell disease that had him in its grasp, he reached the brink of the grave, but a brief respite was given him. He began to improve, and was able to journey to Mentone, where, for a time, his recovery seemed probable to himself and many of his friends, and he

cherished the hope of again occupying the pulpit from which he had so long and with such blessed results preached the Gospel in its simplicity and power, but there was a relapse and he rapidly sank, spending his last Sabbath on earth unconscious, and unable to recognize the dear ones that stood by his dying bed.

Many men can attract public attention by the devices usually resorted to, but it is quite another thing to gain and hold a place in the popular affection and esteem that Spurgeon did. He began his public ministry when a mere lad. A preacher of seventeen is something of a curiosity. His free and unconventional ways, his raciness of speech and his witty sallies aroused attention and drew people to him. It may, however, be taken for granted that mere eccentricity and factitious devices for keeping a man's name before the people will cease to be effective as soon as it is discovered that the would-be famous man is but a mediocrity after all, differing from his fellows only in degree of self-assurance. It is only capability and substantial merit that endure to the end. Mr. Spurgeon rose rapidly in favour and influence, but with singular equanimity for so young a man he kept his balance, and never imperilled his real success by a morbid access of self-consciousness. He was too real, and too intent on his life-work for that. He was an ambassador for Christ and he never lost sight of his vocation. Before his position was fully assured, he was assailed by adverse and oftentimes indiscriminating criticism, but it was powerless to affect the popular estimate or to shake his confidence in his mission. The *Saturday Review*, then in the height of its audacious prosperity, assailed the young Baptist preacher with unsparing ridicule and contemptuous allusion. Spurgeon went quietly onward, merely remarking that a man who had the favour of God and the hatred of the *Saturday Review* could go on his way rejoicing. It was not long after this that hostile attacks became weak, and at length ceased altogether, and for the last twenty years Mr. Spurgeon has occupied a unique position in the evangelical ministry.

Pre-eminently Spurgeon was a preacher; for this office he had many gifts, natural and acquired. He never posed for what he was not; the grand directness and simplicity of his character did not permit of that. He was not a learned preacher in the usual acceptance of the term. It was his purpose and that of his friends that he should study under the late Dr. Joseph Angus, but, through one of those little incidents that often mean so much, the intention was abandoned. Nor can it be said that Spurgeon was an uneducated preacher. He enjoyed fair educational advantages in youth, and was a life-long student. It may be doubted if any man living was better versed in the rich Puritan theology of the seventeenth century. From his Bible and from that deep, clear well of theology undefiled, he drew constantly the great saving truths it was the one purpose of his life to proclaim. His strong human sympathies kept him in close touch with the popular heart, and his healthy common-sense evoked a ready response. His rich, flexible, powerful and melodious voice had a charm that never failed to please. Though exercised sparingly, Mr. Spurgeon had considerable dramatic power, that made the truths he preached very vivid and real to his hearers. Above all, his great strength lay in the tenacity with which he held the great distinctive doctrines of evangelical Christianity. He was no mediating, no compromising theologian. He had no sympathy with the misty subtleties in which excellent and strong-minded men so easily get befogged. He was a stalwart champion of evangelical orthodoxy, and stood unflinchingly to the last.

No less eminent as a worker was the deceased pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle. His pastor's college, orphanage, and other schemes of practical benevolence, are well known and have proved very useful. His were the first sermons that stood the test of weekly publication. They have enjoyed uninterrupted prosperity since 1855. Others have tried to follow him in this respect, but not with unquestioned success. His numerous other works show that he was as racy and bright with his pen as he was in the pulpit. Here also is revealed an important element in his prosperous career. His mastery of pure, simple, idiomatic Saxon gave strength and force to the way in which he put his pithy sentences. They carried his meaning directly and were made memorable by their force and point.

Great and illustrious ones have yielded to the inevitable summons, but the memory of Charles H. Spurgeon will be affectionately cherished after the remembrance of princes and ambassadors have become dim through the fading years. His fame as a faithful minister of Jesus Christ and as a benefactor to his kind will live long.

## Books and Magazines.

LITTLE'S LIVING AGE. (Boston: Little & Co.)—This admirable weekly repertory of all that is best and brightest in current literature holds on its way with undiminished attractiveness.

OUR LITTLE ONES AND THE NURSERY. (Boston: The Russell Publishing Co.)—In ability to interest, instruct and delight the little ones, this beautiful monthly stands at the top of the list.

ST. NICHOLAS (New York: The Century Co.)—This fine monthly magazine for young readers needs only to be seen and examined to commend itself to all who desire to see good, wholesome, refining literature in the hands of young people. It is admirably sustained. The best writers for the special class for whom it is designed are enlisted in its service, and the same can be said of the artists whose work calls forth admiration and pleasure.

HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE. (New York: Harper and Brothers.)—As in the case of the other publications that issue from this great New York publishing house, this excellent weekly, designed for young people, has undergone improvement. The familiar green cover is discarded, and the reader gets the benefit of the increased space. The mechanical appearance has been changed to a still more artistic and attractive form. The contents are of an instructive, entertaining and varied character, and the illustrations are finely finished and attractive.

THE MISSIONARY REVIEW OF THE WORLD. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls; Toronto: 86 Bay St.)—The February number devotes a large portion of its space to a most timely consideration of the work in China. In the department of Literature of Missions are two articles, the first by the Rev. John R. Hykes, of Kiukiang, on "The Importance of Winning China for Christ"; the other, by the Rev. John Ross, of Moukden, North China, on "How the Gospel Spreads in China"; both of which present a most hopeful view for the future of missionary enterprise there. The Monthly Concert of Missions is also devoted chiefly to China, reviewing the causes and significance of the present troubles there. The various departments of the Magazine as usual cover the broad field and present an excellent summary of mission work in all parts of the globe.

HARPER'S MAGAZINE. (New York: Harper and Brothers.)—John Hay contributes a poem, "Night in Venice," and this affords the occasion for a fine frontispiece. A most interesting and beautifully illustrated paper follows, the first of a series, "From the Black Forest to the Black Sea," by Poultney Bigelow. William McLennan continues his French-Canadian tales; this time it is "Marie, a Story." There is a second paper, "Personal Recollections of Nathaniel Hawthorne," by Horatio Bridge. A paper under the title of "A Skin for a Skin," by Julian Ralph, describes the fur-trading industry of the North-West. Other interesting papers in the number are: "Chicago—the Main Exhibit"; "The Royal Danish Theatre"; and "Old Shipping Merchants of New York," together with the usual features that make this popular magazine so attractive.

THE CENTURY. (New York: The Century Co.)—It is remarkable how this favourite monthly is kept up to the highest point of excellence. The new number is possessed of great attractions. The frontispiece is Titian's "La Bella." "Characteristics," by S. Weir Mitchell, M.D., are continued, and the second paper on "The Jews in New York" appears. John Elliott Pillsbury writes interestingly and scientifically on "Recent Discoveries Concerning the Gulf Stream." Other interesting papers are: "Richard Henry Dana"; "Pioneer Days in San Francisco," by John Williamson Palmer; "The Australian Registry of Land Titles," by Edward Atkinson; "Original Portraits of Washington"; and "The Degradation of a State; or, the Charitable Career of the Louisiana Lottery." The Kipling-Balestier story, "The Naulahka," increases in interest, being ably written. The illustrations and other contents are fully up to the usual high standard maintained.

THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL. (Philadelphia: The Curtis Publishing Co.)—This splendid magazine is in complete touch with a woman's best needs, and covers everything in her life. "Wine on Fashionable Tables," whether its use is increasing or decreasing, is discussed by such royal entertainers and diners-out as Chauncey M. Depew, ex-President Hayes, Madame Romero, Mrs. ex-Secretary Whitney, George W. Childs and others. In the series of "Unknown Wives of Well-Known Men" we have the first portrait of Mrs. John Wana-maker ever printed. Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher reaches the call of Plymouth Church to her husband and their removal to Brooklyn in her series of papers on "Mr. Beecher as I Knew Him," while the daughter of Charles Dickens completes her first story. Robert J. Burdette begins his work as a *Journal* editor with his new department, "From a New Inkstand." Dr. Talmage's page is excellent this month; Maria Parloa's department is full of good household ideas; Rider Haggard, Canon Farrer, the Countess of Aberdeen, Charles Dickens and a score of famous English celebrities send New Year's greetings to American women, and all through the number there is a sense of originality and brightness which copes with honest practical advice and helpfulness.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.)—Professor Lanciani's paper on "The Pageant at Rome in the Year 17 B. C.," has the foremost place in the *Atlantic Monthly* for February. Rome reminds us of Mr. Crawford's second instalment of "Don Orsino," which gives incidentally an idea of the mania for speculation and building lately rife in Rome, and contains a vivid description of the Pope assisting at a service at St. Peter's. Another subject, still Italian, is "A Venetian Printer Publisher in the Sixteenth Century," the printer publisher in question being Gabriele Giolito, the chief of a firm of printers and booksellers, who flourished in Venice during a large part of the sixteenth century. Venice is also the scene of a charming little sketch called "The Descendant of the Doges," by Harriet Lewis Bradley. Isabel F. Haggood has an article on "A Journey on the Volga," a graphic sketch of Russian life. Henrietta Channing Dana discusses "What French Girls Study." Professor N. S. Shaler, of Harvard University, writes with knowledge on "The Border State Men of the Civil War." Professor E. P. Evans writes about "The Nearness of Animals to Men," and Mr. Albert H. Tolman devotes an able paper to "Studies in Macbeth." A discussion of "The League as a Political Instrument," and reviews of a dozen or more volumes of recent fiction, under the title of "The Short Story," complete a number well composed, and thoroughly worth reading.