

PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

MIRACLE AND LAW.

The miracles of Jesus Christ profess to be supernatural interpositions for the accomplishment of an immediate benevolent purpose, while in combination they afford a body of evidence testifying to the power and benevolent mission of a divine Saviour of the sinful. Their directly benevolent aim is conspicuous throughout. Jesus never performs any wonderful work for display of power; when a desire is indicated for signs in the heavens these are refused; when His own wants are concerned there is no exercise of power to deliver Himself from suffering; but when a poor sufferer appeals for deliverance, He is ready to act; or when the feeble, oppressed condition of one who has been a long time in this case comes under His eye, He is moved to compassion and gives unexpected deliverance, even without intervention of request. All this is done, not as if it were any part of the divine purpose to keep men exempt from suffering, nor as if it were inconsistent with the divine benevolence to allow its return and continuance, for He is at pains to warn that even a worse thing may come; but as if deliverance from suffering were in harmony with the mission, and peculiarly appropriate, as illustrative of a Saviour's design as well as of His divine power. By way of sign, he would rescue from disease, in order thereby to point to a grander deliverance, even from sin, which causes all the world's sorrow.

The question here calling for attention is, "How do these miracles stand related to the laws of nature which we now recognize as fixed and unchangeable?" The first portion of the answer must be that they are incapable of explanation under these laws. They are veritable examples of results incapable of being attained under the operation of natural law. The effects secured were indeed only such as would have been attained had medical science been able to accomplish the result, for the great majority of them belong to the region in which the grand healing art works out its beneficent contribution to human well-being. But in respect to the mode of execution, they were in no sense analogous to what is achieved by unexpected advance in scientific knowledge and skill. There was nothing in the whole course of our Lord's life bearing resemblance to the work of him who laboriously ponders the varied aspects of some selected forms of disease, and ultimately finds the cure in a new mode of treatment, or a dangerous and difficult form of operation. The word spoken to the leper or paralytic; the anointing of eyes with clay, and sending the blind man with clay-covered eyes to wash in a pool; the command to Jairus' daughter, "Maid, arise;" and the call to the man of Bethany, "Lazarus, come forth," present no likeness to the conduct of one merely exercising a deeper knowledge of the remedial measures which are constantly being employed in some mode or other for the relief of suffering. What we witness in the varied form of His works is supernatural exercises of divine authority and power. There is no competent vindication of the sacred narrative by reduction of our Lord's works to the level of those forms of knowledge and skill which are within the reach of human discovery. The sacred writings offer no suggestions pointing in this direction; Christian faith, in the defence it offers for its recognition of the miraculous in Christ's life, does not shelter itself behind such a poor breastwork as that which is gained by eliminating the supernatural, seeking to defend itself by surrendering all that is distinctive of the God-man, who not only spake as man never spake, but who, with profuse liberality performed works of healing that made the ears of the nation to tingle, compelling reluctant witnesses to testify that it was never so seen in Israel. The supernatural works of Jesus belong to the same place in history as that which records the supernatural attributes belonging to His personality.

The record of Scripture presenting the narrative of Christ's miracles, does not in any sense represent our Saviour as interposing to stay, for a brief period, the action of fixed law, or to prevent the application of such law in the history of a particular individual. In all these wonders of healing nothing more happened as to actual result, having a general bearing on procedure in the physical world, than does happen when a cure of a particular phase of disease is accomplished by means of some newly discovered appliance at com-

mand of medical art. These two cases are essentially different as to modes of action, but they are strictly identical as to result, and this identity amounts to a demonstration of harmony with scientific requirements, as these actually guide men to the discovery of new methods. That there is identity of result only in some cases does not affect the argument, but arises from the essential features of the comparison, as a product of supernatural intervention must transcend what is ultimately attained by laborious processes of human research. But that there is in any case an identity of result under the different conditions, is an indication that supernatural intervention is not an interference with the laws of nature, such as would be involved in their suspension or subversion. There is a great difference between recovery from suspended animation and resurrection from the dead as in the case of Lazarus, but the fixed order of the universe is no more disturbed in the latter case than in the former.

A further consideration bearing on the miracles of Christ needs to be stated, though it comes more directly into relation with philosophy than with science properly so called. Every one of these miracles was performed avowedly for moral ends, and under applications of moral conditions, while for immediate physical effects. There is moral law as well as physical law, and our Saviour subordinates the latter to the former in determining the use He makes of supernatural agency. The evidence of this is interwoven through the very texture of the narrative, so that an attempt to sever His miracles from their moral purpose can result only in tearing the narrative into fragments—mutilating the record which must be studied and interpreted as it has been put into our hands. Moral law is as unchangeable as physical law, though the character and form of its sway differ from those of physical law, and it is easier for a man wilfully to violate the higher law of life than to violate the lower. Yet so closely are the higher and lower connected in human history, that the easy violation of moral law is followed by painful consequences under the reign of physical law. It lay within the purpose of Jesus to deliver from both, and it is only in recognition of this combined or complex purpose that we discover the rational basis on which supernatural deliverance from disease becomes a natural vehicle for presenting to rational beings requisite evidence of divine intervention in their behalf as they are entangled in the disastrous consequences of violating unchangeable moral law. If, on other grounds, it be apparent that supernatural interference for restoration of health or life does not involve interference with physical law by which the government of the Universe could be in any degree affected; on the grounds now contemplated we come to recognize a harmony of higher and lower orders of fixed law bearing on the history of the human race, and for this harmony of law our Saviour manifested a supreme concern.—*Prof. H. Calderwood, in Science and Religion.*

HOW AND BY WHOM THE REVISION WAS MADE.

The revised New Testament is now in the hands of the general public of the English-speaking world. It is in order, therefore, to recall the history of the Revision and to give a list of the revisers, with their denominational connection.

It was eleven years on the sixth of the present month since the Convocation of Canterbury provided for a committee of biblical scholars to revise the English Bible of 1611. It was recognized as a fitting thing that this venerable ecclesiastical body should take the first steps toward the performance of a work that had come to be regarded as necessary to be done; and when the committee thus appointed, upon the authority given, invited learned men of other denominations to assist in the revision, the invitation was cordially accepted. A committee, upon invitation, was also formed in the United States. Two committees, each consisting of two companies, were formed, one each side of the Atlantic—one company for the revision of the Old Testament, which is not yet completed, and one for the New. It was announced a year ago that the New Testament revisers had completed their work; but various delays have occurred to prevent publication sooner.

The English and American committees embrace seventy-nine members, of whom fifty-two are English and twenty-seven American. Besides these, some twenty-two were lost to the committees by death

and resignation, so that not scholars have been connected with the revision. The members of the English New Testament company are:

Charles J. Elliott, D.D., Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol (Chairman).

George Moberly, D.C.L., Bishop of Salisbury.
Edward Henry Rickersteth, D.D., Dean of Lichfield.
Arthur P. Stanley, D.D., Dean of Westminster.
Robert Scott, D.D., Dean of Rochester.
Joseph Williams Blakesley, B.D., Dean of Lincoln.
Richard C. Trench, D.D., Archbishop of Dublin.
Charles Wordsworth, D.C.L., Bishop of St. Andrews.

Joseph Angus, D.D., president of Baptist College, London.

David Brown, D.D., principal of Free Church College (Presbyterian), Aberdeen.

Fenton J. A. Hort, D.D. (Anglican), Cambridge.
The Rev. Wm. Gibson Humphry (Anglican), London.

B. H. Kennedy, D.D., Canon of Ely.

William Lee, D.D., Archbishop of Dublin.

Joseph Barber Lightfoot, D.D., Bishop of Durham.

William Milligan, D.D. (Presbyterian), Professor of Divinity, Aberdeen.

William F. Moulton, D.D. (Wesleyan), master of the Leys School, Cambridge.

Samuel Newth, D.D. (Congregational), principal of New College, London.

Edwin Palmer, D.D., Archdeacon of Oxford.

Alexander Roberts, D.D. (Anglican), Professor of Humanity, St. Andrews, Scotland.

F. H. A. Scrivener, LL.D. (Anglican), London.

George Vance Smith, D.D. (Unitarian), Carmarthen.

Charles John Vaughan, D.D. (Anglican), master of the Temple, London.

Brooke F. Wescott, D.D., Canon of Peterborough.

The Rev. J. Troutbeck, (Anglican), Westminster.

Of these twenty-five members nineteen are Anglican and six Dissenters.

The American New Testament company consists of thirteen members, as follows:

T. D. Woolsey, D.D., LL.D. (Congregational), New Haven, Conn., (chairman).

J. Henry Thayer, D. D. (Congregational), Professor in Theological Seminary, Andover, Mass.

Ezra Abbot, D.D., LL.D. (Unitarian), Divinity School, Cambridge, Mass.

J. K. Burr, D.D. (Methodist), New Jersey.

Thomas Chase, LL.D. (Friend), President of Haverford College, Pennsylvania.

Howard Crosby, D.D., LL.D. (Presbyterian), Chancellor of the New York University.

Timothy Dwight, D.D. (Congregational), Professor in Divinity School, New Haven, Conn.

A. C. Kendrick, D.D., LL.D. (Baptist), Professor in University of Rochester.

Alfred Lee, D.D. (Protestant Episcopal), Bishop of Delaware.

Matthew E. Riddle, D.D. (Protestant Episcopal), Professor in Theological Seminary, Hartford, Conn.

Phillip Schaff, D.D., LL.D., Professor in Union Theological Seminary, New York.

Charles Short, LL.D. (Protestant Episcopal), Professor in Columbia College, New York.

E. A. Washburn, D.D. (Protestant Episcopal), New York City. Died in February last, after the revision was completed.

The principles on which the revision has been made are as follows:

"1. To introduce as few alterations as possible into the text of the authorized version consistently with faithfulness.

"2. To limit, as far as possible, the expression of such alterations to the language of the authorized or earlier versions.

"3. Each company to go twice over the portion to be revised—once provisionally, the second time finally.

"4. That the text to be adopted be that for which the evidence is decidedly preponderating, and that when the text so adopted differs from that from which the authorized version was made the alteration be indicated in the margin.

"5. To make or retain no change in the text, on the second final revision by each company, except two-thirds of those present approve of the same; but on the first revision to decide by simple majorities.

"6. In every case of proposed alteration that may