

For Dominion Presbyterian.

The Cope-Stone.

AN ANALYSIS, BY N. A. G.

"The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner. Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."—*Luke 20: 17-18.*

"What is this that is written" in Psalm 118: 22, 23? O scribes! O Jews! O people now rejecting Him! Do you not see the prophecy fulfilling? "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." The traveling Christ is teaching sinners that when His hope is fulfilled the exalted Christ will prove to be the people's salvation.

It is as though the Master-Builder and faultless architect, each stage of the structure superintended first and then inspected, receives now his due need of praise. He has been maligned meanwhile for His very greatness of thought, His originality and coloring. The faulty workmen, neither understanding nor knowing the value of the plans, have been both unwilling and unable to follow them out. "It is the Lord's doing" in the course of the generations, the centuries, the ages, and "it is marvellous in our eyes." It is a prophecy of the Christ, exalted of God to become the Redeemer and Saviour of men, now being exalted and continuing to be exalted by the sinners to whom He came.

It was not a premature message. Salvation had long and often been despised. The flood in Noah's day marked the rejection of Christ. (For He who is our ideal now was the only possible ideal then, only less fully revealed than now to us.) So did the second giving of the law. And the desire of the people to turn back into Egypt. The captivity of degenerate Jerusalem also. And the immaculate text itself of Holy Scripture, alongside the coldness and growing formality of the religion. Spiritual degeneration is ever the consequence of the builder's rejection of the Stone which they would not have for their foundation stone, but which is destined to hold the more exalted place in spite of their rejection of Him. "I, (said He) if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The exaltedness signified by "the head of the corner" is the same salvation message as is conveyed by the cross, the same precisely as was set forth by the brazen serpent upraised by Moses at God's command. Look up and receive uplift.

Our Lord's comment (v. 18.) upon the prophecy to which He has drawn attention (v. 17.) is significantly illustrated by the combined work of the quarrymen and the builder in stone. The Egyptian pyramid is the style of structure that suits our purpose best. The stones are cut and numbered in the quarry. Transported to the construction site, they are fitted one by one in place. Here is an odd stone: four-square at the base, tapering to the apex on each side. It is the pyramid in miniature. To the master-builder it is an inspiration, exquisite in quality, of perfect form and prophetic of the accomplished undertaking. But to the workmen it is an enigma. They stumble over it at the quarry and are hurt, for always are there two or one angles upturned. It is therefore transferred to the

scene of building activities. For days and months it is shunned as an offence. A day comes, however, when there are no more numbered stones to lay, nor room to lay them. Yet the structure is not complete. Amid the accumulated debris lies this "rejected stone," half forgotten. The order is given to bring it. Now all see its meaning at a glance. It is the cope stone. The scaffolding is ready; the hoists are adjusted; and the ponderous stone that is to withstand the tear and wear of storm and time is being slowly raised to its position. Ah me! the tackling gives way! there's no time to cry "Look out below!" the stone crashes through the stout scaffolding; and men, "broken" before by falling upon it, are now "ground to powder" when it falls on them. "Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whosoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

To withstand Christ is to imperil our highest interests. It avails not to oppose Him, for He must occupy His rightful place. Let Him slay sin in you, that your soul may not perish from before Him. Let Him stand out in bold relief in your character and life—like the cope stone of an imposing structure.

Among men He was a stranger to men. They tried to bury Him with earth and ignominy, but He arose. And still He rises in the esteem of men and nations. We have done our best to silt up the ocean of truth with earthly sediment. But it has all been to ourself-condemning. He must occupy His rightful place—the acknowledged and adored Son of God, Saviour of men, King of the Kingdom, and "fill the whole earth." (Daniel 2: 34-35.)

She Hath Eternal Life.

I thought to find some healing clime
For her I loved; she found that shore,
That city, whose inhabitants
Are sick and sorrowful no more.

I asked for human love for her;
The Loving knew how best to still
The infinite yearning of a heart
Which but infinity could fill.

Such sweet communion had been ours,
I prayed that it might never end;
My prayer is more than answered; now
I have an angel for my friend.

I wished for perfect peace, to soothe
The troubled anguish of her breast;
And numbered with the loved and called,
She entered an untroubled rest.

Life was so fair a thing to her,
I wept and pleaded for its stay;
My wish was granted me, for, lo!
She hath eternal life to-day.

—British Weekly.

Let us remember that we have to deal with a God of unspeakable righteousness, a God who will bear no shams, a God who is in quest of realities through the lives of His children. And if we do not take up the stewardship of privilege that God has given us, then He will say to us, as He said to the man in the parable: "Render an account of Thy Stewardship, for thou canst no longer be stewards."—*Rev. George Wilson.*

Men talk about the higher Christian life. I do not know about that. What is wanted is the lower Christian life. The difficulty with men and women is that they will not come down to Christ's standard.—*Rev. John Smith, D.D.*

The Minister's Salary.

Do not measure your minister's salary by your own expenses; measure his salary with his position and his expenses. If you were in his place for just one month you would find out many things you had never known before. Possibly, nothing would surprise you more in your new position than your unexpected expenses. Possibly you would be better able to preach than to pay your bills. An exchange says: In the discussion of the amount of salary that their minister should receive two members of a city Presbyterian Church thus expressed themselves: One, a lady, said she "couldn't see why a preacher couldn't live on twelve hundred dollars; she could, she knew"—so she could, for her life was a very obscure one compared with her pastor's, and her necessary expenses were about one-half his; the other, a business man in a small way, thought "fifteen hundred dollars a very abundant salary; he had never had that much himself"—yet the market value of that man's pastor for any position requiring tact, education, breadth, knowledge of men, and downright administrative ability would have been five times greater than his own. And thus people sometimes gauge the salary of a minister by their own earnings and style of living, when the true and just standard must be found in the demands and necessities of the order to which he belongs.

Sabbath on the Farm.

The farmer's Sunday if he is a religious man at all, is a better Sunday than the city man's. It is more completely the Lord's day. In some cities—even on Sunday the business houses, if they are not open, are still for ever before your eyes, suggesting man's business and not "the Father's business." Streets are crowded with people; street cars and railroad trains are running; saloons and theatres and dance halls and billiard halls are wide open; baseball or football games, horse races and prize fights go on; men must have their Sunday business letters; the Sunday newspapers, full of the world, the flesh, and too often the devil, are cried into your ears and creep into your houses and drive God and church and the things of your soul out of your mind altogether. No wonder the city man has to fight hard to keep his religion, and above all the Lord's day, as he ought to. But the farmer, even the most worldly, seldom thinks of working on Sunday, after the necessary chores are done. Other things will let him alone if he will let them alone. He can go to church if he wants to. And when he gets there, he hears a simple sermon which he can understand, takes part in a simple worship which he can follow, meets only familiar friends and neighbors instead of a lot of utter strangers, gets some good in this way out of the service; and if he has to talk a bit, outside after church, it is still about weather and crops and stock, with which God has still something to do.

Thank God, then, if you are a Christian at all, that you are also a farmer, and have about you all the time these constant appeals to your religious sensibility. This makes it all the easier for you to be a Christian and to stay one.—*Bishop Boyd Vincent.*