Miracles of Proof, A. D. 30-100.

BY J. DENOVAN.

PART II.

Some entertain a captious objection which seems, at least indirectly, to weaken this proof of the divine truth of Christianity from miracles, an objection in which too many lukewarm professors of Christianity unite with openly avowed unbelievers. "If such miracles," say they, "were necessary to establish Christianity at the outset, why are such miracles not now continued to maintain it? How is it to be expected that in this day and country, both so far removed from the time and place where Christianity originated, *we* can be expected to believe without the evidence of miracles those doctrines which it was necessary to promulgate with miracles eighteen hundred years ago?"

In reply to this objection a word to the wise will, I think, be sufficient. In all departments of nature there is a law which explains this matter very satisfactorily. For example: while it certainly demands the exercise of miraculous interposition to *originate* the life, form and nature of a new tree or animal, the perpetuation of the species thereafter becomes natural. No mechanical law is better known than this: It requires much more to set in motion a heavy, inert body than is required to keep it in motion afterwards, whether it be a ship at sea or a railway train on land. At its inception Christianity was, not the higher development of Judaism, but the living reality of which Judaism had been the antitypal shadow; in the person of Jesus, it was an entirely new and unique entity introduced—a novel vital principle injected into our world. At its first appearance Christianity had to *force itself*, like a wedge, in between Judaism and heathenism; there was no neutral territory open to its introduction; it had to stand alone for years, meeting the whole religious and philosophic world in arms; and this could be accomplished by nothing less than divine life and power miraculously operating. But Christianity, having once gained a fair hearing, having once secured a sufficient foothold and impulse among men, having once accumulated a sufficient stock of evidence of its divine origin and authority to satisfy all simple and sincere enquirers, what further need can there be for miracles? If the religion of Jesus Christ now bears upon it abundant marks—unquestionable credentials of its heavenly origin to satisfy any one *who will take pains to examine them*, are not modern miracles superfluous?, And surely God never does anything superfluous. Surely it is enough for any honest and intelligent person to give his deliberate adhesion and solemn sanction to a doctrine once. Having done this he is regarded as sanctioning the doctrine until he as deliberately repudiates and renounces it. Now, at the beginning of the Gospel miracles were employed by God as the outward sign of His solemn sanction—as the best means for imprinting the broad mark of divine authority upon the statements of Jesus and His apostles. Miracles constituted God's deliberate and formal signature. Indeed, unless Jesus and His disciples had produced some such outward sensible signs of the high commission with which they professed to be charged, belief of their assertions and obedience to their commands could not have been a duty binding upon their hearers. Moreover, so long as the records of revelation remained incomplete, so long as there were unknown truths to be divulged or unknown laws to be enjoined upon the church by the apostles, so long as Christianity had not become concrete and so had secured a sufficient and permanent hold upon the world, just so long was the miraculous agency a necessity to arrest the serious attention of mankind—just so long was it indispensable for demonstration, authentication, defence and confirmation of the truth. But now that the records of divine revelation are completed, now that the facts of the gospel of Jesus Christ are crystallized into history as authentic and substantial as any secular history we possess, now that nothing is to be taken from the completed canon of Scripture and nothing added thereto by any authority whatever, now that every doctrine pertaining to faith and every direction pertaining to godliness lie between the two boards of one Book, what need can there be for further miraculous evidence? I do not presume to say that true miracles have absolutely and finally ceased. I only ask, What further need is there for them as an *official attestation to Christianity*? In his second letter addressed to Timothy, the apostle Paul states that even at that time, Scripture was so complete that the man of God might thereby "be thoroughly perfected unto every good work." Surely beyond this nothing is wanted. Nay, more, from a remarkable passage in his letter to the Galatians (chap. 1:8), he asserts with unusual solemnity that although an apostle, or even an angel from heaven, were descending endowed with all the wisdom and power of his high order, he could not tell us one gracious truth that is not already in the gospel we possess. Such a visitant from heaven, no doubt, might charm us with the rich melody and lofty fervor of his oratory and eloquence, he might amaze us by his mighty works, he might carry away our religious feeling as by an irresistible flood until we should be constrained to exclaim, "Never man spake like this man." But all this pious sentiment, all this holy conviction and impulse could add not one particle of Christian truth to what we already possess. We *have* the entire Gospel of God in essence and substance and value *now*. Christianity, genuine and complete, consists in our being fully, soberly, solidly persuaded of, and embodied with the sacred historical verities now in our hands. "*These things* are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name." Many more "things" might have been left on record which have not been recorded simply because the record of them was altogether unnecessary.

But in addition to all this, it seems to me there is good reason why miracles may cease; nay, to me there seems to be a necessity why they should have been discontinued—a necessity based upon a peculiar weakness of the human constitution. We all know how soon a thing of every-day occurrence loses its power to arrest popular attention—to interest the mind of average humanity. The spinning jenny, the steamboat, the railway engine, the electric telegraph, and, I suppose, all other prominent scientific inventions have aroused popular attention and gaping amazement only for a very limited period; but, in a few short months after their discovery, who ever thinks about such wonderful things? The commonest shopkeeper and the dullest rustic takes them all as a matter of course and as unworthy of special enquiry or consideration. And I am sure that if in every true church of Jesus Christ miracles of mercy similar to those which startled and attracted the crowds that followed Jesus were performed every week, in a few years at most—in a very few months, I believe, miracles would attract as little attention as the cures performed by the physician's skill in any city hospital, or indeed any other common occurrence. Their only practical effect would be to reduce the number of the suffering and the revenues of the medical profession. Nay, the natural effect of every-day familiarity with miraculous power would be to lessen the importance and lower the dignity of both the works and words of God Almighty.

Miracles! Why, the common providence of every season of the year—of every day, is essentially miraculous. The incomprehensible effects of the sunlight upon earth's atmosphere which scientists explain (?!!!) by latinized words—the solidification of water into ice and the melting of that ice into water; the springing of the grass out of the ground and the buds out of the boughs; the forming and ripening of fruits and grains—all these are stupendous miracles regularly repeated and, of course, utterly disregarded. If we could only behold such effects produced *for the first time*, the phenomena would overwhelm us in dumb amazement. But we have become accustomed to and familiar with those miracles. The people dwelling round the base of Vesuvius are familiar with a smoking mountain, a hot soil, and frequent earthquakes. All over Japan earthquakes are so common that the wooden houses are built loose-jointed to adapt themselves to the vibrations and oscillations of the soil. We can become accustomed almost to anything. The trembling earth may rock a baby's cradle every second day without alarming the mother who sits by; the groaning of a distant volcano may soothe the slumbers of the weary vine farmer. Custom blunts the keen edge of curiosity and dims the eye of astonishment. The frequent and steady recurrence of any divine miracle very soon should relegate that miracle to the category of natural law.

Every now and then we hear the infidel and the luke-warm professor complaining in tones of injured innocence, "Why should miracles have ceased so long ago? If I only had my doubts removed and my mind fully satisfied by sufficient miraculous proof of the divine authority of the New Testament, I feel sure I should become a decided Christian, devoted to the service of the Saviour—I am sure I would." Pardon me, friend, *I am sure you would not*. Suppose your grandfather and your father had been familiar with miracles performed every week of their lives by Christian ministers, and suppose that you yourself from your infancy had also been accustomed to hear about and even to see frequent miracles wrought in connection with the weekly preaching of the Gospel, what importance would you now attach to such displays of superhuman power? What spiritual effect should they have upon your nature? I feel persuaded none whatever. The day after the Lord Jesus had fed five thousand men beside women and children (8,000 to 10,000 people) with five loaves and two fishes, some men dared to say to Him, Show us a sign from heaven that we may see and believe Thee. It is not *the evidence* of Christianity sceptics, scoffers, scientific agnostics and perfunctory church attenders doubt. They never have taken any pains to examine *the evidence that waits now* for their examination. No honest effort have they ever yet made to ascertain for themselves whether the historical evidences of Christianity are convincing or not. How many hours of study have you and I given to this matter? Have we given to it half as much thought as it took to acquire a fair knowledge of ordinary arithmetic or English grammar? Should we ever have been either decent grammarians or arithmeticians had we treated these two sciences as we have treated the examination of the evidences of the Christian religion? If the honest and unpleasant truth is to be told, it is not the evidences which are deficient, but *the doctrines* of God's Word some of us *dislike*. *We do not like* the just and holy God this volume speaks about—that omniscient and impartial Judge who has pledged His word to render righteous retribution for every sin. *We do not like* that honest and bitter repentance and restitution, faith, watchfulness against incipient lust, prayerfulness and self-denial which the Gospel of Jesus Christ requires and upon the want, the neglect of which it threatens terrible and eternal damnation.

To every one who questions the credibility of Christianity I am compelled to say, and I say it tenderly, want of satisfactory proof is not the true reason for your unbelief, but *dislike* of God's one method of salvation. As the stirring, self-willed child who loves to frolic and potter among dirt does not like the frequent application of soap and water—as the vicious and guilty son does not like to face his injured, virtuous father—as the criminal dislikes the law—as the wild ass or the unbroken bullock rebels against the yoke and the harness, just so do natural men and women shrink from, dislike, avoid this gospel of self-sacrifice and holiness.

You say you want miracles to convince you. So said Thomas even after he had seen more than a hundred signs and wonders wrought by the Lord. Although the great Miracle-Worker had positively promised to rise from the dead on the third day, he declared he would not believe Christ had kept His solemn promise except he saw and handled one sign more. So said the scribes and Pharisees, "Tell us by what authority Thou doest these things, and who gave Thee this authority" to cleanse the temple. Was not the mighty act itself by which He had swept out sheep and oxen, dove-sellers and money-changers evidence sufficient of authority? "Shew us a sign from heaven," demanded they, "that we may see and believe," although fifty people in the multitude around were standing monuments of His miraculous grace and power.

This demand for more miracles—for the perpetuation of miracles, is a morbid craving for excitement, is plausible but grievous self-deception, I assure you. Ye who make this request reason exactly as the rich man reasoned when he found himself in penal torment, and felt a desire to prevent his five brethren from following his footsteps and aggravating his misery with their reproaches through all eternity. "I pray thee, father" (he cried to Abraham), "that thou wouldest send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brethren: that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead" (if one of the sheeted dead should suddenly appear to them and half frighten them out of their wits) "they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

A truce—a long truce to this morbid and miserable craving for superfluous miraculous evidence! We have in the small volume called the New Testament a plain statement of facts accredited by every mark of historical genuineness and authenticity. In the same way that sterling gold is stamped by the mint, or a true document is verified by signature and seal and notarial certificate, Jesus Christ's and His apostles' instructions and injunctions are now before us, stamped with the broad seal of high heaven; and they declare plainly, repeatedly and solemnly that upon our faith in these doctrines and our implicit obedience of these injunctions rests the welfare of our everlasting future. In all common fairness and honesty this ought to end all discussions, and answer forever the question, "What must I do to be saved?" Is the gospel indeed God's message—God's word to me? The affirmative answer to this one question must settle the matter finally. In the face of this gospel, which has come to us from deity, we have no right to agree as to what mankind may be pleased to call morality, or as to what opinions they may entertain about the wisdom or expediency of God's methods of providential management in His scheme of salvation. If they are God's they all *must be* most moral, most expedient, most wise; they *must be* altogether holy and just, true and good. Doubts are sin; rationalism must be dumb; simplest faith is the solitary becoming attitude of the mind: It is my incumbent duty, with God's gospel in my hand, at once to cast down my own imaginations,—reasonings—and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Henceforth, my most important daily business is to study these inspired records as a priceless gift from God carefully and prayerfully, so that I may ascertain their true and simple meaning, for upon this rests my everlasting all.

Within this awful volume lies
The mystery of mysteries.
O, happy they, of human race
To whom the Lord hath given grace
To read, believe, work, watch and pray—
To lift the latch and force the way
But better had he never been born
Who reads to doubt, debate, or scorn.

* Miracles may be useful still to arrest the attention of the thoughtless. The New Testament nowhere tells us that miracles in connection with gospel propagation will cease.

A Plea for Unfermented Wine.

Dear Editor Home,—The enclosed letter I cut from the Winnipeg *Free Press and Sun*. I send to you in hopes that it may be acceptable for the Home Department. I cannot see how they can expect to receive reformed drunkards into the church while they use fermented wine. The testimony of almost every one who has overcome the temptation is, "If I can only keep away from sight and smell I feel safe," but one taste destroys the work of years. REGILA.

Whitefish, Jan., 1892.

(Contributed by the W. C. T. U. of Winnipeg.)

The following communication was handed to a white ribboner by a gentleman who was a member of the church mentioned below, and who would guarantee the authenticity of the letter. The local W. C. T. U. are very anxious to see fermented wine banished from the Lord's table in all the city churches, and are entreating ministers and Christian workers of all denominations to make the communion table safe for the young people of Winnipeg. The letter is as follows:

Dear Sir,—As a Christian member of your congregation, may I ask if it would be possible for you to have "unfermented wine" at the Lord's table?

I shall spend no time in apology for asking this, but just give my reason and leave it to you. When you have read this think what course Jesus would take and ask "Lord, what would'st Thou have me to do?"

Just before I was six years old, my father cut his throat, leaving my mother with five children, three girls older, and one younger than myself. My eldest sister took to drink when she was quite young. Fourteen years ago I was converted. Twelve years ago I heard a sermon on "Christians and Total Abstinence." I signed the pledge with two of my sisters, and we tried to persuade the one given to drink to give it up. She was married and in a good position. Over and over again she signed the pledge and tried to keep it. Over and over again she was tempted and fell. At last, of her own accord, she went into a home for the cure of the intemperate, and stayed one year. She came out a changed woman—a sober wife and mother, and things went on very happily for a few months. Then her husband had a severe cold, but his duty compelled him to go out, so, to fortify himself against the cold, he took a glass of hot whiskey. He was careful not to have it in her presence for fear it should be a temptation. He drank it and came to kiss her before starting. In the kiss the fumes of alcohol were transmitted and all the old craving came back. She went out soon after her husband, and in less than an hour was a drunken, mad woman. Poor thing! She never tried again; she said it was no use, no one knew the fearful struggle, and that unless she could keep out of sight or smell she never could be free. For years we wrestled with God in prayer for her, never doubting that He would give the needed strength some day. She could never keep sober, so she left her husband and two children, one a dreadful cripple through her drink. She has had eight children; six of these have been victims to the curse. Her husband allowed her enough to live on while he lived, but he died two years after she left him—a white-haired broken man of forty-five. We never knew where she lived; she used to come to us at home now and then; we gave her clothes and tried in every way to win her back, for she was a mere beggar. She said she would always keep out of our way, but she would and must have the drink. I need not follow her history, for if you read the life of "Annie Chapman," one of the worst victims in the terrible Whitechapel murders, you read the end of my sister's life; yes, sir, all through that terrible time I sat unknown in Halkin Street church on Sundays, praying that God would give us grace to trust Him, for my sister's end, after all our prayers, shook my faith to its very foundation. I don't question God's dealings. He is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. Now, sir, you would think the drink demon had got enough out of our family, but my only brother, aged 28, inherits the curse. It was he who had the painful task of identifying my murdered sister and of laying her in her grave. Instead of sobering him it seemed to goad him on, for just one month from the date of her death he was turned out of his situation at a minute's notice for drinking and using money not his own. He was manager in a city warehouse. Some kind friends got him a situation in Oxford street. He was in it one month, took to drink again and absconded with some money, leaving a young wife and two little ones quite penniless. We sought him everywhere for a week, on the Saturday his wife received a letter telling her that he had surrendered himself to the police at Gloucester and was to be brought to London and tried at Marlborough street on the morning she received the letter. At the bottom of the letter were these words, "Oh, my darling wife, it is all the cursed drink, for God's sake don't let our children touch it." His sentence was three months' hard labor at Millbank, and he is undergoing that now. I went to the prison begging to see him but was refused. There is only one gleam in this dark cloud, as I looked up at the iron bars and strong walls of his prison I thanked God that while they shut him in they shut the drink out. I pray that Jesus may break the chains of drink while these prison chains bind him.

Dear Mr. Patterson, I know you are brave in the cause of right, and I want you to think of the danger it would be to my brother to come with me to your church with the strong smell of alcohol on the Lord's table, and like that fatal kiss to my sister meet his end from that time. It is easy to get "unfermented wine." I know your deacons might object, and some of the church members. I never touch the wine and I hold my breath while it passes, for I am afraid of it. I know the grace of God is powerful to keep, but Noah was righteous enough to be saved, when all the world was drowned, yet the grace of God did not keep from drink and its fearful results, and ever since that time it has had its victims, even from the very church. I know my case is an exception, but who would think as I sit with the congregation on Sundays, that I bear the scars of drink in its threefold curse of suicide, murder and theft. There may be other brothers and sisters like mine there. Oh, make the church, at least, safe for them, lest they find a path to hell from the Lord's table. When I come to that table it is to wrestle with Jesus, who would not snap the bruised reed. But it has been laid on my heart to unite action with prayer, so I have written this story to you, a most painful task, but it may be one way of glorifying God out of all this darkness.

You might preach a sermon as you did about feeding the lambs, and if you think fit to use any part of this terrible true story, you may do so. I don't want to be known, so you will try not to let enquiries be made, because we are so scorned, even by Christians, and there may be some who would think I ought not to come to God's house. My sister and I have my murdered sister's children to keep and we don't want them to know it, also my aged mother knows nothing of it. I know you will take this to God in prayer, and oh, I do hope you will hear Him ask you to remove the curse from the people and begin at His sanctuary.

We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves, for even Christ pleased not Himself.

[Copy of a letter received by Rev. James Patterson, Presbyterian minister, Chelsea.]

A Spiritual Republic.

Two thousand years ago Jesus Christ founded a spiritual republic. He conquered not by the material sword, but by the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. He conquered not by brute force, but by an appeal to the conscience and intellect of man. He conquered not by enslaving the bodies of men, but by rescuing their souls from the bondage of sin and by elevating them to the glorious liberty of the children of God. He conquered not by shedding of the blood of others, but by the shedding of His own blood. The spiritual empire which He established exists unto this day, and it has been continually extending its boundary till it has covered the whole earth. It is held together, not by frowning fortifications and standing armies, but by the overwhelming influence of moral and religious impressions. Jesus Christ, hanging from the cross, has drawn to Himself a mightier host than ever followed the standard of Cæsar or Alexander. "When I am lifted up from the earth," He said, "I will draw all things to Myself. I will draw them by the cords of love," Other leaders have captured cities; Jesus has captured the citadel of the heart.—*Cardinal Gibbons.*

—Minard's Liniment for rheumatism

Our Sunday Law.

The law of Nova Scotia at present stands as follows:

Any person who shall be convicted before a Justice of the Peace of shooting, gambling or sporting; of frequenting tippling houses, or of servile labor, works of necessity and mercy excepted,—on the "Lord's Day," shall for every offence forfeit not less than one nor more than eight dollars, and in default of payment shall be committed to jail, for a term of not less than twelve hours nor more than four days.—*Rev. Stat., series, chap.* 159.

An Act to amend Chapter 159 Revised Statutes of Nova Scotia, third series, entitled "Of Offences against Religion."

(Passed the 17th day of April, A. D. 1888.)

1. All the words in section 2 of chapter 159, of the Revised Statutes of Nova Scotia, third series, intituled "Of Offences against Religion" after the words "shall for," in the fourth line thereof, shall be struck out—and the following shall be inserted in their place: "The first offence forfeit not less than two dollars nor more than ten dollars, and in default of payment shall be committed to jail for a term of not less than forty-eight hours nor more than five days, and shall for a second or any subsequent offence forfeit not less than ten nor more than twenty dollars, and in default of payment shall be committed to jail for a term of not less than five nor more than twenty days, but the penalties against corporations, shall be, for the first offence, the forfeit of a sum of not less than five dollars nor more than twenty dollars and for a second or any subsequent offence forfeit not less than twenty, nor more than fifty dollars.

2. The word person in the said section of the said Act, shall apply to bodies corporate as well as to individuals, and shall include employer as well as the employed.

(Said was inserted in this section in 1890.)

3. All prosecutions against a corporation shall be had against it in its corporate name, and the sums mentioned as penalties in this Act may be collected by seizure and sale of its personal property as in the case of an individual convicted under chap. 103 of the Revised Statutes, fifth series, intituled Summary Convictions and Orders by Justices of the Peace.

4. All appeals from convictions under this Act and this amendment shall, in the county of Halifax, be to the Supreme Court in banco, and to the Supreme or County Court at the option of the party appellant in other counties.

5. The party appealing shall within five days after the date of conviction give notice of appeal to the party prosecuting. The appellant shall also within ten days after giving notice of appeal, file a bond with two sureties in the sum of eighty dollars conditioned to pay and satisfy any judgment that may be given on appeal. On the perfecting of the appeal the convicting magistrate shall return all papers with the evidence to the court.

6. No particular form of summons or conviction shall be necessary, but the forms under chapter 103 of the Revised Statutes, 5th series, may be followed.

CHAPTER 32.

(Passed the 19th day of May, A. D., 1891.)

1. Chapter one hundred and fifty-nine of the Revised Statutes of Nova Scotia, third series, is hereby amended by adding thereto the following sections:

7. Any person who employs or hires, or procures any other person to perform servile labor (works of necessity and mercy excepted) on Sunday, or who directs, allows, permits, or procures any one or more of his servants, workmen, or employees to perform servile labor (works of necessity and mercy excepted) on Sunday, is guilty of performing servile labor on Sunday within the meaning of the second section of this Act, and shall for the first offence forfeit not less than the sum of two dollars, nor more than the sum of five dollars, and in default of payment shall be committed to jail for a term of not less than forty-eight hours, and not more than five days; and shall for a second or any subsequent offence forfeit not less than the sum of ten dollars, nor more than the sum of twenty dollars, and in default of payment shall be committed to jail for a period of not less than five days nor more than twenty days.

8. Any body corporate which employs or hires, or procures any person to perform servile labor (works of necessity and mercy excepted) on Sunday, or which directs, permits, allows, or procures any one or more of its servants, workmen or employees to perform servile labor (works of necessity and mercy excepted) on Sunday, is guilty of performing servile labor on Sunday within the meaning of the second section of this Act, and shall for the first offence forfeit not less than the sum of twenty dollars; and shall for a second or any subsequent offence forfeit not less than the sum of twenty dollars, and not more than the sum of fifty dollars.

We trust our readers will study this legislation. It ought to be understood and enforced by those whose duty it is to execute our laws. This legislation has been very carefully matured by the legislature of Nova Scotia; and it ought not to be neglected.

Do Good Now.

Dr. Johnson wisely said: "He who waits to do a great deal of good at once, will never do anything." Life is made up of little things. It is but once in an age that occasion is offered for a great deed. True greatness consists in being great in little things. How are railroads built? By one shovelful of dirt after another; one shovelful at a time. Thus, drops made the ocean. Hence, we should be willing to do a little good at a time, and never wait to do a great deal of good at once." If we would do much good in the world we must be willing to do good in little things, little acts one after another; speaking a word here, giving a tract there, and setting a good example at all times; we must do the first good thing we can, and then the next, and the next, and so keep on doing. This is the way to accomplish anything. Thus only shall we do all the good in our power.—*Selected.*

—Minard's Liniment cures diphtheria.

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THE BLESSINGS OF THE G

GOLDEN TEXT.

"The glory of the Lord shall vealed, and all flesh shall see gether."—Isa. 40: 5.

EXPLANATORY.

This prophecy, whether spo Isaiah in his later years or by a of the Exile, called by some the Isaiah, belongs by prophetic vi by actual utterance, to the last the Exile, a few years only bef return in 536.

I. THE PROMISED TIME IS AT 1. *Comfort ye.* In the Septuagi is a form of the same word that lated "comforter" in John. Bri pathy, aid, strength, comfort. spoken to the prophets, God's gers. *Saith your God.* The com divine authority and power bel 2. *Speak ye comfortably to* (Che Delitzsch both translate "spake y heart of") *Jerusalem.* "In a vol distinct and penetrating," "to th ligence, conscience and feelin Hebrew word for heart inclu three. *Her warfare is accom* "Warfare" standing for "enforce ships." The metaphor "very sug of the peculiar troubles of milit vice in ancient times"; "Hath man a warfare [hard service] earth?" *Her iniquity* (on acc which they had been suffering) *doned.* Or, "her guilt is accepte is a remarkable phrase, which besides only in Lev. 26: 41, 43, is used of Israel's "accepting their that is, fully and submissively ac edging it. The "pardon" is Go cious act *consequent upon* man acquiescing in the truth respecti self. As the sufferings were on of "sins against God," there was of ending them except by God's ness when He saw that the tim come when it was best for the forgiven, and have the penalty re *She hath received . . . double for sins.* In the sense of amply su It was the ordinary rule under that "for all manner of trespass" condemned by the judges shoul double" (Ex. 22: 9). So that the ing is simply that she had suff full penalty, and the hour of rele come. Ewald and others trans the prophetic future as a prom she shall receive double merci blessings. But the other mea better.

II. PREPARING THE WAY OF TH 3. *The voice of him that crieth.* one that calleth." The second relates to something to be done hovah. It is, therefore, natura cribed to a non-divine, thoug supernatural, voice. The poeti is much heightened by the m *In the wilderness.* This belongs follows, as in Rev. Ver. A great ness or sparsely inhabited dist between the exiles and their *Prepare ye the way of the Lor* figure here used is founded on a ern custom of sending persons pare the way for the march of a m through a wild and uncultivated This consisted of levelling hills valleys, putting roads in order, a ting everything in readiness.

III. THE TRIUMPH IS SURE. *the glory of the Lord shall be reve* this wonderful preparation, and t it.

6. *The voice said, Cry.* The sam as before. *And he* (or one) *said* the prophet. *All flesh is gras* greatest and strongest nations, th were keeping the Jews in exi seemed so resistless, even they w as the grass. God had but to l upon them, and they would pass like a flower in the wind. The still true of all those who gathe selves together against the pe God. The nation that stands in t of the Gospel must fade away. T of the world is the proof.

8. *But the word of our God sha for ever.* Especially the word of to the exiles that they should and the same word to God's peop the kingdom of God shall tr Against all assaults, against the of friends, and the bitterness of e it shall stand. Every attack ha it stronger. Every storm beatin it, as upon a rocky island, has bu the depth and strength of its firm dations.

MISSIONARY ILLUSTRATIONS. Jews to-day are themselves a proof that God's Word is sure.

(2) We understand that our Chaplain McCabe, has sent the ing message to Colonel Ingersoll: *Colonel,*—Ten years ago you m following prediction: 'Ten year this time two theatres will be b one church.' The time is up Methodists are now building churches every day—one eve hours. Please venture upon prediction for the year." Eviden Colonel is as far out of the way taire was when he set up a p press at Fernay to demolish Chr ty. That press is now used at to print Bibles!!

IV. PROCLAIMING THE GOOD T 9. *O Zion, that bringest good* Cheyne translates as in our co version. Zion, having received th tidings, should proclaim them fro mountain-tops to all the land. with the Rev. Ver., translate *O th tellest good tidings to Zion.* Th news is brought to the people Angels, prophets, apostles, an and proclaim it. *Behold you* Manifested in His acts of sal bringing the exiles home, coming person of Jesus Christ to bring re tion to man. In these, more tha the revelations of nature, is t character and nature of God show

10. *With strong hand.* Or *mighty one,* Rev. Ver. God's mig shown in the deliverance of the from the great nation who held captive. It was shown still m Jesus Christ, "the wisdom and po God." It requires more power deem a soul than to create a worl human problem is so great as turning wicked people to righteo