

## Pastor and People.

### THE MYSTERY OF CHASTISEMENT.

"We glory also in tribulations. —Rom. v. 3.

Within this leaf, to every eye  
So little worth, doth hidden lie  
Most rare and subtle fragrantcy.

Wouldst thou its secret wealth unbind?  
Crush it, and thou shalt perfume find  
Sweet as Arabia's spicy wind.

In this dull stone, so poor and bare  
Of shape or lustre, patient care  
Will find for thee a jewel rare;

But first, must skillful hand essay,  
With file and flint to clear away  
The film that hides its fire from day.

This leaf! this stone! it is thy heart;  
It must be crushed by pain and smart,  
It must be cleansed by sorrow's art—

Ere it will yield a fragrance sweet,  
Ere it will shine, a jewel meet  
To lay before the dear Lord's feet.

—Selected.

### BITTERNESS,

In angry mood I stalked  
Across the moor,  
And crushed with ruthless heel  
A modest flower,  
Which bending low with petals bruised,  
Fragrance, so strangely sweet, diffused  
Over all around, that Anger fled in shame.

With bitter soul I strode  
Through life's vast mart,  
And pierced with cruel words  
A timid heart,  
Which, reeling 'neath the venom'd shaft,  
Forgiving fragrance so did waft  
On gentle breath, that Passion paled with grief.

—L. L. R.

### PETER'S INCONSISTENCY AT ANTIOCH.

BY W. H. MURRAY.

It is true that Peter's mind had been enlarged by intercourse with Paul, and that the conversion of Cornelius and the extension of the faith among the Gentiles at Antioch had shown him that to deny baptism to the believing Gentiles was to "withstand God." Not only did he stoutly maintain, in the face of the protests of his offended brethren, the rightness of his conduct towards Cornelius; but thirteen years afterwards, notwithstanding the numbers and strength of those "zealous for the law," he boldly supported the cause of the Gentiles before the assembled brethren at Jerusalem and declared that God had made no distinction between the Jews and them, all alike being saved by grace. He even implied that, did they bind the Gentiles as some proposed, they were fighting against God, and that the Law, for Jew as well as Gentile, was a burden too great to be borne.

Though all these circumstances would seem to indicate that Peter had clearly grasped God's purpose, it must be remembered that his mind was not a contemplative nor strongly logical one; he did not follow out his new ideas to their final conclusions. They had come to him in sudden revelations; they were extraordinary illuminations in an intensely Jewish mind and could hardly be expected to dissipate the "prejudices of fifteen centuries." He was carried on these occasions out of and beyond himself, though his natural generosity and nobleness of mind welcomed the larger gospel. Being pre-eminently a man of action, and not a man of thought, he was incapable of appreciating the great principle involved in the dispute, of seeing all the far-reaching consequences of the final issue; and his old prejudices would re-assert themselves under the pressure of the strong feeling around him. He lacked Paul's clear grasp of the whole circumstance, and steady conviction of the soundness of his position. His mind might, under conflicting thoughts, and in difficult situations, become confused as to the proper conduct in certain details. The propriety of eating with Gentiles had not been explicitly settled by the official

letter to Antioch, and doubtless that point was with most still an open question. And even Peter may have, under the influence of the liberal sentiment at Antioch, only yielded the point without being thoroughly convinced of its general propriety. Then, even after the judgment of the Jerusalem church, there remained a large and influential body of Judaizers, silenced for the time, but not convinced; and Peter, hitherto the leading apostle, would be anxious to retain his influence. He had seen what hostility Paul had roused, and what trouble there had been about Titus, and doubtless the strict party had made him feel that his attitude had offended them. There had been so much dissension that he was ready to do much for the sake of concord.

It is probable also that in the interval there had been at Jerusalem a reaction from the liberal sentiments of the letter. No longer influenced by the strong personalities of Paul and Barnabas, the Jewish Christians may have begun to feel they had yielded too much, and determined to resist any further innovations. This very matter of eating with the Gentiles may have been discussed, and decided by the Church to be unlawful. Therefore, moved by his reverence for the conservative James, feeling that his influence at Jerusalem was at stake, and being unwilling to give occasion for further strife, Peter, on the arrival of "those from James" withdrew himself from the Gentiles.

He was inconsistent; but he did not clearly grasp the whole situation, nor was he perfectly convinced of the rightness of his former conduct. We cannot think it was a case of personal timidity. There was a mingled intellectual and moral weakness. Peter did not consider it "safe" in the interests of the Church to offend the brethren. His denial was a falling away. This action indicated only a confused mind, overcome by the weight of authority and example.

Muskoka.

### EGYPT AND ISRAEL.

BY REV. JOHN BURTON B.D.

Up till the present year, notwithstanding all that has been done by explorations in Egypt, the monuments have been silent regarding Israel. Happy they whose faith is kept from drifting on to blind credulity, or whose enquiring spirit is saved from falling into the dark abyss of scepticism. He that believeth shall not make haste. Among the trustworthy explorers of Egyptian antiquities the name of W. M. Flinders Petrie stands in the very front rank. In the May number of the *Contemporary Review* there is an article from his pen recording a discovery in the Theban district of a large slab of black syenite, over ten feet long, five feet wide, and thirteen inches thick. On this, among other gravings, is a long historical inscription of Marcaptah, who, as the son of Rameses the Great, has pretty generally been recognized as the Pharaoh of the Exodus, as Rameses is taken to be the Pharaoh of the oppression. Mr. Petrie says that the condition of this stone is perfect, not a single sign or scene defaced or injured, and the amount of inscription on it is almost without precedent. The inscription of course records the glories of the Pharaoh, and the plenty with peace that falls to the lot of Egypt in consequence. The part specially concerning us at this moment is the epilogue of which we give a part as in Mr. Petrie's article. The translation is that of Mr. Griffith:

"Vanquished are the Tabennu (N. Africans); the Khita (Hittites) are quieted; ravaged is Pa-Kanana (Kanaan) with all violence; taken is Askadrie (Askalon?); seized is Kazzel; Yenu of the Syrians is made as though it had not existed; the people of Ysiraal is spoiled, it hath no seed; Syria has become as widows of the land of Egypt; all lands together are in peace."

The full import of this allusion to Israel cannot be at present understood, for the reader will have noticed that the name occurs in a list of Palestinian victories, not as

being in Egypt. Possibly some of the descendants of Jacob (spread, as we may surmise they were, over all the land of Canaan—Gen xxxvii. 14-17) may have remained on the old pasture lands when Jacob went down into Egypt; possibly (Num. xlv. 45), while the great body were in the wilderness, some adventurous souls may have invaded the land and "Marcaptah may have chased after them in revenge for the escape of the main body;" possibly—We must just wait a little longer in hopeful expectation.

"The only Egyptian mention of the race," writes Mr. Petrie, and those words are scarcely passed the proof-reader's desk before another Egyptologist, M. Spiegelberg, announces that he too has discovered the name of Israel on another tablet of this Marcaptah, the full meaning of which has not yet appeared. Enough however has appeared to awaken our expectations anew, and to think otherwise of the Old Testament than that it is "Christianity's Millstone."

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Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

### SCRIPTURE TEXTS ILLUSTRATED.

BY REV. J. A. McKEEN, B.A.

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more, but judge this rather that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."—Romans xiv. 13.

Vessels arriving in port brought us word of a derelict. She was reported in a certain latitude at one time and a few days after we heard of her in another place. She kept drifting in the track of East and West bound traffic, a danger to navigation, for the light in the binacle was out and no hand held the helm. In the darkness of the night an approaching ship could get no warning by sight or sound, and the steady sharp lookout might sight the helpless hulk too late to avoid collision. One of Her Majesty's ships of the North American squadron was sent in search of the derelict, and after an absence of a few days she returned with the abandoned vessel in tow. I saw her after she was safely moored, a weather beaten, broken, deserted, desolate castaway. It is an evil and bitter thing to lead a sinful life. There is no merit in standing by such a life and the sooner it is abandoned the better, but the evil words spoken cannot be recalled, and the wicked deeds done cannot be undone. The old bad life has been left behind, but its influence is like the lumber laden derelict it will not sink and it will not drift ashore. A sinner who has turned from his evil ways unto God has reached the quiet haven. He rests in the calm but the gently heaving swell of the sea brings to him word of a distant storm. He knows that in that storm human souls have made shipwreck, and there comes to him the awful thought that his "derelict" may mark the place where a precious life has gone down. God have mercy upon the man who is leaving behind him an example which shall be as the putting of a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

Orono.

### HOW THE KINGDOM STARTED.

BY C. H. WETHERBEE.

It is well for us to occasionally look back to the early days of Christianity and carefully consider some of the great difficulties under which it started in its onward career. We need to take into the account the moral condition of the world at that time. Physical diseases in many forms, and widespread, were the types of spiritual diseases. Unbelief and skepticism were rampant. Moral darkness was very dense and covered all Palestine.

There was a good deal of religion, but it was of that kind which is far more hurtful to men's souls than no religion at all. It was from religious people that Christ and His apostles received the greatest opposition, the most virulent abuse and the greatest harm. Think, too, how the mighty Roman Empire and its influences stood in the way

of Christianity. It allowed no such freedom of expressed thought as is now enjoyed in our own land. Run your mind over the whole situation and think of the gigantic obstacles with which Christianity had to contend at the very outset, and which kept up opposition for quite a long time, and then consider the fact that in spite of the mightiest foes, the most obstinate obstacles, the naturally most discouraging circumstances, Christianity made amazing progress, so much so that its foes were alarmed at its advancement and feared its power. And do not forget that Christ started out with only twelve men, obscure men, comparatively unimportant men, poor in earthly goods and destitute of scholarly attainments.

And here is our argument: If Christianity could cope so successfully with the world and with religious forces of a malign character, having everything against it at the very start, we may safely conclude that it is not now to be snuffed out by the wagging tongues of infidels, nor be destroyed by all of the forces of darkness combined. Nor can false friends deliver it over to destruction. Think of the situation of Christianity to-day, with all of its manifest drawbacks, with all of its discouraging features, and then compare it with its feeble beginning and all of its adverse surroundings. Shall we go about bemoaning the outlook, fearing that by some means the devil and his imps will wreck the good cause? Oh, let us not indulge in groundless lamentations and get under the shade of weeping willows, for God still lives and is mighty.

### THE NEGRO.

If ever there was a people that have obeyed the scriptural injunction, "If they smite thee on one cheek, turn the other also," that people has been the American negro. To right his wrongs the Russian appeals to dynamite, Americans to rebellion, the Irishman to agitation, the Indian to his tomahawk; but the negro, the most patient, the most unresentful and law-abiding, depends for the righting of his wrongs upon his songs, his groans, his midnight prayers, and an inherent faith in the justice of his cause, and if we may judge the future by the past, what man will say that the negro is not right. We went into slavery pagans, we came out Christians. We went into slavery a piece of property, we came out American citizens. We went into slavery without a language, we came out speaking the proud Anglo-Saxon tongue. We went into slavery with the slave chains clanking about our wrists, we came out with the American ballot in our hands. Progress, progress is the law of nature; under God it shall be our eternal guiding star.—B. T. Washington

### THE STORY OF A BIBLE.

Here is an illustration of what may be called the romantic side of Scripture circulation. The writer is an evangelical pastor at work in Bulgaria: "A few Sabbaths since I gave the communion, for the first time, to a converted Jew. He told me that his father had been with the French as a dragoman in the Crimea; that, while there, he secured a copy of the New Testament in Hebrew-Spanish, and that he read it and prized it on his return to Constantinople. When he was dying he had it with him on his bed, and died with it clasped to his breast. The wife was commanded by her husband's Jewish friends to destroy the book; but, not being able to read, she could not then tell it from some others in the same type. The result was it was thrown aside and not destroyed. The young man in question somehow obtained this copy, has been reading it, has foresworn intemperance, professes to have accepted Christ, and I gave him the sacrament of the Lord's Supper two weeks ago for the first time."—English Churchman.