

Pastor and People.

"BE READY."

T. L. S. III. 1.

Ready to hear what the Master shall speak,
Ready each day, His good pleasure to seek;
Swift to "do good, and distribute" to all,
Ready to rescue the tempted who fall.

Ready to run, when the message is "Go,"
Willing to wait, if He orders it so;
Ready to sow or to reap, or to glean,
Faithful and true, though the work be unseen.

Ready for service that others may shun,
Finishing work by another begun,
Ready for rest, oh, the infinite bliss!
Saviour and Lord, make us ready for this!

—Julia H. Johnston.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

Perish the hand which would circumscribe by one hair's breadth the limits of the definition of the Church of Christ; perish the arm which would exclude from that one flock of the Good Shepherd the "other sheep which are not of this fold;" perish the ravenous superstition that the wind of God, which "bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth," can only be conveyed by mechanical transmissions. I, for one, at any rate, refuse to flatter the priestly pride which would sectarianize the catholicity of the Church of Christ. The articles which I accepted at my ordination taught me that the visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, wherein the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments duly administered; and, I, for one, even if I were to stand alone, would repudiate and protest against the uncatholic teaching which would pretend to do what it cannot do, by unchurching any who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.

When I speak of the Church in general, I do not mean this or that communion, under this or that organization; but I mean in their ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, the whole multitude of the saints of God. What! are we not to claim as full and honoured members of the Church of Christ, in every possible true sense of that word, because they were Moravians, those holy missionaries who successfully planted

"Sweet Sharon's rose
On icy plains or in eternal snows"?

Or Williams, the apostle of Polynesia and the martyr of Erromanga, because he was a Dissenter? Or Carey and others in India, because they were Baptists? Or Elizabeth Fry, because she was a Quakeress? If there are any who think that He who died for all mankind cares mainly or chiefly for outward organization, their views of Christ are not such as I learn from Him who made keeping the Commandments the essential of entering the kingdom of heaven. I say with Whitfield: "Do they profess repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ? If so, they are brethren."

True and unswervingly loyal in my love for the Church of England, yet I would stand bareheaded before any true saint of God; and, be he Romanist or Independent, or Quaker, or Presbyterian, so he be a saint of God, desiring ten thousandfold more that I may stand with him before the throne of Christ, rather than with those who, though they may have had "Lord, Lord," or "the Church, the Church," forever on their lips, and have spent their lives in the endless round of outward ordinances, may yet, if their lives have been unloving and unworthy, hear those awful words, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," and "Depart from me, I never knew you." For it is Christ, and Christ alone; it is not

Episcopal government, or Apostolic succession, or ancient ritual, or the orthodoxy of curiously articulated creeds; it is Christ, and Christ only, and the innocence which shines in the lives of them that truly believe in him, which has been the strength of Christianity.

ANOTHER DISCOVERY IN PALESTINE.

In a recent number of the Word and Work (London), we find an account of the recent discovery in Southern Palestine of the ruins of eight cities which had been built successively, each upon the ruins of a previous city, at Tel el Hesi. It reads thus:—

Another important "find" was announced this month, at the meeting of the Palestine Exploration Fund. In 1890 Professor Flinders Petrie convinced himself that in a remarkable mound called Tel el Hesi, in Southern Palestine, would be found the remains of what was one of the strongest places in the country down to the invasions of Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar.

The explorations (said Mr. Bliss, at the Palestine Exploration Fund meeting recently) have fully verified this forecast; the mound of Tel Hesi being composed of no fewer than eight successive towns, formed on the ruins of one another, the uppermost dating about 500 B.C., and the lowest or earliest going back to 1500 B.C.—the time of the great Egyptian conquests of the land.

The most important find of all is a cuneiform tablet, the first record of pre-Israelitish Canaan yet yielded up by the soil of Palestine, and Professor Sayce holds that this is but the forerunner of the library of the Governor of Lachish, in the days when the Israelitish invasion was still distant.

Professor Sayce believes that this find heralds a discovery which will amount to "digging up the sources of the Book of Genesis."

Amid all the evidence discovered by Mr. Bliss of the civilization of that remote age—wine presses, treacle presses, alkali burnings, and innumerable others—by far the most curious is the disclosure of an iron blast furnace, so arranged as to give strong evidence of being intended to heat, in its descent, a blast of outside air forced through passages, before entering the chamber at the level where tuyeres are usually found. "If this theory be correct," says Mr. Bliss, "we find, 1,400 years before Christ, the use of the hot-air blast instead of cold air, which is called a modern improvement in iron manufacture, due to Neilson, and patented in 1828."

We shall look with interest for the translation of this tablet, and for the discovery of others. The fact that one tablet has been found which antedates the days of Moses, leads us to expect that others will be found. Already from such tablets we have obtained many lights on the Scriptures. This discovery intimates that many more are in store for us.

WHAT KIND OF A LIFE CHRISTIANITY IS.

REV. JAMES WOODROW, D.D.

Christianity is a life; but it is a life which begins with the new birth. It is the life made up of the thoughts and acts of one who loves what God loves and hates what God hates; of one who has been made alive and been renewed by the Holy Spirit, and in whom, therefore, the Holy Spirit dwells, who is thus a temple of the Holy Ghost. But how can such a life be lived without a creed—a collection of beliefs—a belief in God our Father, in Jesus our Redeemer, in the Holy Spirit our Sanctifier; belief in God's Word and in all the truths therein contained? Yes, Christianity is a life; but it involves a creed as well. A life not founded on a creed is comparatively of little worth; it certainly is not a Christian life. The Christian life,

so far as it is Christian, must be regulated in all things by the will of God as set forth in His Word—must, and will joyfully, recognize him as its absolute Sovereign, to whom implicit obedience in all things is due, and will be heartily rendered. It will find its highest liberty in its completest loyal obedience and self-renunciation.

The claim to be liberal is often nothing else than a declaration of independence against God's right to rule, and of a determination to set up standards and laws of our own enacting, to exercise unrestrained the right of self-government. It is not so plainly outspoken as to say bluntly, "Ye shall not surely die," as was said to our first mother, when God had told her, "Thou shalt surely die." But it seeks practically to reach the same end by clipping and smoothing off what it calls the harshness and severity of a command, a little here and a little there, until the original can hardly be recognized. Then it suggests that what the Sovereign Lord has denounced as sin is not so wholly bad after all—it has its good points. And so the falsely called liberality goes on in its task of obliterating the distinctions between right and wrong, sin and holiness—hurling God from his throne.

For it is God alone who determines what is right and what is wrong. For us to criticize and condemn His laws and His plans is to claim that we are wiser than He—that we can improve His imperfect handiwork. The only right judgments we can form are those which are in exact accordance with His. If in His sight any, even the slightest, deviation from His law is sin, and sin is an abominable thing which He hates, so it should be with us. The more clearly we can perceive the beauty of holiness, the more clearly shall we perceive the shocking deformity of sin.

THE KIND OF PREACHING NEEDED.

Six days in the week we are face to face with the hard facts and vain theories of the world. We take our daily papers that give us all the news, and more, and our weekly periodicals and monthly magazines, in which the topics of the day and the mooted theological questions are discussed—begging your pardon—more ably than most of our pastors can do it. These we can digest at home, or you can aid our digestion by week-night lectures; but they are dry husks at best. When we come to church we want the sweet kernel of the word of God. We need to stay ourselves on a "Thus saith the Lord." After a six days' comparative fast we are hungry, whether we are conscious of it or not, and a rehash of men's opinions does not "touch the spot." We want you to do what we have not time to do for ourselves, "to bring out of the storehouse things new and old," to restore our famished souls. We want help in settling every-day questions of right and wrong, practical questions of our duty to God, to man, to ourselves—Christianity applied. We want to be calmed and refreshed and strengthened by fresh glimpses of God. "Milk" or "meat", whichever each one requires, your storehouse should contain both. But let it always be food, something that will satisfy, so that we shall not go away from the feast you have prepared more hungry than we came. And it would be well if there should go with it the suggestion of such unbounded reserve stores that we shall not only be filled to-day, but be assured that there is a supply for all the to-morrows. If you will but give to us of that which feeds your own souls in their varying conditions and experiences, you surely will not go amiss.—"Deacon Pugh," in The Advance.

Gold that is the price of blood was never yet blessed to him that gave or him received.—Cooper.

SUNDAY AND SABBATH.

"Sunday" is the common name of a day of the week. "Sabbath" is the common designation of an institution. "Sabbath," means "rest." "Sabbath-day" means "rest-day." The "Sabbath" is observed by different people on different days of the week; therefore it is not proper, not sufficiently indicative, to use the two words "Sabbath" and "Sunday" interchangeably, nor to give the name "Sabbath" to the day of the week known as "Sunday." Mohammedans observe their Sabbath on Friday; Jews and several denominations of Christians observe their Sabbath on Saturday. A large majority of Christians observe their Sabbath on Sunday. Many Christian clergymen and other Christians who work hard on Sunday, observe their Sabbath on Monday. It is important, therefore, to persevere in usage the distinction between the name of the day of the week, and the name of the institution observed on that day. As to the objection sometimes made to the term "Sunday," that it is a term of heathen origin, the same objection may be made to every other day of the week, as well as to many a term in religious use—as "sacrament," for instance. The first day of the week is called "Sunday." It is observed by most Christians in honour of Him who is the "Sun of Righteousness;" and again, it is observed in honour of the Son of God, in recognition of which it has sometimes been spelled "Son-day," or "Sonneday." The "Sunday-school," is also a well-known institution, as apart from the day on which it is held. Even when the Sabbath is observed on Sunday, it is not strictly correct to say that that day is Sabbath. The day is one thing, the institution is another.—S. S. Times.

THE VALUE OF A CREED.

The decrying of creed in the interest of conduct is very natural, but very superficial. If it succeeded it would make life and conduct blind and weak. There is no greater misnomer applied to creeds and opinions than that which lurks in the word "advanced." The man whose creed is the smallest, the most crude and colourless and flimsy, is called "advanced," while he whose beliefs are richest and most full of hope and liberty is called "slow," "behind the times," and other tardy names. The man who believes nothing with any energy, who masks the doctrines of our Lord's Gospel under negations, who evaporates them into a thin mist of speculation, who emasculates them of their energy by subtracting their vital forces, who has a cynical sneer for every effort of a stalwart faith—such a man is called an "advanced thinker." The cheerless iconoclasm which is forever unbuilding and breaking down the strong barriers erected in a former time parades before the world as "free thought." It is no advance, but inertia; no free thought, but dullard slavery, which leads a man into a state like that. Exactness, earnestness and precise fidelity to the truth of things are better than a limp negation, and make a man a true, free and advanced thinker.—Phillips Brooks.

Through the kindness of Mr. John Cory, a large number of Bibles and Testaments have been distributed in the parish of Bessans, high among the mountains and glaciers of Savoy. An excellent collection of French literature has also been placed in the hands of the school master, who during the winter lent the volumes to the villagers, by whom they were much appreciated. In the same neighbourhood, and through the kindness of the same gentleman, Bibles have also been placed in the Refuges on Mount Cenis. The long winter of seven months, during which it is impossible for women and children to venture out, makes the possession of the Book a great boon. Some good fruit is already known of in Bessans.