

tribes, and his inspired benediction reveals their fates and fortunes. Passing by the other tribes, we come to Joseph, who is represented by the two tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh, thus having a double portion among his brethren; and of Joseph he said, "Blessed of (by) the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath," which was realized in these two tribes inhabiting the middle and eastern portions of the Holy Land, and enjoying positions of as great fertility and abundance as fell to the lot of any. Ephraim inhabited Samaria, a rich and fruitful country, to which Moses' description is applicable, for it possessed a mild and salubrious atmosphere, was blessed with abundance of good water, and had plenty of valuable timber. Then for the precious things of the earth and the fulness thereof was her location valuable; and we in these Colonies should not forget our own situation, that if these Maritime Provinces be valuable for their forests, their minerals and their fisheries, we are no less to bless God, and to be thankful for our lot. But there are more valuable things even than these of the hills and springs,—the "good will of him that dwelt in the bush" crowns all. This respects the transaction detailed in the third chapter of Exodus, and refers to Moses' intercourse there. It was at the burning bush, fifty years before, that Moses had stood, and while there, had heard a message which he never forgot. As that was the scene of his solemn consecration to his life-work, and, we must believe, of his first real acquaintance with God,—in short, both of his conversion and call to his mission,—we shall consider it more particularly.

Then it was about two years after his flight from Egypt, while tending his father-in-law's flock in the solitude of Sinai, and leading a life of retirement not unfavorable to devotion, that one day he led his flock by the back of the desert to Horeb, that sacred hill, where a terrible sight presented itself to his view. For on a sudden the bush before him burned, all in a blaze did it appear; and yet, though the lambent flame played around and within, it crackled not, burned not, nor gave way. Moses stood amazed. He knew the properties of fire, and yet here, under the most favorable circumstances, were these negatived. Almost involuntarily he exclaimed, "I will turn aside and see this great sight," when, lo! the bush got a tongue, and from its midst came forth a voice that made him quake, "Moses! Moses! draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." No long time was left him for conjecture as to who the speaker was, for, "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of thy fathers," was uttered by the same voice, and Moses was afraid to look upon God.

Here, then, was his first contact with Deity in the bush, at the age of forty, and after his flight from Egypt; and then, too, was the period of his renunciation of his earthly hopes, and his preference of being the humble leader of Israel, to being called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Such an effect had this appearance and communication upon him, that forty-five years afterwards he refers to it and celebrates "the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush."

Who, then, dwelt in this bush, and wherein did his good will appear?

I.—In reference to the first of these enquiries, when you turn to Exodus iii, you find this personage at first styled "Angel of the Lord;" by-and-by He calls Himself "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob;" and Moses was afraid to look upon God. Now, that it was a Divine person that was in the bush, is very apparent. It was therefore the bush consumed not. Fire is the emblem of Deity, and in flames of fire did God show Himself in Old Testament times. He maketh fire his minister, and by this token did He reveal Himself to Moses to teach him His majesty and to impress his mind with the communication He was about to deliver. Appearing in flames, Moses could not but fear; and hearing a voice, he could not but regard. But who was the speaker? Stephen, in Acts ii, calls Him an "Angel of the Lord," and that he was a messenger, was evident from his commission; but no mere servant or inferior messenger