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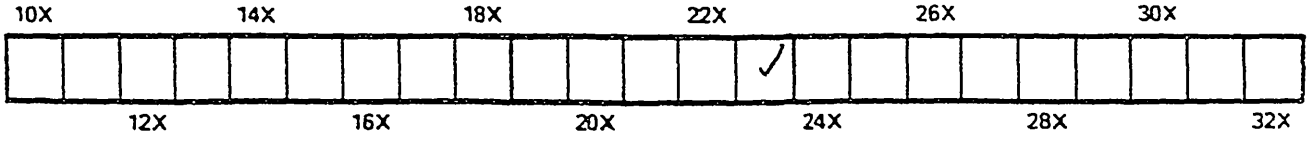

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THE CONDITIONAL ELEMENT IN PROPHECY.

THE Bible, although it is, in the deepest and truest sense, the Word of God, and, indeed, because it is His Word, is a collection of books in human speech. It must, therefore, be interpreted and understood by the ordinary laws of interpretation, and in harmony with the principles that underlie all expression of thought in the medium of human language. Even for the heavenly book, there can be no heavenly hermeneutics. To whatever extent we suppose the Scriptures are to be read and understood differently from other books, in the matters of principles and method, to that extent we change them from revelation into riddle, and make their meaning a matter of mystery and guess.

But, when we come to apply these sound principles of interpretation to the prophetic utterances of the Old Testament, we find that there are some of them which, thus correctly understood, have never yet had, and can never hereafter have, any corresponding reality in historic fact. That is, they have always been, and will always be, "unfulfilled." Let us look at one or two sample cases. In Jeremiah xxxi. 1-9, we have an assurance that Israel, which here means evidently the kingdom of Ephraim, the kingdom of the North, shall yet return from the captivity in which it was suffering in the days of Jeremiah, and shall inhabit in prosperity, as a flourishing people, its

ancient land. At the same time, we see in verses 23-30, Judah shall be delivered from the power of Babylon, and shall dwell again securely in its old home. Then no longer shall Israel hold itself aloof from Judah in the old way, but it shall recognize Jerusalem as the centre of the national life and the dwelling-place of its God (verses 6 and 12). Now, it is certain that what is here said of Israel has never been fulfilled. Israel has never had any possession of its ancient territory, nor has it, in any sense, had a dwelling-place upon the mountain of Samaria. It is equally clear that these words can have no fufilment in the future, for the distinction between the two kingdoms, such a distinction, at least, as these words suppose, and suppose to be continuous, has utterly perished. Moreover, even if we could suppose this distinction to be yet in existence, as the advocates of the Anglo-Israel notion claim, still the prophecy could have no fulfilment, for the time indicated in the prophet's words, when rightly interpreted, as the time of the coming to pass of the things spoken of, must appear in the fulfilment to make the fulfilment a real one. A prediction which errs in the time of the predicted event is as unfulfilled, or as false, as one which errs in the fact. But the time to which the prophet refers throughout our chapter, is the time immediately succeeding the Babylonian exile. It is in this time, and without the intervention of a worse captivity or exile, that the events of this chapter are, according to the prophet's teaching, to be realized. To scatter the nation again through the long centuries of the present dispersion, and then to cause even the events foretold in this chapter to come to pass, would not be to fulfil the prediction of the prophet Jeremiah. If there is a promise made among men to pay fifty dollars to a certain person next week, it is not considered a keeping of one's word to pay the money to his children twenty years after his death. This may be a commendable form of conduct, a showing of works meet for repentance, but it is not a fulfilling of prophecy.

Let us take, as another case of unfulfilled prophecy, Isaiah lxvi. 12-24. In the discussion of this passage, we use the term Israel in its broader sense. As thus employed, it denotes the

entire remnant of the chosen people, with special reference to Judah. It is clearly Judah that is uppermost in the mind of the prophet, as he sets before us the picture of the future contained in the verses now to be considered. The substance of this picture is a series of events that are immediately to follow the Babylonian exile. They may be expressed as follows:

1. Jehovah will give to Jerusalem great prosperity, glory, and joy (vs. 12-14).

2. But His enemies He will destroy in great numbers with fire and sword (vs. 15, 16).

3. Even Israel itself shall be purged; for the idolatrous element shall be destroyed out of it (v. 17).

4. Somewhere near Jerusalem Jehovah will gather together all the nations that have afflicted and oppressed her, and they shall see her glory, and behold the majesty of Jehovah's wrath, which shall flame forth as a sign against them, bringing upon them a swift destruction (vs. 18, 19).

5. Yet a remnant of these nations shall be spared; and this remnant, now fearing Jehovah, and earnest in His service, shall go willingly to peoples afar off, those with whom Jehovah has no controversy, because they have not yet known of Him, and have done no harm to His chosen people, to make known to them the glory of Israel's God (v. 19).

6. This spared and penitent remnant of the nations shall also bring back in honor to Jerusalem those of God's chosen people who have been exiles and captives in their lands (v. 20).

7. Jehovah, on His part, shall show His favor towards this spared remnant of the nations by adding some of their number to the holy band of the priests and Levites of the new commonwealth (v. 21).

8. But Israel shall be the queen nation of the world; and her sacred days and her sacred rites shall forever shape the life and the religion of all the nations of the earth (vs. 22, 23).

9. Near Jerusalem shall be the bodies of those who were slain in the day when Jehovah rose up in wrath against the gathered nations; and these slain shall be abhorred of all men, consumed by a fire that shall never be quenched and a worm that shall never die (v. 24).

But none of these things, except the three first, and these only in a partial and very imperfect way, came to pass in connection with the return of Israel from the Babylonian exile. Nor, indeed, have they ever come to pass. According to the New Testament representations of the nature of the kingdom of God and its future, it is impossible that they should come to be hereafter. Even if all these things should some time in the future come to be, that would not fulfil this prophecy; for, in the case of this prediction, as well as in the case of Jer. xxxi., the *time* indicated by the prophet, is an essential element of the prophecy.

It is sometimes sought to escape from the conclusions to which our present study has brought us, by affirming that such prophecies as the two we have selected as cases of unfulfilled prophecy, have found, or will find, their fulfilment in the history of the Christian Church. The prophets, it is claimed, did not have in such utterances, the future of Israel in mind, but were seeking to set forth the future of a spiritual Israel, the Church of Christ. This future they depicted by using terms and figures of speech whose meaning was shaped by the prophets' ideas about the life and institutions of Israel, but which, as used by the prophets, referred only to the spiritual Israel, the body of true believers in the Christian age. It is a sufficient reply to all these claims to say that there are no established and sound principles of interpretation, and no known laws of figurative language, by the use of which, such language as our passages contain, can be made to indicate the future of anything but the nation of Israel, the seed of Jacob according to the flesh. Any man needs only to make the attempt to fit the language on aught else, holding firmly to the purpose to read and understand the Scriptures according to the same laws and methods which we employ in the interpretation of all other literature, to find how vain and hopeless it is. But we must remember that, as soon as we assume that the Bible cannot be interpreted by the universal laws of interpretation, without the use of any other or any additional laws, we make it a book with no certain meaning whatever, about whose real import one man's guess is as good as another's. It then becomes, as has been charged against it, "a fiddle on which any tune may be played."

The impossibility, at any rate, of understanding that the two passages which we have been considering set forth in any way the future of the Church of Christ, will be clear by noticing carefully what they really present to us. The passage in Jeremiah xxxi. deals, at least, apparently, with the future of North Israel, and the land of Samaria. Now, even if we grant that language apparently relating to Judah and Jerusalem really refers to the Church of the Christian age, how can language that seems to have to do with the apostate kingdom of Jeroboam, also be understood to be depicting the future of the Church, especially when, as in the present case, the two kingdoms of the North and the South are referred to in the same discourse? Did the prophet believe in two Churches of Christ?

In the prophetic conception expressed in the passage of Isaiah lxvi., we may be sure of at least two elements; these are (*a*) the existence in the future seen by the prophet of three classes among the true worshippers of Jehovah, the "all flesh" of verse 23: (1) Israel itself, (2) the remnant, penitent and pious, of the nations destroyed by Jehovah, and (3) the more distant nations not involved in the great destruction. (*b*) The continued and perpetual existence of both the state and the institutions of Israel. Other nations, although they are to share in the blessings of the future, are not to be identical with Israel, nor even on an equality with her. They are to serve her interests, and promote her welfare. Moreover, this separation and subordination are not to be temporary, but permanent conditions. To say nothing of the difficulties occasioned by the picture of the perpetuity of the separate nation of Israel, and its peculiar institutions, it is clear that the rest of the prophetic conception cannot ever be realized in the future of the Church. For the Church is not to be eternally separate from the nations and served by them. The nations are to become the Church, or the kingdom of Heaven will never come.

It may be said, besides, that a study of the prophetic utterances, taken as a whole, makes it very clear that the prophets saw no future for the kingdom of God, in which the nation of Israel, as they knew it, purified and filled with righteousness,

indeed, would not be queen and centre, chief in the favor of God, and source of blessings to all the world. Jerusalem was to be the religious capital of the world, and the spiritual birthplace of the nations. To the prophets of Israel, the Church of Christ, as a new and separate organization, as another and distinct form of the kingdom of God, was absolutely unknown. He always looked for the accomplishment of the earlier plan of God, which was that the people of the Almighty, the nation chosen of God, should take the kingdom and possess it for ever. He, therefore, labored to secure that spiritual fitness in the nation that would prepare it for its high destiny, and make it ready for the reign of the great and coming Messianic King. It was partly to secure the carrying out of this great plan of God, to make one last effort to rouse Israel to the securing of its possible glorious future, that Jesus was born a Jew, and went about only among the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Else there would be no meaning in His parable of the wicked husbandmen (Matt. xxi. 33-40). But the hardness of heart in Israel was too great for even the Son of God to overcome. So that, at the last, He saw that even He could not bring to realization the prophetic hope, and that the plan of God for the blessing of man through the kingdom of Heaven must be changed. This is not the place to discuss the problem of the sovereignty of God, and the changing of His plans towards men, suggested by this fact. The fact itself is clear from the words which Jesus Himself uttered. On that morning, when, as He rode along the descent of the Mount of Olives, the multitude of the disciples recognized His kingship in glad shouts, now near the end of life and earthly mission, He looked, with breaking heart and streaming eyes, upon the proud and haughty city that had lost its chance of glory and of queenship. "If thou hadst known," He said, "the things which belong unto peace. . . . they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another: because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation" (Luke xix. 42-44). Just a little after this, as recorded in Matt. xxi. 43, He said to the Jews: "The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." All this shows two things. The first is, that with the rejection

of Jesus by the Jews, the divine plan as to the kingdom of Heaven was changed. The second is, that the Old Testament prophets must have spoken on the basis of a conviction that the kingdom of God was still in the possession of Israel, not yet taken from it, and that it would always, or at least might always, remain the possession of the nation. When, therefore, the kingdom of God was taken away from Israel, and given to the Gentiles, it became impossible for the words of the prophets to be fulfilled, so far as their fulfilment would demand as a necessary condition that Israel should be the queen and centre of this kingdom.

So far as the prophets taught that which was to be true, wherever, whenever, and however the kingdom of God should come, their utterances find, and will find, a corresponding reality in the life and history of the Church. But no such correspondence as this can rightly be called a fulfilment of their prophecies, since, in all these cases, the language they used calls for some other condition of affairs, some other historical situation, than ever has been, or can ever be. Thus it is evident that some prophecies have remained thus far, and will ever remain, unfulfilled, because of some implied condition necessary for the fulfilment, which has never been realized. These conditions have failed to appear in the course of actual history, because it was necessary, in order for them to be, that there should be some spiritual fitness or readiness on the part of man, which man failed to secure. God always deals with men according to the receptivity He finds in them; and this receptivity is conditioned by man's own willingness to possess it. Thus man conditions God's work in him and for him. This is at least a practical statement of truth, whatever may be said of its philosophical correctness. It is a truth, moreover, that the prophets always recognized, and in view of which, they were earnest and hopeful, or sad and despairing, in their work among the people.

A better knowledge of this prophetic attitude, and a truer sympathy with the fundamental prophetic endeavor, would prevent pious souls from being not a little unwilling to believe that there is so much unfulfilled prophecy. If we think that

the main business of the prophet was to say things that they might be fulfilled, it is unreasonable to ask us to suppose that prophecy has been remained unfulfilled. If, however, the prophet was the man to whom God gave to see that, for God to do certain great things for man, man must present the necessary spiritual conditions in himself, and that to avert the otherwise certain evil, man must repent and forsake his sins, then naturally he must have been more intent upon securing the desired condition among men, than upon foretelling what would happen independently of what man should be and should do. Indeed, it must be clear that often the fulfilment of his prediction would have been the failure of his ministry. In like way, now, the preacher assures the sinner that he will surely be lost, hoping that this very prediction may, by the grace of God, bring salvation to him. In so far as he is a true prophet, he fails as a preacher.

In all this, it is not intended to say that there are no unconditional prophecies which the prophet saw would be fulfilled, whatever the receptivity of man in any particular age might be. The prophets were the proclaimers of the unconditioned, as well as the conditioned, purposes of God. But we have sought to show that the conditional element in prophecy must be allowed to exist, and that its presence will account for the non-fulfilment of some prophecies. Even the presence of this element in the prophecies of the Old Testament, on the other hand, will not account for the non-fulfilment of all unfulfilled prophecies. The progressive character of the prophetic teaching, and the presence of an ideal element in the prophetic utterances, must also be taken into account in explaining the fact of the non-fulfilment of the words of the prophets. But when all these allowances have been made, allowances that, after all, affect only the surface of the great stream of the prophetic activity and teaching, there still remains a fulfilment of the prophetic utterances so grand and majestic that it is evident the prophets spake only as they were moved by the Spirit of God.

Additional evidence of the fact that there is a conditional element in prophecy, is found in the presence in the Scriptures

of prophetic predictions entirely unconditioned as uttered, but which the Scriptures themselves distinctly inform us were not fulfilled. Such a prediction was the declaration of the prophet Isaiah to king Hezekiah, which we find in 2 Kings xx. 1: "Set thine house in order," said the prophet, "for thou shalt die and not live." But before Isaiah had gone far into the city, new conditions had arisen and God sent him back to announce the non-fulfilment of the prediction he had just made. Now he was to say in the name of Jehovah: "I will heal thee, ... I will add unto thy days fifteen years." It does not appear that Isaiah was reluctant to confess that he had foretold that which was not to be, or was troubled about an unfulfilled prophecy. We have, however, a case of unfulfilled prophecy, in which the prophet took more to heart the non-fulfilment of his prediction. This was apparently because he was a more narrow soul, and a less spiritually-minded prophet than Isaiah. But his concern about his own reputation as a predicter, greater, seemingly, than his interest in the manifestation of the divine love and grace, met with a just rebuke from God.

The prophet now referred to was Jonah. All day he had cried: "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown." The forty days passed, and Nineveh still remained, rich and populous as ever, for Nineveh had fasted, and prayed, and repented. So "God repented of the evil that He had said He would do unto them, and He did it not." But Jonah "was very angry." The salvation of a great city, in his thinking, was dearly purchased by his being shown to be a prophet whose threat had not come to pass. Shall we not learn from this that there are some things that ought to seem to us, as they do to God, more desirable than what we call the fulfilment of prophecy?

God's own idea about the character of prophetic promises and threatenings, which we may offer as a last evidence of the existence of a conditional element in prophecy, may be found in Jeremiah xviii. 7-10: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall

speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them."

S. BURNHAM.

Hamilton, N. Y.

THE BOOK OF MICAH.

THE name, "minor" prophets, has proved to be very misleading. Not a few, strange as it may seem, have supposed that they were so called because of their inferior importance. It should scarcely be necessary to state that they owe the name solely to their smaller size. The book which contained them was known in Greek as the "Twelve-prophet-book." They were put into one volume because their collected remains were about equal in size to the books of the greater prophets, and because it obviously saved expense and waste of space to copy the small authors upon a single roll.

We are not to judge the work or influence of these prophets by the size of the books with which their names are associated. We are not to forget that the functions of the prophets as authors were secondary, and rose from later circumstances. Originally and primarily the prophet was an orator, a preacher to the people. The mighty agency for good exercised by such leaders of men as Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha, was carried out exclusively by the living voice. They "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." But as the times altered, and life became more complex, the prophet was compelled to write, and perpetuate his messages, and so put them beyond the power of intriguing priests or hostile kings to suppress. But as we are not to suppose that all the oral messages of the prophets were committed to writing, neither are we to suppose that all that was committed to writing has come down to us. When we find a prophet like Zephaniah, or Obadiah, represented by a short single poem, we are not to conclude that so brief an utterance was the sole outcome of his life's work. It has been truly said, that some poets live by small but precious books, others are famous for a single short poem, but it would obviously be un-

fair to conclude that these poets wrote nothing else worth preserving. It is more than probable—indeed, it is quite certain—that in the Bible we have only the fragments of a much more extensive literature, the remains of a much vaster library. While then it may be true, as has been maintained, that when prophecy became literature, it was exposed to all the risks to which the preservation of literature is subject, yet, doubtless, God in His providence interposed to preserve as much of the writings of each prophet as was necessary or helpful to the building up of His kingdom among men. Whether this title "minor," or the difficulty of understanding some of their writings, has led to their comparative neglect cannot be decided, but it is certain that no part of the Scriptures has been so little studied, or is at this moment so little known.

The apostles evidently attached a high value to the minor prophets. In the New Testament they are more frequently quoted than the greater prophets, or, to speak more correctly, the larger prophets. "The text of the first Christian sermon," says Dean Payne Smith, "is taken by St. Peter from Joel." St. Stephen gives emphasis to his argument by a quotation from Amos; and St. James, by a quotation from the same prophet, decides the question discussed at the first Christian Council. So, too, if we look at the doctrines first revealed by their instrumentality, we shall find that they hold a very foremost place in our belief. It is Joel who teaches us the momentous fact of a future resurrection and a general judgment, and of that outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh, without which these doctrines would be a terror to us.

It is Micah who reveals to men the birth-place of our Lord, Zechariah foreshadows His crucifixion, Jonah His resurrection, though veiled under a sign; and as they were the earliest prophets who left written memorials of their work, so they were the last. The Old Testament closes with the trumpet sounds of Malachi, telling us of the approach of the Forerunner, of the separation of the Jews into those who accepted Christ and those who rejected Him, and of the coming of the days when, "from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, no victim should bleed upon an altar, but the meat-

offering, the type of Christian worship, be offered every day to Jehovah's name." Since it has fallen to my lot to give one of the papers on these minor prophets, I have no cause to regret that Micah, the most distinguished of them all, has been assigned to me. Lange, in his introduction to Micah, classes him with Isaiah, and declares these two to be the mightiest of the prophets.

Name.

The name Micah was identical with Micaiah, and both forms were contractions of the fuller Micajahu, or Micaiahu, meaning "who is like Jehovah." The name was not uncommon. It is borne by eleven persons in the Old Testament, generally in an abridged or contracted form. Twice already it had been prominent in Jewish history. It was the name of the Ephraimite under whose roof the young Levite, Jonathan, the grandson of Moses, ignobly served as an idolatrous priest, for a few shillings a year, and it was the name of the brave prophet, son of Imlah, contemporary of Elijah, who alone, amid a crowd of courtly flatterers, had dared to tell to Ahab the disastrous issue of his intended expedition against Ramoth Gilead. Our author, no doubt, to distinguish him from this earlier prophet, with whom, strange as it may seem, he has sometimes been confounded is called the Morasthite, that is, an inhabitant of the little town of Moresheth-gath, in the low-lying sea plain of Philistia. In the words, "Hear all ye people," with which the later Micah commences his prophecy, and the earlier Micah closes his, there is very likely an intended reference to the identity of their names. It is generally believed that the question in chapter vii. 18: "Who is a God like unto Thee," has reference to the meaning of the prophet's name.

Historical Situation and Date.

We will now inquire into the historical situation and date of Micah. The introductory title or superscription states that he prophesied in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. There is a great variety of opinion among commentators as to the genuineness of this title. Archdeacon Farrar holds that we cannot be sure that these headings are anything

more than the gloss of an editor after the Babylonian exile, founded on tradition or conjecture, and that there is no part of the extant prophecy which can with any probability be assigned to the reigns of Jonathan and Ahaz. Dr. Pusey, on the other hand, maintains that the title was an essential part of the prophetic book, as indicating to the people afterward, that it was not written after the event. Bertholdt, again agreeing neither with Farrar nor Pusey, positively denies that any of his prophecies can be referred to the reign of Hezekiah, and assigns the two earlier of the four portions into which he divides the book to the time of Ahaz, and the two later to that of Manasseh, because the idolatry which prevailed in their reigns is therein denounced. I find, so far as my investigations have gone, that in this case, at least, the weight of evidence is in favor of the genuineness of the title. A brief summary of the evidence will be in place here. Jeremiah, a century later, furnishes us with an authentic incident in Micah's history, and tells us expressly that he prophesied in the reign of Hezekiah. Jeremiah's words are these: "Micah, the Morasthite, prophesied in the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Zion shall be ploughed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest." (Jer. xxvii. 18.) This is an exact quotation from Micah iii. 12. This passage in Jeremiah is supposed by some to be against the genuineness of the introductory title of Micah's prophecy. The fact is that it is really an argument in its favor, for the simple reason that a later writer, if he had wished to furnish the book with a superscription, would certainly have considered the account in Jeremiah, and avoided the apparent contradiction by leaving out Jotham and Ahaz. Why any discrepancy should be perceived between the statement in Jeremiah, that "Micah, the Morasthite, prophesied in the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah," and that the word of the Lord came to him in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, it is difficult to imagine. The former does not limit the period of Micah's prophecy, and at most applies only to the psssage to which direct allusion is made. A confusion appears to have existed in the minds of

those who see in the prophecy, in its present form, a connected whole between the actual delivery of the several portions of it and their collection and transcription into one book. There is strong internal evidence that certain portions of Micah's prophecy were uttered in the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz, while they were collected as a whole in the reign of Hezekiah and committed to writing.

Chapter i. 6 predicts the overthrow of Samaria, so that this section of the prophecy must have been delivered before the destruction of Samaria by Shalmaneser, which took place in the 6th year of Hezekiah, B.C. 722; and connecting the high places mentioned in chapter i. 5, with those which existed in Judah in the reigns of Ahaz and Jotham, we are certainly justified in assigning chapter i. to the time of one of these monarchs.

The denunciation of the horses and chariots of Judah, chapter v. 10, is appropriate to the state of the country under Jotham, after the long and prosperous reign of Uzziah, by whom the military strength of the people had been greatly developed. Also, the forms in which idolatry manifested itself in the reign of Ahaz, correspond with those which are threatened with destruction in Micah v. 12-14: "And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand, and thou shalt have no more soothsayers; thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of them, and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands. And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee, so will I destroy thy cities." And the allusions in chapter vi. 16, to the statutes of Omir and the works of the house of Ahab, seem directly pointed at the king of whom it is expressly said, that he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel.

Micah's relation to Isaiah also agrees with the inscription. The well-known prophecy, three verses of which Isaiah prefixed to his second chapter, is now owned well-nigh on all hands to have been originally delivered by Micah. These verses are: "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye

and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths, for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." But it appears from the context in Isaiah that he delivered the prophecy in the second chapter in the reign of Jotham. But since Isaiah prefixed to a prophecy in the days of Jotham this great prophecy of Micah, then Micah's prophecy must have been already current. The connection in which the prophecy is found in Micah and in Isaiah points to the same conclusion. The prophecy as it stands in Micah is in close connection with what precedes it. He had just said, as recorded in chapter iii. 12: "Therefore shall Zion for your sakes be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the field." Then he instantly subjoins, as recorded in the beginning of the fourth chapter, God's reversal of that sentence in the latter days: "And in the last days it shall come to pass that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains," etc. The two sentences are as closely joined as they can be. "Zion shall be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps." "And it shall come to pass in the last days," etc. In Isaiah, however, there is no such connection. After the first chapter, and its summary of rebuke, warning, threatening, etc., Isaiah, in his second chapter, begins his prophecy anew with a fresh title: "The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem;" and to this he prefixes three verses of Micah's prophecy. He separates it in a marked way from the preceding summary, and yet connects it with some other prophecy with the word "and." He himself marks that it is not in its original place here, while in Micah its close connection with the foregoing marks that it is in its original place. Dr. Pusey's conclusion, touching the date of Micah is this: "At the commencement of Hezekiah's reign, he collected the substance

of what God had taught by him, re-casting it, so to speak, and retaining of his spoken prophecy so much as God willed to remain for us. As it stands it belongs to that early time of Hezekiah's reign, in which the sins of Ahaz still lived on. Corruption of manners had been hereditary. In Jotham's reign, too, it is said, expressly, in contrast with himself, the people were still doing corruptly. Idolatry had, under Ahaz, received a fanatic impulse from the king, who at last set himself to close the worship of God. The strength of Jotham's reign was gone; the longing for its restoration led to the wrong and destructive policy against which Isaiah had to contend. Of this Micah says, such should not be the strength of the future kingdom of God. Idolatry and oppression still lived on, against these, the inheritance of former reigns, Micah concentrated his written prophecy. We may accordingly assume with the title, that the various contents of the book arose before the vision of the prophet between the years 758 and 722 B.C., but that under Hezekiah, somewhere near the close of his labors, he wrote out what was of permanent value in his several discourses, in the two chief discourses of the book before us, and published it as a perpetual testimony.

The Contents.

We come now to consider the contents of the prophecy itself, or rather to give a brief outline or analysis of the contents, the time at our disposal not allowing of more than this. It does not come within the province of this paper to attempt an explanation of the many difficulties which the text of Micah has been found to present. These difficulties have given rise to much complicated discussion, and could not be dealt with in a single lecture. Archdeacon Farrar speaks of the abrupt transitions and strange, apparent self-contradictions of the prophet. He is of the opinion that we are here dealing with the fragments of longer oral discourses, and that we hardly possess the remains of the prophet in their integrity, or even, perhaps, without additions and interpolations. He draws attention to the fact that the last two chapters differ in tone from the others—a fact which has struck most modern critics, and which has led Ewald to

regard these chapters as a magnificent colloquy written by some anonymous prophet of slightly later date. It is quite obvious that it would require a fairly-sized volume to deal at all adequately with these questions. Nothing more, therefore, can be attempted in this paper than a brief summary of the contents of this prophecy as we have it in the received text. There is considerable difference of opinion among authors as to the best division of the subject matter. Three sections, omitting the superscription, viz., chapters i., iii. and vi., are introduced by the same phrase, "hear ye," and represent, according to Dr. Smith, three natural divisions of the book. The first section includes chapters i. and ii., the second iii., iv. and v., and the third vi. and vii., each commencing with rebukes and threatenings, and closing with a promise. Another arrangement, adopted by Canon Cheyne and the "Britannica," puts chapters i., ii. and iii. into one section, in which threatening and gloom predominate; chapters iv. and v. into a second, in which promise predominates, and chapters vi. and vii. into a third, in which the sadder tone again prevails. Ewald, followed by Farrar and Lange, makes four divisions of the book, as follows: (1) The judgment of God, chapter i.; (2) The proof of the necessity of this judgment, chapters ii. and iii.; (3) The promise, chapters iv. and v.; (4) A colloquy written by some anonymous prophet of a later date, chapters vi. and vii. I propose following this division of the subject matter, not, however, accepting the position that chapters vi. and vii. were not written by Micah.

We have first, then, the threat of judgment, chapter i. In a majestic exordium, Jehovah himself is represented as coming forth in the thunderstorm from His heavenly palace, and descending on the mountains of Palestine, at once as the witness against His people and the executor of judgment on their sins. "Behold the Lord cometh forth out of His place and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth, and the mountains shall be molten under Him, and the valleys shall be cleft as wax before the fire and as the waters that are poured down a steep place" (i. 3 and 4). Samaria is sentenced to destruction for idolatry, the blow extending also to Judah, which participates in the same guilt: "Therefore I will make Samaria as an heap of the field

and as plantings of a vineyard, and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof" (i. 6). But while Samaria is summarily dismissed when her doom has been pronounced, the sins of Judah, as we shall see in the next section, are analyzed at length. The prophet whose sympathies are strong with Judah, especially with the lowlands which gave him birth, sees the danger which threatens his country, and traces in imagination the devastating march of the Assyrian conquerors from Samaria onward to Jerusalem and the south. This passage, extending from verse 10 to the end of the chapter, is remarkably striking. The prophet expresses his anguish over the doom of his native Judah by a play on words, or a series of paronomasias. Contemplating an advance of the Assyrian king through the towns of the Shephelah, he takes the name of town after town, chiefly in the neighborhood of his own native village, and extorts from their meaning an omen of mourning, failure and woe. An example or two must suffice: "In Gath, meaning tell-town, tell it not. In Akko, weep-town, weep not. In Bethle-aphrah, dust-town, roll thyself in dust. Pass by, thou inhabitant of Shaphir, meaning fair-town, in nakedness and shame. The citizens of Zaanan, march-town, marched not forth." These devastated places meet the eye of the seer, and their names become to him the texts of his lamentation and gloomy predictions.

The second division or section deals with the sins which have made the foregoing judgment a necessity. The prophet was a man of the people, in all probability a man of humble lineage, and in this respect unlike his contemporary, Isaiah, who was of patrician, perhaps even of princely birth. Micah's whole sympathies, it is quite evident, were with the humble and the oppressed. As a man of the people he finds the chief causes of the threatened judgment in the crimes of the rulers or leaders of the people. It is the grasping aristocracy, the unjust judges and priests, the hireling and gluttonous prophet that have made the threatened doom inevitable. The greedy aristocrats coveted fields and houses and took them by violence, oppressed widows and broke up happy homes. "They covet fields," says the prophet "and take them by violence, and houses, and take them away;

so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage." The prophet assures these oppressors of the poor that their injustice and cruelty will result in the carrying away into exile of their luxurious sons, so that they shall have none that shall cast a cord by lot in the congregation of the Lord. The false prophets are indignant at such terrible predictions, and order the true prophets to be silent and not weary them with these incessant reproaches: "Prophecy ye not, say they, to them which prophecy." But the prophet replies that he cannot alter the eternal purpose of God, which is to bless the righteous and punish the wicked. He therefore pours forth a fresh and stronger denunciation against those who strip bare the poor and afflict the widows: "The women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses; from their children have ye taken away my glory forever. Arise ye and depart, for this is not your rest, because it is polluted it shall destroy you even with a sore destruction." That is to say, let them depart from a land which they have polluted, and which should be their destruction. In the third chapter he denounces in scathing terms the fiendish oppression practised by the princes of Judah, "Who hate the good and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones; who also eat the flesh of my people and flay their skin from off them, and they break their bones and chop them in pieces as for the pot and as flesh within the caldron." The self-interested flattery and the hireling and greedy spirit of the false prophets are set forth in burning words: "Thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth and cry peace, and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him. Therefore shall night be unto you that ye shall not have a vision, and it shall be dark unto you that ye shall not divine, and the sun shall go down over the prophets and the day shall be dark over them." Then in the closing verses of the chapter, the blood-stained princes, the hireling priests and the bribe-taking prophets are once more rebuked and are assured that on their account "Zion shall be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest." There are two

verses in this section. viz., 12 and 13 of chapter ii., which have greatly puzzled commentators, and about which there has been any amount of speculation. They certainly break the thread of the context, as in the next chapter the prophet continues the remonstrance broken off at the eleventh verse of chapter ii. without any reference to the intervening clause. Some suppose that they are a marginal gloss by some reader who was grieved over the threat of doom, as they read like a sudden promise of restoration under some victorious king, and that the gloss in time found its way into the text. Others suppose that they are a separate oracle of Micah which did not originally stand in its present connection. Still others find this sudden turn from threat to promise and from promise to threat in accordance with all true prophecy and in harmony with what we have in other chapters of this book. Pusey remarks that "God's mercy on the penitent and believing being the end of all His threatenings, the mention of it often bursts in abruptly, and that what seems sudden to us is connected in truth."

The third discourse or division of the book, embracing chapters iv. and v., deals with the promise of blessing, the promise of deliverance and salvation. In the glories of the Messianic kingdom, the prophet loses sight of the desolation which should befall his country. Instead of the temple mountain covered with the wild growth of the forest, of which he had just spoken, he sees the mountain of the house of Jehovah established on the top of the mountains, and nations flowing like rivers unto it. The reign of peace is inaugurated by the recall from captivity, and Jehovah sits as king in Zion, having destroyed the nations that rejoiced in her overthrow. The predictions in this section form the climax of the book. The leading thought common to both chapters is, that the deliverance and glorification of Israel is certain, because the promises cannot be broken, while yet it will come only through grevious affliction, and after the deepest humiliation.

The first eight verses of chapter iv. give a glowing description of Messianic days, or of the future kingdom of God. Dr. Farrar remarks that the rhythm and beauty of this prophecy had evidently caused it to sink deep into the minds of those who

heard it, for it is in great part, as already noted, repeated verbatim by Isaiah, who doubtless borrowed it from Micah. It is a picture of triumph, of righteousness, and of peace. As we have already quoted the substance of this prophecy in another connection, as found in Isaiah, it will not be necessary to repeat it here. But as Micah gazes on the prophetic vision, he hears the wailing of Zion as of a woman in travail. He does not disguise the truth that the deliverance must be preceded by a period of anguish in which the people shall be carried to Babylon before they could be redeemed from the hand of their enemies. The description, therefore, of the future glory of Israel is followed at once by a description of the heavy affliction, distress and banishment of the people which must come before their salvation. We have in this section of the book another example of the abrupt transitions of Hebrew prophecy. The promise of Zion's triumph, which we have in the last verse of the 4th chapter, is instantly followed, in chapter v. 1, by a picture of her humiliation before a besieging conqueror who smites the king of Israel on the cheek, and then without a pause there follows a prophecy of glorious Messianic prosperity, in which the person and work of the Messiah are described. The prophet had said of Israel: "I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass, and thou shalt beat in pieces many people."

Then in chapter v. 1, he says: "Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops! he hath laid siege against us; they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek." Then follows the familiar and oft-repeated Messianic prediction: "But thou Bethlehem, Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." It is worthy of notice that two goings forth are mentioned here, a going forth literally, from the days of eternity, as well as a going forth from Bethlehem. Going forth, as Pusey puts it, is opposed to going forth, a going forth out of Bethlehem to a going forth from eternity—a going forth which then was still to come; to a going which had been long ago, even from the days of eternity

—language which would seem to indicate that the prophet had in his mind something more than "a conception of a majestic ruler who should proceed from Bethlehem, the city of David, and who should maintain a peaceful government over Israel." Rather would it not indicate that he beheld as in a vision the personal historic Christ.

The remaining verses of this chapter deal with the glorious conquests of this mighty deliverer, this ruler in Israel, whose birth at Bethlehem the prophet had just predicted. As the time referred to is most clearly the time after Christ's coming, the Assyrians mentioned in these verses as the enemy against which this predicted ruler from Bethlehem would have to contend, cannot be the literal Assyrians, for they would then have long since ceased to be, but doubtless are chosen to represent all the enemies who vex the Church. "Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off." The horses, and chariots, and cities, and strongholds, and witchcrafts, and soothsayers, and graven images, and groves, mentioned in the closing verses, and which the prophet says are to be swept away, no doubt refer to the agencies which had opposed the progress of the true faith, and which in the coming time would be overcome by the might of the victorious ruler from Bethlehem.

Chapters vi. and vii. constitute the fourth and last division of the book. As the first five chapters have been called the prophetic-political chapters, so these last have been named the ideal, contemplative chapters. "Leaving," says Lange, "the concrete sketches of history, the public reproofs, and the historical prediction, the prophet rises to the height of the idea woven through the whole course of history and represents the relation between the God of Israel and His people, the past condition, the present complications, and the future solution under the figure of a suit-at-law. There is no good reason for maintaining, as some have done, a different author and an earlier or later date for this section than for the former sections. The historical situation is the same, the style is rhetorical, the subject is not so much particular manifestations of present sin, as the sins of the whole people. The refer-

ence is not to particular moments of the future, but to judgment and salvation in their spiritual nature."

These chapters are the first prophetic piece of a purely dramatic plan and execution. In the first stage of the suit Jehovah appeals to his people as to the cause of their apostacy, reminding them of the many mighty deliverances which he had wrought out for them. The reply of the people follows, indicating their entire ignorance of what was required of them. "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before Him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" The prophet, in a single sentence, a sentence which has the compressed meaning of a volume, places before the people, the only service that God requires, the only service which He can approve. "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

In the second stage of the suit, the voice of Jehovah is heard once more upraiding the guilty people for scant measures and deceitful balances, for violent Mammon-worship, for lies which shall provoke terrible vengeance of spoliation and famine, and for the open Baal-worship which shall make them a desolation and a hissing. Then the prophet, representing the ideal Israel, bewails the diminished number of the good, and the terrible state of injustice and corruption, which shows that visitation of God is at hand. Then we see the righteous community sitting in darkness and desolation, but still hoping that God will accept their submission and repentance, and will vindicate His name upon the insulting enemy. The book closes with a beautiful and touching expression of comfort and hope in the pardoning mercy of God, or as Farrar expresses it: "The prophet closes his varied words of menace and promise, with the music of untroubled hope and faith." "Who is a God like unto Thee that pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage, He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, He will

have compassion on us, He will subdue our iniquities, and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old;" words which centuries afterwards were caught up by the aged priest, whose song unites the Old and New Testaments together.

Style of Micah.

A few sentences on the characteristics of Micah's style as a writer must suffice. Of Micah, personally, we know next to nothing. He was born a villager in Moresheth-gath, and this is the only reason for introducing the name of so small and obscure a place in the first chapter, where it is named among the ten places which he selects for warning and for example of the universal captivity. In this village, it is believed, he made his home, and here he was buried. The fact of his being a provincial, a man of the people, may account in some measure for his large sympathies with the oppressed, and for assuming more openly, perhaps, than any other prophet, the attitude of a tribune of the people, reserving his heaviest denunciations for the greedy aristocrats who were crushing the very life out of the masses. The prophet's surroundings, no doubt, had something to do with the characteristics of his style as a writer. The varied and rich figures in which his prophecy abounds are derived from the pastoral and rural life of the lowland county, whose vines, and olives, and fig-trees were celebrated. These supply the prophet with so many striking allusions as to suggest that, like Amos, he may have been either a herdsman or a vine-dresser, who had heard the howling of the jackals as he watched his flock or his vines by night, and had seen the lions slaughtering the sheep.

As he contemplates the overthrow of Samaria, he says (chap. i. 8.): "Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked, I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning like the owls." Again, in speaking of the future conquests of Israel (chap. v. 8.), he says, "And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, in the midst of many people, as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks

of sheep, who, if he go through, both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver."

The language of Micah is pure and classical. In point of rhetorical peculiarity he stands between his contemporaries, Hosea and Isaiah, but nearer to the latter than the former. For although like the former, he is abrupt, abounding in sudden and quick changes in depth of spirituality; he is the worthy companion of Isaiah, sharing with him the marvellous mingling of mildness and strength, of gentleness and devotion.

This book, as Pusey observes, has remarkable symmetry, a fact which the careful reader will at once notice. Each of its main divisions begins with upbraidings for sin, threatening God's judgments, and ending with promises of future mercy in Christ. These sudden transitions from each of the main themes to another, from upbraiding to threatening, from threatening to mercy, and then back again to upbraiding, is probably a part of that same vivid perception of the connection of sin, chastisement and forgiveness in the will and mind of God. The prophet sees them and speaks of them in the natural sequence in which they were exhibited to him.

To great simplicity Micah unites great vividness and energy. To this vividness belong his rapid changes of person or gender; his sudden questions; his unmarked dialogues. These changes of person and gender occur in all Hebrew poetry, but in passages of Micah are very marked, the variations in the last verse of chapter vi. being unexampled for rapidity even in Hebrew. And yet, as critics have remarked, notwithstanding these variations and sudden transitions, the flow of his words is smooth and measured. Without departing from the conciseness of Hebrew poetry, his cadence for the most part is of the most prolonged sort, as far as any can be called prolonged when all is so concise. The poetic vigor of the opening scene of the last two chapters and of the dramatic dialogue sustained thoughout is remarkably striking.

The Spiritual Application.

We come now to the last division of our subject, viz., the spiritual application or religious teaching of Micah's prophecy.

I find that Prof. Workman is in agreement with Archdeacon Farrar and other distinguished biblical scholars in maintaining that the predictive element in prophecy is secondary, that the definite announcement of events yet distant is but a small and a subordinate part of the prophet's mission. In other words, the prophets were not so much foretellers as forth-tellers; they dealt not so much with future contingencies as with present realities; they disclosed the concealed facts of the present rather than revealed the hidden events of the future. That is, they were the interpreters of God's will to the people. They were moral teachers, they were spiritual guides. In harmony with this view, Farrar remarks, "That it is of the deepest importance for any genuine comprehension of the prophets in their real grandeur, to see that they were preachers of righteousness, statesmen and patriots, enlightened to teach an ever-apostatizing nation:

> "What makes a nation great and keeps it so?
> What ruins kingdoms and lays cities flat?"

Whether this is the correct view or not, it is quite certain that the writings of the Hebrew prophets—and perhaps none more so than Micah—contain a vast amount of practical religious teaching of universal application.

No one can read the Book of Micah without being impressed with the fact that he is a conspicuous teacher of spiritual religion. Running through his prophecy from beginning to end is the thought that forms and ceremonies and ritual observances are of no account apart from practical righteousness. The end and aim of religion, according to Micah, is righteousnes. A religion divorced from morality is no religion at all. "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" By no means. What then. "He hath showed thee, O man," says Micah, "what is good and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Here we have an epitome of Micah's theology. We have in a sentence the spiritual application, the religious teaching, of his whole prophecy, teach-

ing that is applicable to our individual, domestic, social and national life. Micah recognizes and emphasizes the fact—the fact that we would do well to recognize and emphasize in this day and in this nation, viz., that in the law of righteousness is the one basis of all political truth, and that in obedience to this law of righteousness is the guarantee, and the only guarantee, of national stability, vigor and success. "Zion," says Micah, shall be ploughed as a field and Jerusalem shall become heaps and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest." Why? "Because ye heads of the house of Jacob and princes of the house of Israel, abhor judgment and pervert all equity, ye build up Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity. This is why Zion shall be ploughed as a field. And is not the lesson this, that the same perversion of equity and judgment will run the ploughshare of disaster and ruin through any nation on the face of the earth and cause it to wither and die under the blighting curse of Almighty God, of whose throne justice and judgment are the habitation. I am reminded in this connection of a late utterance of a distinguished Bishop: "I at least am old-fashioned enough to believe that in the history of nations and churches and communities the guarantee of permanence lies in the possession of a scrupulous regard for holiness and righteousness. It is not by cheap successes; it is not by brilliant talents; it is not by nimbleness and adroitness of mind; it is not by splendid speculations; it is not by scientific achievements; it is not by the power of extended commerce or enlarged knowledge that you can give the power of an abiding strength to any people. It is in the heart, and the people who are possessed of the spirit of love of righteousness, of a determined and reverent allegiance to the laws of holiness, scrupulously pure in their social life, scrupulously honest in their commercial dealings, scrupulously righteous in the way in which they conduct their public affairs—there is the strength, there is the stability of peoples. When Rome falls, she falls because of the immorality within her. "Rome shall perish," sang the poet, but when you ask where is the power by which she fell, his answer is, "In the blood that she has spilt." The violation of the eternal laws of righteousness is the undermining of

national strength. And as we see this great British Empire scattering its possessions far and wide over the purple seas and gathering all nations, dusky and white, under her control, spreading her commerce in all lands. making her sails to brighten on every sea, our feelings of pride must be tempered by the thought, will these things abide, and the answer is, "Righteousness exalteth a nation," righteousness gives stability to a nation's power. In purity alone lies the guarantee of permanence."* This has the ring of a Hebrew prophet. During the past year Christian ministers of all denominations throughout this Dominion, irrespective of creeds or party politics, have been thundering against the corruption in high places, corruption revealed by the investigations and disclosures at Ottawa and Quebec during and since the recent session of the Dominion Parliament —investigations and disclosures that have caused both political parties to blush, and that have disgraced the Dominion in the eyes of all civilized nations. Did Micah live to-day, judging from the prophecy which we have just been studying, would he not pronounce God's judgments against all boodlers and perverters of public justice, and predict the speedy overthow of the nation whose national life was corrupted by the most flagrant violations of the sacred and eternal principles of right? We need more men in our Senate chambers and legislative halls of the Micah stamp; men who know not what it is to shrink from braving danger, exposing falsehood or fighting against wrong; men who can say with Sidney, the immortal English patriot, who, when told that he could save his life by denying his own handwriting: "When God has brought me into a dilemma in which I must assert a lie or lose my life, He gives me a clear indication of my duty, which is to prefer death to falsehood;" men like the martyr, Galeazius, who, when urged by his friends to recant and save his life, replied: "Death to me, with the testimony of truth, is sweeter than life with its denial."

The great spiritual lesson then which we gather from our study of Micah is this, that rightness of heart, moral integrity, is the one divine requirement; that no ritual observance or unspiritual formalism can take the place of purity of heart and

* The Lord Bishop of Ripon.

life; that no nation can have continued prosperity, whatever its material resources or natural advantages or intellectual culture may be apart from righteousness—righteousness at the basis of our home life, our social, commercial, intellectual and political life. "Righteousness exalteth a nation." In a word, what does the Lord require of us in all life's varied relations, "but to do justly, to love mercy, and walk humbly before our God?"

Wingham. SAMUEL SELLERY.

THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY THE PIONEER OF CIVILIZATION.

THE Christian missionary has been in the past, and still is, the leading agent in the civilization of the nations. The forces that elevate and develop the resources of a country are usually brought to it from without. The Anglo-Saxon race, composed of the most energetic and enterprising people on the face of the earth, is under God, the foremost of the Christianizing and civilizing forces of the age. Its instinct for colonization, its wonderful power of adaptation to the climatic, geographical and strategical conditions of the countries it occupies; its exceptional skill in developing the resources of forest, field and mine, lake, river and sea; its commercial activity, its faculty of controlling councils, influencing men in high places and low; and, above all, the enlightened and practical form of its Christianity, render it, notwithstanding many serious defects, the missionary race of the age. The civilization of this continent was not the work of the aborigines. Had it been left to them it would have remained a wilderness. Though we neither forget nor undervalue the early labors of the Roman Catholic missionary, we are warranted in saying that it was the more intelligent Christianity, the more massive manhood, the more Puritanic and high-principled piety of the Anglo-Saxon that became instrumental in the providence of God in the production of the civilizations that now obtain in Canada and the United States. The darkest Africa is coming out of her darkness into the light, under the guidance and guardianship of the same indomitable race. Egypt, though she

had built the pyramids and pierced the ages with the inscrutable gaze of the mysterious Sphinx, lined the banks of her Nile with temples and educated Moses, the master of Jewish law and literature, fell back into the sleep of centuries, till she was wakened by the clink of the Anglo-Saxon's hammer, the tick of his telegraph, and the rush of his railway trains.

But it was not always so. Let us look at that land which we affectionately call the "Mother Country." That she occupies a high place among the nations, none will deny. The activity and extent of her industries, the splendor of her scientific achievements, the ability of her statesmen, the equity of her administration, her political ascendancy, her far-reaching commercial relations, her navies upon the waves of every sea, her fortresses frowning from every shore, her armies marching in every clime, her language spoken in every quarter of the globe, her empire touching every zone, attest her greatness. Now, what is the secret of that greatness? To this question many answers might be given by men occupying different positions in the world, and viewing society from various standpoints. No doubt many causes have contributed to it, but it is the boast of every British subject that his gracious Queen declared that the Bible was the principal source of her kingdom's greatness. And amidst the abounding scepticism of this day, it is no small thing to say that the great majority of her civilized subjects believe her noble declaration to be true. But the Bible is not the product of Anglo-Saxon thought. It was brought to Britain from afar. The holy men who wrote it under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, were natives of another continent. Ages ago the Christian missionary, with the gospel message on his lips and the Bible in his hand, came to the forest glades of Britain and taught our forefathers the way of life. The Druidical priesthood disappeared before the revelation of Christ as the great High Priest of the Christian profession, the massive altars were deserted, and the groans of human victims gave place to the cries of the penitent for pardon and peace. The Danish and Saxon deities followed the superstitions of the Druid. Thor's mighty hammer was smitten from his grasp by the stone cut without hands from the mountain. The gospel that saved the

soul, soothed the conscience and sanctified the life, also expanded the intellect. The man, the woman, the child, the home and the state, all felt the uplifting influence of the grace of God. The chivalry of a higher social life succeeded the brutality of the heathenism that was disappearing. The divided states were conquered into unity, and national strength grew out of a healthier moral life. Godliness stimulated genius, and the builder, the architect, the sculptor and the painter vied with each other in constructing and adorning the buildings in which the Christian worshipped. The shrine, the chapel, the cathedral and the minster rose in increasing symmetry and beauty as civilization advanced. Souls swelling with sublime and sacred sentiments sung in spontaneous strains the praises of God, and poetry found a home amid the sanctities of their faith. Spires pointed toward the stars, towers rocked with the sound of the church-going bell, and strains of sweetest psalmody sounded through the aisles of their sanctuaries. Time passed on, and Chaucer lightened the journeys of his pilgrims with his "Canterbury Tales," and Spencer led the fair Una through forest shades and over glassy glades. A band of poets and scholars surrounded the throne of the virgin Queen of the Reformation era; Shakespeare breathed life into his wonderful creations, and sent embodied virtues and vices, bearing names that have become familiar to us as household words, to instruct and interest all succeeding generations. Sir Thomas Moore had written his "Utopia," and gone out into the silent land, dismissed from earth by the headsman's axe. Bacon in later days gave the world a new philosophy, and changed the mental methods of successive generations; Milton, in grand organ tones, sung the sublime tragedy of "Paradise Lost"; Bunyan dreamed his way from the City of Destruction to the Land of Beulah, and woke only when the angel harpers met him at the gate of the Celestial City. Newton saw in the falling apple the principle of gravitation, and solved a mystery which more than fifty centuries of thought and research had failed to explain. He timed the march of the stars, measured their shining masses, traced the mysterious tie that held them together, and lifted the universe from the obscurity of conjecture into the realm of law.

What a magnificent story is that of England's civilization, yet it begins with the work of that lowly missionary who preached Christ to a heathen people long ages ago.

Turning from the progressive civilization of the nation, let us look at the story of the uplifting of the masses as seen in recent history. It is full of suggestive thought and abiding interest. Methodism was born in a college. The intellectuality of its origin is as clear as its spirituality. John Wesley was the leading logician of his year and the best Greek scholar of his day. But his scholarship was sanctified by grace, his manhood was disciplined into sturdy strength, and his gifts were devoted to the good of his fellowmen. Had he followed his natural inclination, he would have spent his days in academic retirement, influencing the thought of the age by the productions of his pen. He shrunk from the noisy rivalry of worldly life; its pleasures had no attractions for him; its pursuits could not absorb him; its honors and emoluments did not tempt him. How often history repeats itself, and how much like one another are the lives of the men whom God uses as His special instruments. Moses was prepared by the solitudes of the desert for his work as the liberator and leader of the host of Israel. Elijah learned his richest lessons, and found his deepest views of the things of God in the storms and the silences of Horeb. John the Baptist came from the wilderness of Judea to startle a nation into life, and make a monarch tremble beside his incestuous spouse. Paul, from the wilds of Arabia, came forth to preach Christ and Him crucified. Luther, from the silent discipline of his monastery, came face to face with superstitious life in peasant and potentate, smote human error to the earth with the hammer of God's Word, and shook the thrones both of sacred and secular power. John Knox, from the learned retirement of Geneva, guarded by the silent Alpine summits, found his way to Scotland, faced royalty till it wept tears of terror, made wickedness tremble in the highest places in the land, shivered the crucifix to atoms and put a living Saviour in its place. So pure-souled, high-minded and tender-hearted John Wesley left all that he held dear in this world that he might, first on this western continent, and after-

ward in his native land, bring souls to Christ. The spiritual life that brought peace to the people called Methodists, enlightened their minds, roused their energies, and impelled them to intellectual effort. The dissipated became sober, the indolent industrious, the unclean became clean, the ignorant realized their ignorance and sought after knowledge. The masses to whom he devoted himself were practically heathen, and John Wesley was as really a missionary as any who went to Fiji or to Central Africa. Many a congregation of barbarians, in a distant and uncivilized country, listened for the first time to the gospel of Christ in a far more orderly and respectful manner than did the wilder heathen in some neglected part of England listen to John Wesley. Many a missionary has stepped upon a coral reef among untaught savages with far less risk to his life than John Wesley incurred when he opened his mouth and taught a band of colliers in the "Black Country." And what was the result? There can be no question that Methodism did more for the lessening of crime, the promotion of order, and the social and moral, as well as the religious, improvement of the neglected masses of the English population, during the eighteenth century, than any other movement of that age. Wherever John Wesley saved souls, he provided as far as possible for the mental and material advancement of the people. His schools rose near his chapels; he provided cheap, improving and abundant literature; he promoted industrious and frugal habits through his "Friendly Societies;" he met human life at all its angles, provided for all its needs so far as his system permitted, and led his people along lines of development and improvement. His organizing faculty was as fully developed as his reasoning powers. Neither Frederick the Great, nor Napoleon, nor Wellington, could organize their armies of a few score thousand as John Wesley marshalled his. They often had all their forces within the sweep of a field-glass, but the captains of Wesley's host were separated from him and from each other by oceans and continents. He never sought human power and glory. He lived not for himself, but for his fellowmen. He would not keep even a superfluous silver spoon while a man or woman in all England lacked bread. He has been dead more than a

hundred years, yet he lives in the hearts of thirty millions of people. Every fiftieth man, woman and child upon the face of the earth is an acknowledged follower of John Wesley. They are good citizens of this world, though they are in training for citizenship in the city of the living God. On all questions of righteous living his voice is still heard, nor is it uttered in vain. When Methodism was organized, Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Oxford, was Prime Minister of England. "All these men have their price," said he, as he looked around the assembling members of the House of Commons. John Wesley could say the same, for the price of his followers was the "precious blood of Christ." He taught his people, however, that manhood so purchased was too precious to be used as the tool of political factions. So, while Walpole drove his voters like cattle to the shambles, where honor and principle were slaughtered, it soon became known that a Methodist could not be bought. To-day the vote of the Methodist people is on the right side on the great questions of moral reform, and no people give mere party politicians so much trouble as they do.

Who will deny that John Knox and Andrew Melville did as much for the civilization of Scotland as William Wallace and Robert Bruce did? The holy boldness of the intrepid reformer bore all before it. He bearded tyrants on their thrones, spoke scathing sentences to his sovereign, until Mary, Queen of Scots, wept hot tears of terror and vexation. Threats of imprisonment, torture and death did not terrify him. His whole soul was engaged for the salvation of his country. No truer patriot ever lived, but his patriotism moved along higher lines than that of the warrior and statesman. He saw that the highest and best form of citizenship was that which would meet the approval of the King of kings, the most potent, political institutions those which were as pure as they were powerful, and that the real "rights of man" would be most clearly conceded under a constitution that recognized the prerogatives of the Ruler of the universe. To build up a righteous nationality was his purpose, and he lived and labored for that end. On one occasion he retired at night to the garden behind his house in the Cannongate to pray. His serving man, anxious for his safety,

silently followed him. As the great reformer continued his supplications, his emotions became so intense that they amounted to agony. Again and again he cried with increasing fervor, "Lord, give me Scotland or I die." Never was prayer more evidently answered. God gave him Scotland. The spirit of John Knox pervades that land to-day, though hundreds of years have passed since that prayer was uttered. The Genevan theology which he brought from the shadows of the Alpine peaks, speaking more of Sinai than of Calvary, more of law than of love, more of Divine Sovereignty than of God's Fatherhood, rugged and massive as the mountains amid which it was born is the theology of Scotland. But that stern system had its uses in the stormy days of the Reformation. The sharpest weapons of the spiritual armory were required to meet the forces that were then arrayed against the truth. Armed with fatalistic forms of expression that matched the severity of his own intrepid and granitic nature, John Knox, like the cliffs of his own country's iron-bound coast, dashed into fragments the waves of sacerdotal passion that hurled themselves against him. The sunbeams of royal favor and the storms of ecclesiastical persecution were alike powerless to subdue him. A weaker hand and a feebler religion would have failed to meet the exigencies of his times. Where loyalty was narrowed to the devotion of the clans to their separate chieftains, where the peasant knew no higher sovereign than his own leader, where a castle was a court and its demesne a principality, where feuds ran like lightning-riven chasms through successive generations, where hereditary hatreds were as sacredly held as their native inheritance, it required an authority as severe as it was strong to mould these conflicting elements into unity, and subdue them into permanent peace.

A quarter of a century before the death of Knox, a babe was born near Montrose, who was to be the leader of the educational department of the Scottish Reformation. Andrew Melville was, like Knox, a missionary of the cross. He, too, was a student at Geneva, and brought back to his native land a firm belief in the Calvinistic creed. But he became more of an intellectual than a spiritual power, Cautiously and wisely he laid deep and wide the foundations of an educational system, the growth of which

went on side by side with the spiritual development of the nation. The effects of it are felt and seen in the civilization of to-day, and its leading features will probably never disappear from the history of that country. Thus the intellectual uplifting of the people followed their spiritual awakening, and their mental as well as their moral prominence is traceable to the labors of the missionaries who carried to them the gospel.

Is it not equally true that St. Patrick, the early messenger of truth to Ireland, did more for the people of that country than any scholar, statesman or military leader? The roll of her illustrious men is a long and brilliant one. Her heroes, sages and poets; her orators, artists and historians, are among the most renowned of men, and her history is that of illustrious deeds and famous characters. But among them all there is not a man who has stamped his impress so indelibly upon the life and religion of that people as St. Patrick. Though there may be a halo of romance about him, though tradition has added many marvellous statements to his real record, and though his personality is somewhat indistinct as seen through the haze of nearly sixteen centuries, yet the story of his earnest toil on his self-chosen mission field, his intense love for the souls he sought to save, his courage in braving the fierce persecutions to which he was exposed, and the real work he did for the Master, is sufficiently clear to place him among the most saintly, heroic and successful of Christian missionaries. The light that history throws upon that early period is exceedingly imperfect. We know comparatively little of the social, industrial, domestic and religious condition of the people of that day. The names of a warrior or two, perhaps a petty chieftain or a wandering poet, have struggled doubtfully down to this century. On St. Patrick's brow no crown was placed, his hand grasped no sceptre, he was seated on no royal throne, yet fifty generations of Irishmen do him homage, and his name is reverenced in every home. Neither the statesmanship of Grattan, nor the fiery eloquence of O'Connell, nor the undaunted genius of Wellington, has done so much for Ireland as this lowly minister of Christ did. Though the poetic and patriotic numbers of Moore are dear to his countrymen, St. Patrick's name will be remembered when his is forgotten. The

mandates of monarchs, the subtleties of statesmen, the conquests of armies, the material achievements of science and the choicest productions of literature and art may pass away, but the work done for God and humanity by the heralds of the cross shall never perish. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

If we turn our eyes for a moment to the continent of Europe, we find the same historic principle illustrated and confirmed. To the heroic Huss of Bohemia, the rugged and undaunted Martin Luther, and the saintly scholar, Melancthon, to Calvin and Zwingle in Switzerland, Farel in France, and Savonarola in Italy, European civilization owes a debt that it can never cancel. The history of that continent is far older than that of Christianity; it leads us back into the realms and the days of classic story. Greece was the mistress of science, the home of ancient taste and refinement, the acknowledged and venerable preceptress of the Roman Empire. Rome, lifted to the throne of the world by the power of the sword, gave historic renown to southern Europe; but neither the philosophy of Greece nor the legions of imperial Rome could do for that grand old continent what the missionaries of the cross have done. When Paul listened to the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us," he did more for Macedon than either Philip or Alexander the Great could do. Paul on Mars Hill did more for Athens than all that her heroes and her statesmen had done for her. Paul, a prisoner at Rome, was doing more for the uplifting of her citizens, and the conquest of the world, than Cæsar did. And in later days, Frederick the Great, whom Carlyle almost worships as a demigod, and Bismarck, the man of blood and iron, did far less for their country than was done by the Monk of Wittemberg. It is easy for men of average courage, when the cheers of thousands of brave men are ringing in their ears, and all the pomp and circumstance of glorious war combine to assure them of victory, to face embattled ranks of foes and do deeds of heroism. But Luther was spurred on by no such stimulants. As he, a lowly monk, went forward to face the princes and the prelates of Christendom at the Diet of Worms, he did a more

heroic thing than men have done upon the field of battle. He struggled not for a few square miles of territory, not that he might win worldly fame, or that he might lay his hand upon vast spoils. He sought the truth, and he armed himself with celestial armor that he might defend it against all comers. It was his purpose to lift men out of superstition, ignorance and sin into the clear light of gospel day, to break the fetters that bound men's souls and admit them to the liberty of the children of God. By preaching a full and free salvation through faith alone, by translating the Holy Scriptures into the language of the people, by stripping the religion of the day of all useless and confusing accessories, by placing the pardoning grace of God in the stead of priestly indulgences, rearing the cross where the crucifix had stood, pointing to the supremacy of Christ, and resisting the dominancy of a man-made hierarchy, and by inaugurating a system of education for the masses, he did more, directly for Germany, and indirectly for the world, than any man of his age. Yet to him with all his greatness, Luther was nothing and Christ was everything. As he stepped into his waggon to begin his journey to Worms, the students gathered around him and shouted, "Luther forever, Luther forever!" But Luther bared his brow, and said: "Christ forever, the gospel forever."

Could we follow the footsteps of the devoted Livingstone as he travelled over the narrow and almost impassable paths of Central Africa, suffering frequently from fatigue, fever and exhaustion, exposed to the attacks of savage beasts and more savage men, we would see that such was the unfailing kindness of his sanctified nature, the purity of his life in the midst of abounding impurity, and the influence of his character and the power of the truth he taught, that wherever the foot of this Christian missionary was planted, there civilization began. He came into contact with some of the lowest specimens of our race; he met human nature in its most degraded forms; he dealt with it under the most discouraging circumstances; but his labors were not in vain. He lived among them as an embodiment of goodness, a revelation of Christian personality. His name is a power for good in the dark continent to-day, and

his memory is universally revered. It was his splendid task to open the way for the Christianization and civilization of a continent, and most nobly did he accomplish it. England did herself honor when she opened beneath the fretted roof of Westminster Abbey a fitting grave for the distinguished traveller. It seemed as if the civilization of the old world was touched by the hopefulness of African heathenism, when Livingstone's servant, a child of the dark continent, stood amid the peers and warriors and statesmen that were gathered there, and cast a spray of palm down upon the casket that held the form he loved so well. It may not be amiss for us to remember that the tablet in Westminster Abbey that commemorates his virtues, speaks of Livingstone as "The humble missionary and the pioneer of African civilization."

The Christian missionary had much to do with the civilization of this continent. The bands of adventurers who found their way in earlier days to Maryland, Virginia, and other points along the eastern seaboard, took with them men of God who laid the foundations of Christianity, where their congregations placed the corner stones of a new nationality. Nor can we forget the men of the *Mayflower*—men who left their comfortable homes in the midst of an advanced civilization, and came, in winter, to the then savage shores of New England. They were led across the ocean by no attractive schemes of colonial enterprise, by no ambition to found a new empire. They came to gain, what was more to them than wealth, or power, or prestige, a place where unmolested by prelatical power they might worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. They had seen their brethren imprisoned, mutilated and maimed, because they would not conform to the superstitious observances of a religion which savored more of man than of God. They carried little more than their Bibles with them. One of their first acts on landing was to kneel in the snow and worship God. The north wind swept through the leafless forests; the icy atmosphere sent a chill to their very bones; the glittering eye of the savage gleamed stealthily upon them from the depths of the woods; death from exposure threatened them, but they were free men and women; their hearts were as free as their hands.

no fetters held their consciences. They were missionaries of Christ, though they called themslves by no such title. They were laying the foundations of nationality, though they knew it not. Plymouth Rock, by which they knelt in prayer, was to have more historic significance than the pyramids of Egypt. They were men of rare conscientiousness, placing principle before pelf, the power of truth higher than the might of monarchs, and holding their Bibles as more precious than bread. They were men of great decision of character, rugged as the rocks of their adopted shores, and firm as the everlasting hills. They built into the nationality they were forming so unconsciously, an element that is more precious and powerful than wealth, or talent, or patronage, or position, namely, character. They were narrow and rigid, but they were strong. New England manhood was an element of permanence and power. Foreign immigration does not overwhelm it, corruption does not wash it out. It does not bow to the tyranny of Tammany Hall, nor follow the lead of men of the type of Boss Tweed. It is still distinguished by noble names in literature, law, art and religion, such names as those of the Beechers, Stowe, Emerson, Philips, Holmes, Lowell, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Parker, and others.

In glancing at the history of civilization, in other parts of this continent, we cannot fail to notice the influence of the Roman Catholic missionary. Far as we may be from accepting either the teachings or the tactics of the Jesuit, we cannot deny that his self-sacrifice and devotion, as manifested in the early history of North America, are worthy of cordial recognition and high praise. Along the shores of the St. Lawrence and the magnificent chain of lakes whence the waters of that mighty river flow, we see well-defined traces of the labors of these earnest men. Close to the Hudson's Bay posts, on the upper Ottawa, fringing the boundaries of Hudson's Bay, casting their shadows on the waters of river and lake till they approach the Arctic Circle; away over the northern and western trapping and hunting grounds of the "Great lone land;" in the shadows of the Sierras, touched by the breath of the Pacific; amid the orange groves of California, Mexico and Florida, and dotting at distant points the banks of the Mississippi, the missions of these earnest

men were seen, in some localities indicated, centuries ago. There can be no question that their religious instructions, imperfect though they were, communicated some saving facts relating to the great atonement, and were also associated with sufficient training in secular things, to aid the natives to advance from the savage state in which they were found toward the elementary conditions of civilization.

The work of the Protestant missionaries, though commenced in many localities more recently, has been more effective and speedy in its results. A clear presentation of gospel truth, making the plan of salvation intelligible to the ordinary intellect, has led not only to the conversion of multitudes of souls, but to the formation of those habits of industry and frugality, which inevitably lead to a condition of comfort, if not of wealth. William Carey was a boy of only four years of age when Lawrence Coughland began his work as a Methodist missionary in the Island of Newfoundland. Eighteen years before that celebrated herald of the cross went to India, William Black began his evangelistic labors in Nova Scotia, and seventeen years later the Methodist preacher opened his mission in Upper Canada. Pursuing their way on foot through almost trackless forests; plunging into the soaking soil of miasmatic swamps; risking their lives in swimming through deep and wide rivers; sometimes camping beneath the silent stars far from human habitation; at other times sharing the scanty food and the rough shelter of the backwoodsman's cabin; they carried the glad tidings of salvation from house to house, and led many souls to Christ. They answered as best they could the eager questions of enquiring men and women; brought into the forest depths the story of the transactions of the outside world; brought the culture of their own minds into helpful contact with the involuntary ignorance of frontier life, and dropped into many a young heart the germs of a later development of intellect and resource. Wherever they went the coarse dissipation, which too frequently was the result of discouragement and dissatisfaction, gave place to the propriety of life which was founded upon the peace and joy of a conscious salvation. The bounding heart of the saved sinner stimulated his intellect, and his whole nature

awoke to the consciousness of higher things. Forth from the homes of the early settlers of our maritime and inland provinces, came a band of men, vigorous in mind, strong in thought, rigid in integrity, pure in lip, ready to deal with the great questions of the day. Such were the men who built up the structure of responsible government, in which the reign of law and the maintenance of order were happily combined, with ample security for the liberty of the subject; the men who constructed our unrivalled system of municipal administration, reaching from the newly organized township in the backwoods to the oldest county, from the tiniest incorporated village to the vast cities that, in their hopeful activity and matured strength, rival the commercial centres of the Old World. Such were the men who in conjunction with others from the Mother Country, perhaps their equals, certainly not their superiors, bound together in one vast Dominion, this grand confederation of colonies. Such, too, were the men who have secured to us liberty of conscience, our open Bibles, and a system of education second to none in the world. It is no discredit to them to say, that the ideas they evolved, the great historic deeds they did, the proud position they, under God, have placed our country in, are largely due to the early missionary. The consecrated hands that pulled the latch-strings of the log cabins long ago, moulded the minds and shaped the thoughts of the men to whom they ministered. Who can say that, influencing our domestic, social, educational, municipal and national institutions to-day, there are not principles and methods that were suggested by some utterances heard long ago from the lips of the missionaries in backwoods religious services and conversations? There are men of God who, though long since laid to rest beneath the forest's shade, still speak in the words of those whose very personality was shaped and energized by such means as these. We have met more than one senator who confessed that their power to speak in the presence of others was gained in the cottage class-meeting, and the readers of this article do not need to be told, that the great and noble man, who gave Ontario her unrivalled educational system, was not only led into public life through such means as these, but was himself in his early days, a devoted laborer in the missionary field.

What is true of this land is true of every region in which missionary work has been, or is being, done. The evangelization of the Fiji Islands led to their civilization; India has been led in the same direction by the Christian missionary. The same is the case with Australia, and all the islands of the sea in which the gospel has been heard and received. In Japan, the telegraph, the railway, and the steamship follow the messengers of the cross. The age-long isolation of China is yielding to the influence of the gospel. The Christian nations of the earth are the civilized ones. In them are found the choicest productions of the sculptor's chisel and the painter's pencil, the grandest discoveries of science, the profoundest systems of philosophy, the most varied, instructive, and polished literature, the most practical solutions of social problems, the widest charity, the most daring enterprises, and the most far-reaching and intricate commercial relationships. Strength of character, the product of Christian principle, moves hand in hand with energy of will and activity of mind. The religion that brings man into loving contact with supreme benevolence in the bosom of God, places him in thrilling touch with the magnificent thoughts of the Master Mind of the universe. Christianity influences the whole man, improves all his interests, multiplies his resources, and lifts his completed nature to a higher plane. The sympathy that subsists between every member of the body through the nerves, is still more apparent and real between the mental and spiritual nature. To uplift the one is to elevate the other; the machinery that affects the one thrills the other; and in the results of missionary toil throughout the world we have at once the illustration and confirmation of the Scriptural declaration, "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having PROMISE OF THE LIFE THAT NOW IS and of that which is to come."

Mount Forest. WILLIAM WILLIAMS.

THE NATURE OF CHRIST'S ATONEMENT.

A CONTRIBUTION TOWARD THE FORMULATION OF A CONSISTENT ARMINIAN THEORY.

INTRODUCTORY.

By all Christians the atonement of Christ is regarded as the grandest achievement, as well as the most important of all truths. The atonement of Christ is the central thought of the Christian system, the measure at once of its beneficence and its might. Considered as a doctrine, the atonement is to Christianity what the keystone is to the arch, the bond that constitutes it a unit, the secret of its strength, and the crown of its symmetrical proportions. Considered as a life, the atonement is to Christianity what the heart is to the human body, the fountain whence it springs, and the motive power by which it acts.

Methodism has never formulated an authoritative theory of atonement; nor does she, in our judgment, possess one that is perfectly consistent with the other elements of a genuine Arminian Soteriology. In this matter—as Mr. Wesley said in reference to another—Methodism "leans too much to Calvinism." To no inconsiderable number of her children this is equally a matter of regret and of solicitude. While it may be true that after man has exhausted his powers and resources, there will be much in the atonement that is unknown to him; yet, if we cannot reach the summit of this mountain of truth, that is no reason why we should forever remain at its base in ignorant credulity. The facts of our nature bind us to the attainment of intelligent reasons for our convictions and acts. If we are to trust our interests for time and eternity to the death of Christ, the question arises, and we ought not to crush it even if we could—Why? We do not intend to intimate that a *rationale* of the atonement is necessary in order to salvation: that would make the salvation of many impossible, a conclusion which is as repulsive to a genuine Arminian as it is derogatory to the character of God. The atonement is not the reason for the sinner's faith, but for the exercise of God's mercy toward

the sinful. Nevertheless, as far as in us lies, we ought to be able to give "a reason for the hope that is within us."

Upon a subject like this we are often told that we ought not to theorize at all, but simply to accept the fact as it is revealed to us in Scripture. This advice is at once wise and unwise; for we are persuaded that much of the stereotyped phraseology and the morbid sentiment on the nature of the atonement is nought but a refuge from intellectual difficulty on the one hand, or an excuse for the neglect of intellectual effort on the other. It is simply impossible to think about the atonement without building up a theory: the moment we begin to think, that moment we begin to theorize. "Fichte was wont to base the utility of philosophy on the fact that the thinking man cannot but philosophize; with at least equal truth it may be said that the thoughtful Christian cannot but theologize."[1] The vital issues which hang upon atonement emphasize the need of close, clear, and definite thought on the subject. It is no mere curiosity, nor the motions of intellectual pride that have prompted our study of this subject; but the awful alternative of eternal life or death as the destiny of the soul. With these issues before us, we have felt the tremendous force there is in the words of Dr. Dale: "To speculate is perilous; not to speculate may be more perilous still."[2] To this reasoning it surely is no valid objection to intimate that there are so many erroneous or defective theories which do dishonor to the Saviour's work, or to the nature of man for whose salvation He laid down His life. The existence of false theories may act as beacons to us in our investigations; but their existence suggests that there is a true theory, and the facts of our nature demonstrate that it is our duty, if possible, to find it.

In a series of articles which are to appear in this review, it will be our aim to point out some of the conflicting elements which have crept into our Arminian Soteriology, and at least to indicate the direction in which a consistent theory of atonement may be found. It is hoped that the readers of the review

[1] Prof. A. Cave, in "A Symposium on the Scripture Doctrine of the Atonement."

[2] "The Atonement," p. 14.

will look upon these articles as the writer does: not as dogmatic statements of truth, but as the thoughts of one whose sole object in the study of the subject has been the discovery of truth. If we may, without immodesty, adopt the words of Anselm, we say to our readers: " . . . . the condition on which I wish all that I say to be received, [is] that if I shall have said anything that a higher authority does not confirm, although I seem to prove it by reason, it be not received as a certainty, but only as what in the meanwhile seems true to me, until God in some way gives me a clearer revelation. . . . . for indeed we must know that whatever a man can say or write on the subject, the deeper reasons for so great a truth still remain concealed."[1]

We begin in this issue a study of the principles and facts which underlie the doctrine of atonement.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES AND FACTS.

I. Moral Law.

No discussion of atonement can be of much value that either ignores or slightly deals with the question of God's moral government. With a view of ascertaining what it is, and what its relation to the fact and doctrine of atonement, we therefore enter upon its study. Upon the mere fact of a moral government it is scarcely needful that we should linger. This is abundantly established by an appeal alike to man's nature and environment. The arguments of Bishop Butler on this subject have never been superseded, much less answered, and on this vital matter we must be content to refer our readers to the immortal Analogy.

Man's moral nature implies a basis or standard of righteousness prior to it, a standard to which the consciousness of each individual makes its appeal. This standard of righteousness must centre in a person, no abstraction meets the requirements of the case. Well has it been said that "the true obligation of moral law can only be discerned when we pass from the order to the Orderer, from man to God.[2] Here the question naturally

[1] "*Cur Deus Homo*," p. 37.

[2] Fernley Lecture, 1888, "The Christian Conscience," p. 104.

arises, What is that standard of righteousness to which man makes his appeal, and by which he measures the moral quality of his actions? Or to put the matter in another form, What is the nature of that law which man is under obligations to obey? In our entire language there is not a word which has been used with greater inexactitude than this word law.[1] Physicist, jurist, and moralist all define it differently. Representing the first class M. Littrè says: "When we have discovered a general fact in the forces or properties of matter, we say that we are in possession of a law."[2] The great jurist, Blackstone, says, "Law is a rule of civil conduct prescribed by the supreme power in a state, commanding what is right and prohibiting what is wrong."[3] Mr. Austin, another distinguished jurist, defines law to be "a rule laid down for the guidance of an intelligent being by an intelligent being having power over him."[4] If we follow the example of Dr. Thompson and Dr. Arthur, and change the terms of these last two definitions, we shall have, for all practical purposes, an adequate definition of moral law.[5] Moral law

[1] "Words, which should be the servants of thought, are too often its masters; and there are very few words which are used with more ambiguity, and therefore more injuriously, than the word Law. . . . In its primary signification a *law* is the authoritative expression of human Will enforced by Power. The instinct of mankind, finding utterance in their language, have not failed to see that the phenomena of nature are only really conceivable to us as in like manner the expressions of a Will enforcing itself by Power. But, as in many other cases, the secondary or derivative senses of the word have supplemented the primary signification, and law is now habitually used by men who deny the analogy on which that use is founded, and to the truth of which it is an abiding witness. It becomes, therefore, all the more necessary to define the secondary senses with precision." "Reign of Law," by the Duke of Argyle. This matter is most ably and thoroughly discussed by Rev. W. Arthur, D.D., in the Fernley Lecture on "Physical and Moral Law," Part IV.

[2] Quoted in Fernley Lecture on "Physical and Moral Law," p. 94.

[3] Quoted by Rev. J. P. Thompson, D.D., "Love and Penalty," p. 143.

[4] Quoted in Fernley Lecture on "Physical and Moral Law," p. 109.

[5] Mr. Arthur's definition of moral law is as follows: "It is a law given by an intelligent being to an intelligent being, to specify and determine his proper relations, first to other intelligent beings, secondly to non-intelligent creatures, thirdly to unconscious things, and finally to specify and

is the rule of conduct laid down by the Supreme Sovereign for the regulation of the lives of all His moral creatures, commanding what is right and prohibiting what is wrong, the observance or breach of this rule determining the relation of the subject to the Sovereign.

The essential elements of moral law as indicated in the foregoing definition, are rightful authority on the part of the Law-giver; the obligation to obedience on the part of the subject, associated with the utmost freedom of action. "Liberty and authority are the two poles of the moral world; the one necessarily implies the other, just as effect implies cause, and adaptation implies purpose. There can be no legitimate authority if there is no real freedom, and there can be no real freedom if there is no supreme authority to guide and defend liberty."[1] Herein lies the essential difference between what, by an admissable figure, are called physical laws and those designated moral; the former represents but one will, that of the Law-giver; the latter represents the will of the ruled as well as that of the ruler.[2] When the physicist finds an established order in the sequence of events, he has not, as he is quite apt to imagine, discovered a law; he has simply ascertained a series of facts.[3]

determine his relations to the Law-giver, in case of obedience on the one hand and of disobedience on the other. Such law goes into force by virtue of the mere authority of the Law-giver" See "Physical and Moral Law," pp. 115, 116. Dr. Thompson's definition is, "A rule of moral conduct, prescribed by the Supreme Head of the universe, commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong." See "Love and Penalty," p. 144.

[1] Rev. B. F. Cocker, D.D., in *Princeton Review* for January, 1879, pp. 69, 70.

[2] See "Physical and Moral Law," p. 122.

[3] "The phrase 'law of nature' is commonly used to denote an observed uniform sequence of antecedent and consequent. This, however, is not a regulative principle of reason, but merely a generalized fact. We do not say 'it must be so,' but only that, so far as observed, it uniformly is so. The word *law* is here used in a secondary sense. . . . . It is important, however, to note the distinction; because observed uniform sequence is not only dignified with the name of law, but also deified as the cause which sufficiently accounts for the existence and order of the universe." "Philosophic Basis of Theism," by Rev. S. Harris, D.D., LL.D., pp. 185, 186. See also Hodge, "Sys. Theo." Vol. III., p. 259.

What men call natural laws are but the modes in which divine power operates in the material universe.[1] "It is a perversion of language to assign any law as the efficient operative cause of anything. A law presupposes an agent, for it is only the mode according to which an agent proceeds; it implies a power, for it is the order according to which that power acts. Without this agent, without this power, which are both distinct from itself, the law does nothing, is nothing."[2] This position of Paley is indisputable, and if we must use the word law as scientists do, to designate an observed order in the sequence of events, we still adhere to the position that those are not truly and properly laws but facts. The indestructible distinction between so-called physical and moral law is that the former intimates what actually and universally *is*, the latter what ought to be. "Strictly" speaking, however, "the idea of law belongs not to the domain of Nature, but to the realm of mind; and in that realm, not to purely intellectual activity, but to the activity of will, desire, and social life. It signifies that which is *laid down*, fixed or appointed by the sovereign authority. It contemplates the possibility of willing obedience to a command, or conformity to a rule, necessarily implying the possibility of disobedience. Its application to Nature is therefore figurative, since in the working of Nature there is neither disobedience nor nonconformity; nor yet anything corrresponding to voluntary obedience."[3] Law in this figurative sense, and law as command are the only forms of it known to us; the former regulating the relations of things, the latter the relations of moral agents. The law for regulating the conduct of primitive man, on obedience to which his destiny hung, was in the form of a

[1] "What a modern talks of by the name, Forces of Nature, Laws of Nature; and does not figure as a divine thing; not even as one thing at all, but as a set of things, undivine enough—salable, curious, good for propelling steamships! With our sciences and cyclopedias, we are apt to forget *divineness*, in those laboratories of ours. We ought not to forget it! That once well forgotten, I know not what else were worth remembering." Carlyle's "Heroes and Hero Worship."

Paley's "Natural Theology," p. 253.

[3] "Basis of Fath," Rev. E. Coudes, p. 196.

positive precept clearly announced. "And the Lord God commanded the man saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of knowledge, of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."[1] The well-being of every moral creature centres in conscious, voluntary obedience to the revealed will of God as the law of its life.

It is profoundly important that we keep this essential difference between the law of force and the law of command perpetually before our minds. The failure to do so forms the basis on which some of the most radically defective theories of the atonement rest. F. W. Robertson, in his righteous recoil from the extreme judicial view of the atonement, has fallen into one equally removed from the truth. When he affirms that "Christ approached the whirling wheel and was torn in pieces,"[2] he is betrayed into the use of a loose analogy which derives whatever force it has from the unwarranted assumption that moral law is administered on exactly the same principles as physical law. A somewhat modified form of the same error underlies many of the statements of Dr. John Young concerning the "self-action" of spiritual laws,[3] a theory we deem irreconcilable with the facts of human experience, and which is in direct opposition to all that the Scripture contains concerning the forgiveness of sin. These theories will come under review again; they are mentioned here simply as indications of the confusion which is likely to arise when we forget the palpable distinction between what Butler calls the "natural" and "moral" government of God. The wise, strong words of G. Steward are worthy of careful thought in this connection: "Good and evil stand for ideas without subsistence, if the things they represent be viewed apart from the behests of sovereignty and the offices of law. They can have no place in a universe of chance or necessity, but appertain solely to the ordinances of a Creator of answerable perfections. They no less imply a Moral Being as their Author, than they do His sovereignty in

[1] Genesis ii. 16, 17.

[2] "Sermons," Vol. I., p. 174.

[3] See "Life and Light of Men," pp. 85, 94, 111, etc.

their distribution and results. Even physical nature so far as we see it, is simply a medium for expressing ideas of a purely moral origin, and is but the projected shadow of a throne that overlooks the high places of the universe, filling them with the changeless splendor of a moral presence."[1]

Though it is not necessary, in this connection, to make any elaborate examination of the philosophic discussions concerning the origin of moral obligation; yet it is essential that our position should be clearly stated. The student who has never wrestled with this problem is scarcely in a position to appreciate the difficulties with which it is beset. The first essential to any clear conception of the subject is a thorough understanding of the terms employed. More than half the difficulties have vanished from the discussion the moment the terms have been bereft of their ambiguity. We must distinguish between moral law and moral government. Law is the truth by which intelligent, responsible beings ought to shape their conduct; whereas government is the authoritative declaration of the truth by which moral subjects ought to regulate life, such a declaration as enforces obedience to its commands by appropriate sanctions. Here then we see there is a distinction between law as the eternal principle of right, and law as the governmental application of these principles of right to particular instances. Now, if I use the word *law* in the former sense, and my opponent uses it in the latter, there is no hope of understanding each other; we have the same word upon our lips, but representing things which utterly differ. With this distinction, however, clearly before us, suppose we try to get at the heart of this matter by admitting the most generally accepted view that moral law takes its rise in the will of God.[2] Just as this admission is made, suppose a disciple of Herbert Spencer appears and says, "Well, gentlemen, if there are no other origins for right and

[1] "Mediatorial Sovereignty," Vol. I., p. 8.

[2] This is the view of Hodge, "All moral obligation, therefore, resolves itself into the obligation of conformity to the will of God." "Sys. Theo." Vol. III., 260; also I., 405, 406. Descartes declared the will of God to be absolute, constituting right and wrong. See "Descartes," by Prof. Mahaffy, p. 190.

wrong than this enunciated or intuited divine will, then, were there no knowledge of the divine will, the acts now known as wrong would not be known as wrong." [1] Now, if we mistake the administration of law for the eternal principle of right and wrong on which the administration of law rests, the objection of Herbert Spencer is unanswerable. If the distinction between right and wrong rest on the mere will of God, where shall we find a solid basis for morality or religion? This theory makes the will of God the standard of His own perfection, whereas the divine perfections are the limit and rule of the divine will. Another serious objection to this theory is that no act of will can create a moral obligation. When there is no higher authority behind a command than that of mere will, it has not yet reached the sacred altitude of law. The command may be both wise and good, but it is simply advice. There must be an antecedent obligation to give any command the force and authority of law. Anselm saw the difficulty which lies just here. He says: "When it is said what He wills is right, and what He does not will is not right, it is not to be understood that if God were to will anything unbecoming it would be right because He willed it." [2] We find that the bare proposition that moral law takes its rise in the will of God is met with unanswerable objections. Suppose we reverently propose another question for the purpose of seeking a solution, "Why does God will as He does rather than otherwise?" Here we have no temptation to confound law with government, on the one hand, nor a mistaken regard for divine prerogative to lead us astray on the other, but a straightforward question to answer. Surely God does not will as He does from necessity, any more than He does from impulse, or from caprice? There must be some reason worthy of His infinite perfections that leads God to will as He does and in that reason we have the ultimate ground of all moral obligation. "The particular drift of every act proceeding externally from God we are not able to discern, and therefore cannot always give the proper and certain reason of His works. Howbeit, undoubtedly a proper and certain reason there is for every

[1] "Data of Ethics." Chap. IV., sec. 18.

[2] "*Cur Deus Homo*," p. 66. Tract Society Edition.

finite work of God, inasmuch as there is a law imposed upon it; if there were not it should be infinite, even as the worker Himself is. They err, therefore, who think that if the will of God is to do this or that, there is no reason besides His will. Many times no reason is known to us; but that there is no reason thereof I judge it most unreasonable to imagine, inasmuch as He worketh all things not only according to His own will, but the counsel of His own will. And whatsoever is done with counsel or wise resolution hath of necessity some reason why it should be done, albeit that reason be to us in some things so secret that it forceth the wit of man to stand . . . . . amazed thereat."[1] With these words of the devout old writer before us, it seems almost irreverent to ask what is the reason why God wills as He does? Yet no spirit of mere curiosity prompts us as we feel impelled to push the question. With much that Dr. Dale has said on this subject we heartily agree; but we regard the distinction which his conclusion compels him to make between the conscience and the will of man (the former recognizing the authority of what he calls "the eternal law of righteousness," the latter the personal authority of God) as abitrary; and one which we venture to think finds no warrant from the facts of man's nature, the experiences of human life, or the pages of inspiration.[2] It seems to us an indisputable axiom, that the true for the Reason is the right for the Will. The mind accepts these propositions without reasoning and without hesitancy. They cannot be proved, but the mind is assured of their truth, because it recognizes them as ultimate ideas of reason.[3] What the divine reason perceives to

[1] Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity," Book I., Chap. 2. The whole of the First Book is full of valuable matter on the question of *law*.

[2] See "The Atonement," pp. 368-373. The very word *conscience* itself seems opposed to Dr. Dale's idea. It signifies not merely what I know, but what I know with another. That other cannot be an impersonal though eternal law; it must be a personal being—*God*.

[3] "There are certain ultimate facts beyond which it is impossible to push our speculative enquiries; certain first or fundamental principles of reason, which are in themselves indemonstrable, but which constitute the ground or condition of all demonstration; certain intuitive perceptions, which are widely different from rational deductions, but which determine and govern

be true, then, the divine will chooses as right. Here we imagine is the fountain whence law takes its rise, and this is the true relation of the divine will to law.[1] But while moral law does

every process of reasoning, and every form of belief. To deny the *certainty* of our intuitive perceptions, because we cannot prove by argument the truth of our mental faculties, would virtually amount to a rejection of al evidence except such as comes to us only through *one* channel, and *that* the circuitous one of a process of reasoning; while by the constitution of our nature we are qualified and privileged to draw it fresh, in many cases, at its spring and fountain-head." "Modern Atheism." J. Buchanan, D.D., LL.D., pp. 341, 342.

"'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' What a world of profound meaning, but seldom noticed in proportion to its weight, is there in that question! We are necessarily referred by it to a prior standard of right, by which the will of the 'Judge of all the earth' itself is regulated. Most delusive, and indeed altogether without sense, would be the appeal, did it signify that whatever the Divine Being might be considered as doing, must on that account, because He does it, be considered as right. The word 'right' would have no reference to a moral standard, but only to irresponsible power; and it would no longer be wicked, but merely foolish to question the divine decisions.

"We cannot but perceive from this and other representations, that the Scriptures presuppose a chain of truths—of essential and unalterable relations—according to which the divine judgments and acts of will are themselves determined; but they do not admit the existence of those eternal truths to be independent, or exclusive of the divine nature. . . . . Though, therefore, the source of truth lies beyond will, we cannot seek for it beyond God Himself; so justly is it said, that He 'is truth as well as life.' And, though divine will cannot be said to constitute truth, yet its decisions cannot but be in accordance with His nature, and therefore unquestionably just. 'The judgments of God are according to truth.'" "The Christian Atonement." Rev. J. Gilbert, pp. 113, 114. Third Edition.

[1] "As eternal in reason, the distinction of right and wrong and the law requiring the right are not originated by any fiat of will, human or divine. Law is eternal in God the supreme reason, and the will of God always acts in conformity with the law eternal in the reason of God. God's will is His reason energizing. It is essential to all true and wholesome theology as well as to all true and wholesome ethics to recognize the absolute supremacy of reason, to recognize the universe as having its ultimate ground in reason and not in will." . . . . . "God is reason, not active and powerless, but energizing freely. God is will, not capricious, energizing in unreason, but a rational and reasonable will." Prof. Harris' "The Philosophical Basis of Theism," pp. 195 and 197.

not originate in the will of God, it is here seen to be inseparable from His person.[1] *It has its roots in His being, its embodiment* in His character, and its expression in His government. No Christian conception of moral law is adequate which does not recognize the Divine Being as sole and supreme authority, from whose behests there is no exemption and no appeal. The only objection that can be urged against the position here taken on the ground of moral obligation is that it puts law above God. To the intelligent reader the extract in the foot-note from Dr. Harris will be sufficient and satisfactory answer to this objection. We are entirely at one with Dr. Whedon when he says, "The talk about such an obligation being 'above Him,' and so undeifying God, is the shallowest *ad captandum*. It is like an eastern despot's saying, in an old play, that he is 'above slavery to his promise,' as if absolution from moral obligation was any elevation, or subjection to it any degradation, to any being."[2]

The violation of moral law cannot be permitted with impunity. This is evident from the penal sanctions attached to it. Blackstone's remark concerning civil may be safely transferred to moral law without the change of a single letter. "The main strength and force of a law consists in the penalty annexed to it." We have no disposition to exalt law above God, neither do we desire to offer the slightest encouragement to any rebel against His authority. Considered merely as the Law-giver, God is to every transgressor "a consuming fire."[3] His "law kept

[1] "The relation of the divine will to the divine nature must be such that the former is the sure exponent of the latter. . . . . Human morality cannot have its ultimate source in mere command, or exercise of authority over dependent being. Such a supposition would imply either that God might act capriciously, that is, without regard to His own perfection; or that He might act in violation of His own perfection. In appealing to the divine nature, we do not affirm that God was necessitated to create, as if He were subject to constraint from a superior power; or as if His power were not exercised in accordance with will. It is simply affirmed that the action of Deity must be in accordance with the perfection of His own nature—can never fall beneath it." Calderwood's "Hand Book of Moral Philosophy," pp. 252, 253.

[2] "Statements Theological and Critical," p. 228. The whole "Statement" is worthy of careful thought.

[3] Hebrews xii. 29.

is gentle as a nursing mother." His "law broken is more terrible than an angry giant." [1]

"There is no outlaw in God's empire whom *fate* may curse, or *fate* may shelter; nor can evil betide whom law befriends, and God justifies." [2] There can be little harm in breaking a law in which the law-giver has not interest enough to enforce. As a mere matter of law, there is no possibility of rectifying the transgressor's relation to the supreme authority; he must bear the threatened penalty in his own person.

The Scriptures have, however, taught us that God is something more than a sovereign law-giver and judge. It is, to say the least, a most unwarranted assumption to affirm that law expresses the entire relations which exist between God and His moral creatures. And yet some theories of atonement are built upon this assumption. On the testimony of the sacred writers, God is also the Father of men; and we claim that the fatherhood is the primary relation of God to man, and that all the other relations of God to man exist for the purpose of carrying out the beneficent ends of the fatherhood. While the fatherhood does not change the sovereignty, it does of necessity qualify it. God is not less our Father because He is also our King. Then, in our recoil from the Socinian theory, we are apt to lose sight of another fact which must enter into any comprehensive and accurate thought on the atonement, viz., Divine prerogative. Subject to abuse as this phrase has been, we dare not conceal it, for in so doing we make an act of grace or a system of mercy impossible. [3] While we are prepared to

[1] "Physical and Moral Law," p. 122.

[2] "Mediatorial Sovereignty," Vol. I., page 14. G. Steward.

[3] "Beyond the views of God which law is adapted to express, we admit two of kindred glory, fatherhood and prerogative; the one the fountain of life, as it is of love; the other of rule, modified in accordance with it, and with the intent, not of superseding, but of augmenting the glory of law itself. Fatherhood is the fount of atonement, as it is also of prerogative. The atonement is therefore the issue of sovereign love, which, nevertheless, cannot express itself but in perfect keeping with government, as determinable by law. . . . . The basis of atonement is therefore twofold: (1) Grace or prerogative; (2) Law, as the organ of government," etc. "Argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews," by G. Steward, p. 79.

contend earnestly that no act of mere prerogative can set a sinner right in his relation to God and law; at the same time, unless law leaves room for the exercise of prerogative, no atonement would be possible, salvation for the sinful would be out of the question. We do not, however, conceive that law as the expression of the divine nature presents any barrier to the exercise of any of His perfections or prerogatives, or in any way destroys the relations in which He stands to His intelligent creatures. We regard it as a theological fiction and not fact which represents one attribute or prerogative of the Deity as in conflict with another. The awful fact of sin has brought the divine law-giver prominently before the human conscience; but surely it has not destroyed the divine fatherhood, nor has it induced a state of civil war among His infinite perfections. There is not a single intimation in Holy Scripture that any perfection of the Deity was in any way opposed to the sinner's recovery from sin. The question before us is not one regarding divine justice or mercy; but simply that at their roots there is no conflict between them. "The mercy that provides and the justice that requires the atonement are one in the recesses of the divine nature. Their union or identity is lost to us in the thick darkness of the light which we cannot approach."[1] Divine mercy finds a free outlet for its exercise through the mediation of Jesus Christ; but, if men shut their souls against its gracious offers, mercy will offer no plea to prevent the execution of the utmost sentence of justice.

John Calvin and his followers have fastened their gaze so intently, if not exclusively, on the sovereignty of God, that they have largely lost sight of His other relations to His creatures, making His perfections to appear in conflict with one another. "Augustinianism is founded on the assumption of the sovereignty of God," says Dr. Hodge.[2] True, but what kind of sovereignty? So far as it relates to the doctrine of atonement, it is narrowed down to the administration of an all-exacting, and all-controlling law. We are jealous of any conception of law which, when pushed to its legitimate, logical consequences,

[1] "Compendium of Christian Theology," by W. B. Pope, Vol. II., p. 278.

[2] "Systematic Theology," Hodge. Vol. II., p. 337.

drags not only man but God at the chariot wheels of an inexorable fate.[1] Law is as immutable as the nature of God, but God is not the slave of law. In a system where law is regarded as the expression of the will of God, it is an anomalous view which, in case of transgression, lays emphasis on the transgressor's relation to the impersonal law, and comparatively overlooks his relation to the personal God of whose will the law is the expression. Law apart from a person is an abstraction, instead of a rule of conduct administered by a competent authority.[2] Strictly speaking man is not related to the law, but to the person of the law-giver; and so long as we insist upon the former to the exclusion of the latter, there is little hope of any adequate or scriptural idea of atonement. "There is indeed a place for the legal in the doctrine of atonement, but it is the subordinate, not the principal place. The legal rests upon the personal, not the reverse. Until this relation is recognized, the legal analogies which have been the bane of theology . . . . . will dominate in the theories of atonement."[3]

What, then, is the precise relation of atonement to moral law? Does it provide for the salvation of the sinner by the substitute's enduring the penalty which the law pronounced as the just dessert of transgression? The devout believer in the doctrine of unconditional election may logically hold such a view. The question before us is not as to whether the vicarious

[1] "We cannot lose the living God in the reign of law if we freely yield ourselves to the necessary relations of thought in our meditation on that reign even as seen in the physical universe, still less I may say is this possible in regard to the moral world; although the tendency to rest in law without ascending to God is manifested in relation to moral law also." "The Nature of the Atonement," J. M. Campbell, 6th Edition, p. 24.

[2] "It would certainly be a glaring contradiction to the moral dignity of man that freedom should bow to an impersonal power, and render voluntary submission and reverence to an impersonal law. An impersonal law which has not a rational will behind it cannot be an authority for my will, cannot bind me, cannot call me to account, cannot summon me before its judgment seat." Prof. B. F. Cocker, D.D., in *Princeton Review* for January, 1879, p. 71.

[3] "Prof. L. F. Stearns, in *Andover Review* for January, 1886, p. 56.

sufferings and death of Christ have answered the ends of law as well as the punishment of the transgressor would have done. That is a truth to which in its proper place we hope to give due emphasis. The question now before us is, Did Christ bear the actual penalty due to the sins of the elect? If it should be objected that the great majority of Calvinistic theologians have receded from this position as untenable, then the question has merely changed its ground, but is not answered; for if Christ did not suffer the actual penalty due to human sin, He must have endured something in its stead. It will be observed here how this theory leaves room for the exercise of prerogative against which it so loudly protests; for if Christ did not bear the actual penalty of sin, but something in its stead, the claims of law must have been relaxed if not dispensed with. So that the real question now before us becomes, "How far?" The Calvinist lays down the premises but repudiates the conclusion; we repudiate the premises but claim that the conclusion inevitably follows.[1] It is impossible to regard the atonement as a question of mere law without being betrayed into a host of contradictory and unscriptural conclusions. No Arminian can consistently entertain the notions of Christ's atonement in relation to law which prevail in Calvinistic literature. The results of the repeated attempts to do so are seen in the conflicting elements it has introduced into our Arminian Soteriology. We find that the Scriptures lay unmistakable emphasis on the fact that all who reject the offers of mercy made in and through Christ have the penalty of the law in full force against their own persons.[2] In this case the penalty has not been dispensed with, not even relaxed; and in consistency with his views of the universal efficacy of Christ's atonement, the Arminian must

[1] For a characteristic Calvinian argument concerning the unrelaxability of moral law, see Symington "On the Atonement and Intercession of Jesus Christ," pp. 55–57.

[2] It is a query worth pondering whether we have not here the solution of the fact that the denial of the doctrine of eternal punishment has for the most part been connected with a Calvinistic rather than an Arminian Soteriology. As a matter of fact, in modern times its denial is almost confined to circles that have been influenced by Calvinism, or that are a rebound from it.

seek some other explanation of its relation to law than that which is given by Calvinistic writers. And it is to be observed that these are no mere verbal differences, but vital, affecting the very foundations of our faith.

The atonement is not so much an affair of law as of sovereign will; as is evidenced, not only by the entire voluntariness of the Redeemer Himself, but of the Trinity whence it takes its rise.[1] Deity was under no obligation to save humanity; but had humanity not been redeemed, it is vital to remember that there had not been a human race, only a man. The intervention of Christ for man's salvation does not consist in anything He has done to relax or to dispense with law; but by the sacrifice of Himself He procures the delay of the execution of the penal sanctions of the broken law, and offers grace adequate for the restoration of the sinful to the image as well as to the favor of God. And, in harmony with the facts of man's moral nature, a personal share in the benefits of Christ's mediatorial mercy is made dependent upon the choice of each individual. This is not to be regarded as a complete idea of Christ's great work for man, yea, we esteem it to be but a mere fragment; yet, so far as that work relates to mere law, it contains the gist of the whole matter. And we claim that this view exalts the divine law and brings out its immutability as no other does, making man's motives to obedience stronger than ever. As the expression of the righteousness of its Divine Author, it is preserved inviolate. The rigor of its claims stands out in bold relief before the moral universe as the expression of God's just hatred of sin, and of His determination to punish it.

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[1] See "The Argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews," by G. Steward, p. 67, where there is a singularly original and important *foot-note.*

THE BIBLE, THE CHURCH AND THE REASON.*

THE case of Dr. Briggs, which is still before the courts of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, has already attracted a good deal of attention, and is likely to attract more before it is finally disposed of. And when anything occurs to so profoundly agitate an important branch of the Christian Church, as this has done, Christian men everywhere, and of all creeds, are naturally anxious to have as clear a comprehension as may be of the questions involved in it. Besides, in this particular instance, the issues involved are not such as concern the Presbyterian Church alone, but such as affect the very foundations of the Christian faith, and are, therefore, of equal concernment to every branch of the Church of God. It is one of those subjects, therefore, which may not inappropriately engage the attention of the great body of divines and theological students to whom the QUARTERLY belongs, and among whom principally it circulates.

In order to engage intelligently in a profound discussion of this kind, it is important at the very outset to get as clear an understanding as we can of the points at issue. And where these are matters of opinion or belief, this can be best done by allowing the person holding the opinions in question to explain them himself. The doctrinal views held by Dr. Briggs, which have given rise to the agitation which has been going on in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and in which some of his brethren discern elements of dangerous error, were first publicly enunciated in the inaugural address delivered by him on the occasion of his taking possession of the chair which he now fills in Union Seminary, New York. But that address has since been expanded into a volume, and it is to a review of this volume, which may be assumed to contain the mature views of the author, expressed in the most guarded language, and sus-

* *The Bible, the Church, and the Reason: The Three Great Fountains of Authority.* By CHARLES AUGUSTUS BRIGGS, D.D., and EDWARD ROBINSON, Professor of Theology in the Union Theological Seminary, New York. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1892. Octavo, pp. 298.

tained by the most cogent arguments at his commands, that I invite attention.

One further observation, however, I ought perhaps to make in self-defence. The object of this paper is neither to defend nor to refute the opinions of Dr. Briggs, but simply to ascertain the exact nature of his teaching by an honest and candid examination of his book. All that I feel called upon to say about the work is that it is a scholarly and really able treatment of questions of vast importance on which great issues depend, and which deserve to be calmly and dispassionately considered.

It is a matter of congratulation that Dr. Briggs maintains the complete independence of the Holy Scriptures, as carrying with them the means of their own authentication and interpretation. I do not understand him as denying the value and importance of those branches of Christian evidence which lie, either in whole or in part outside the sacred volume, except in so far as they may seem to make the inspired writings dependent upon some thing other than themselves. He asserts, with the Reformers and the Puritans, that "the historical evidence is probable; but that the divine evidence in the Scriptures themselves gives the believer certainty, the assurance that his faith and life are founded upon the word of God which cannot be broken, changed, or avoided." Or as it is expressed by the Westminster Confession, that "The authority of Holy Scripture for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man, or Church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the Author thereof, and therefore it is to be received, because it is the word of God."

He takes equally strong ground respecting the self-interpreting power of the Holy Scriptures, accompanied by the illumination and guidance of the Holy Spirit, holding with Luther that "It is the attribute of Holy Scripture that it interprets itself by passages and places which belong together, and can only be understood by the rule of faith," and with Wickliff, that "The Holy Spirit teaches us the sense of Scriptures as Christ opened the Scriptures to His apostles." He holds, indeed, that "The Church is a great fountain of divine authority; but not, if we understand him aright, as a revealer or a discoverer of the will of God. It neither gives authority to the Holy Scriptures

nor is it the divinely authorized interpreter of their meaning. Nevertheless, the visible Church is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, in which He maintains His government, and through which He carries on His conquests and enlarges His dominions. It is the living organ by which he makes Himself and His will known to mankind.

But there is something through which God makes Himself, in some sense, known to men, and His authority felt by them, other than either the Bible or the Church. His converse with man began before either of these had an existence, and there is no reason to doubt that He converses with them still where both the Bible and the Church are unknown. Wherever the missionary goes he finds that God has been there before him. The distinction between right and wrong and the sense of moral obligation are universal. The word "ought," or its equivalents, are found in all languages. And this universal sense of obligation and accountability suggests the idea of some One, not ourselves, to whom we are accountable. Hence, though the fact, we know, is disputed, there are probably no people on earth who have not at least some rudimentary notion of God, and of their accountability to Him as their Ruler and Judge. As it has often been observed, man is everywhere a religious being, and if he had not a God and a religion he would make them for himself. Even upon the bedimmed and shattered mirror of the fallen and debased soul, enough of the Divine is reflected to enable it to fashion to itself some rude conception of God and religion, without which it cannot be satisfied.

It is this divine thing in man which Dr. Briggs calls the Reason.* It is evidently not the understanding or logical faculty which he calls by this name; but rather the intuitional part of our spiritual being, that by which we see and know things, of which we can give no other account or proof but simply that we see them and know them. And it is this divine element, this through which God speaks to the individual soul—"the light that lighteneth every man that

* "I am using reason in a broad sense to embrace the metaphysical categories, the conscience, and the religious feelings."—*Inaugural Address*, p. 225.

cometh into the world"—which lifts man above the plane of merely intellectual animal existence, and makes him a proper subject for religious instruction. Without it such a revelation as that of which we have the record in the Bible would have been an impossibility, and the Church could not have existed. This Dr. Briggs calls "a great fountain of authority."

But one is naturally anxious to know what he means by this phrase. It must be confessed it is ambiguous, and, therefore, whatever may be the precise meaning attached to it in the mind of the writer, it is liable to be misleading. We are apt to look upon a fountain as an original source. But the original source of authority is God Himself. What Dr. Briggs means, if I understand him aright, is that these three—the Bible, the Church and the Reason—are the three great media through which God speaks to men, the three grand instruments by which he produces conviction and certitude in the human soul. And he seems to be of opinion that mental idiosyncrasy, and the bias given to the mind by early training have very much to do in determining which of these is likely to be most influential in particular cases.

It is due to Dr. Briggs to say that he utterly disclaims any intention of making these so-called fountains of authority co-ordinate, or placing them on the same level. On the contrary, he declares most emphatically that the Bible alone is the infallible rule of faith and practice. He says: "Churchmen have exalted the Church above the Bible and the Reason; Rationalists have exalted the Reason above the Bible and the Church; and the Evangelical party have exalted the Bible above the Church and the Reason, but no party, so far as we know, has made Bible, Church and Reason co-ordinate, that is, on the same level, in the same order of equal and independent authority."

The mediæval Christian had the Church and the sacraments, but had not the Bible, and knew little of its contents; and yet he often attained to a real saintliness of character, and to a degree of certainty in respect to the divinity of his religion which enabled him to joyfully lay down his life for it. It would probably be easy to find believers virtually without the Church,

deprived of its ministrations and ordinances, who nevertheless find the Bible, accompanied by the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit, a sufficient support for their faith, even when it is subjected to the severest strain. Then, it seems that cases are not wanting in which men who have failed to find the rest that they have been in pursuit of eithe in the Bible or in the Church, have found it in the Reason, or in that faculty of the soul which brings it as it were face to face with God. Of this latter class Dr. James Martineau is pointed to as an eminent example.

Of course, the normal state of things is that in which all these operate in harmony and conjunction. These are things which it is perhaps scarcely too much to say, that God hath joined together, and which it is not lawful for any man to put asunder. They may be and perhaps should, in the interest of accurate thinking, be separated as matters of thought, but they are too closely united in the great saving work which the moral Governor of the world is carrying on among men to be separated in practice. Let any individual Christian try the experiment, and he will soon find how difficult—indeed, impossible—it is for him to determine to which of these "fountains," instruments, or organs of divine authority he is most indebted for what the Christian religion has done for him. He may be ready to say, I owe all that I am and all that I ever hope to be to the Church; but he will admit that all that the Church has taught him has been drawn from the Bible; and if he meditates upon the matter profoundly enough, he will find that both the Bible and the Church have been appealing all the while to something that was in him independently of either the one or the other of these, and without which it would have been impossible for him to have been beneficially influenced by them. He will find, too, if he carries the analysis of his experience far enough, that the influence of both the Holy Scriptures and the Church have tended to the same point, namely, to bring the soul—what Dr. Briggs calls the Reason—into direct personal contact with God Himself in the person of the Holy Spirit, and to make him feel his immediate, absolute and continuous dependence upon Him and Him alone.

Another chapter in Dr. Briggs' book which is sure to be read with considerable interest, and is sure to provoke a good deal of

criticism, is that in which he discusses the question, "*Is the Bible Inerrant?*" The position which he takes is that the Bible nowhere claims the attribute of inerrancy for itself; that though the inerrancy of Scriptures has been held by individuals at different times as matter of private opinion, it has never been accepted as a part of the creed of the orthodox Church, and that it is not only wholly indefensible, but pernicious and dangerous. He holds, indeed, that "the Bible is the infallible rule of faith and practice," but, according to his view, its infallibility begins and ends there. And he sees no inconsistency in assigning to the Bible this supremacy of authority in the domain of faith and morals, and at the same time admitting that it contains errors in minor matters. "If one should find errors of chronology and geography, of historical statement and description of events, of geology and astronomy, of natural history and archæology, errors in any or all these departments," he says, "they would not be in contravention of the statement that the Scriptures are the only and infallible rule of faith and practice."

Dr. Briggs' own position, which he says he has ever held and now holds, is "that there are errors in Holy Scripture; but that these are all in circumstantials, and not in essentials; that they are in the human settings, not in the jewel itself. Holy Scripture does not claim inerrancy in its human setting, and it does not in fact possess it. It is sufficient if the divine ideals that come from revelation are errorless, so that the Bible can be followed with implicit confidence in all matters of faith and practice. The sacred writings are all able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ. 'Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction, which is in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.' No error has ever been found in the Holy Scriptures which in the slightest degree impairs this precious doctrine."

Indeed, so far from impairing the credibility of the inspired writers as witnesses of the divine and saving truth which they were commissioned to make known, Dr. Briggs holds that their

inaccuracies and errors in minor matters add to their trustworthiness. He says: "A witness in a court of justice is not rejected because he betrays ignorance and slips into errors of detail which may have resulted from carelessness and inattention. His evidence is all the stronger for these marks of symplicity and the faults of common people. A witness who makes no mistakes is open to suspicion, lest his testimony may have been prepared for the occasion by his advocate or himself. Historical documents are not cast aside as worthless because they contain errors. No historical document can be found that is altogether infallible. Even the Pope of Rome does not claim infallibility in all things, in his utterances at the table and on the street, in his conversation with his friends about literature, art, or philosophy, war or finance, but only when, sitting in the chair of St. Peter, he speaks *ex cathedra*, as the Vicar of Christ, in his official position as the supreme head of the Church, in matters of faith and morals."

Dr. Briggs does not reject the maxim, *Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*, but he would confine its application to the substance of Scripture, and the intention of the inspired writers. In his judgment it is not applicable to errors of ignorance or inadvertance, but to errors of deceit or falsehood. "If it could be shown that the writings of the Old Testament, any of them, were written with the intent of deceiving and misleading men, then we could not trust them as infallible in faith and practice. But the errors which have been found in the Bible are not errors of deceit but of inadvertance, not of falsehood but of lack of knowledge." Many of these errors, he admits, have doubtless arisen in the course of transmission through the mistakes of copyists. But these, he holds, may for the most part be traced out and explained according to the principles of textual criticism. He affirms, however, that while this kind of criticism advances steadily toward the original autographs, "it finds the number of errors increasing as well as diminishing." "As it works its arduous way backward, some errors are removed, but others of equal difficulty are disclosed."

Of these alleged errors of Scripture a very few instances are given. The only two referred to in Dr. Briggs' previous writ-

ings, he tells us, are those contained in Matthew xxvii. 9, and Mark i. 2. These were errors of citation. In the former passage a quotation, Zechariah xi. 12, 13, is credited to Jeremiah; and in the latter the evangelist credits Isaiah with what is, at least in part, a quotation from Malachi. Then, either Stephen, in his dying speech, or Luke in reporting it, transposes certain Old Testament incidents, or confuses certain names. Calvin, supposing the speech to be correctly reported, says of Stephen: "It is evident that he made a mistake in the name of Abraham, since Abraham bought a double cave of Ephron, the Hittite, for the interment of his wife; but Joseph was buried elsewhere, viz., in the field which his father Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor for a hundred lambs. Wherefore this passage is to be corrected."

These and other instances of inaccurate quotation, and some other errors presenting even greater difficulties than these, are familiar to every Bible student; but while they certainly do seem to disprove the literal inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures, they are not such as to shake the faith of any well-balanced mind in the entire trustworthiness of the inspired record. As Dr. Briggs says: "All errors that have yet been discovered are but as the moles on a beautiful face, or the discolorations of a cathedral which come in part from the wear and tear of ages, and in part from inner defects in the marbles themselves, but which enhance the beauty and majesty of the structure, witnessing to its antiquity, strength and grandeur," or, to quote another passage from the book under review, "They indicate that the authority of God and His gracious discipline transcend the highest possibilities of human speech or human writing; and that the religion of Jesus Christ is not the religion of the Bible, but the religion of personal union and communion with the living God."

Those who have looked for controversy in this article will, if they honor it with a reading, doubtless experience a feeling of disappointment. As was promised at the beginning, there has been no attempt made either to defend or refute the positions taken by Dr. Briggs in this book. The object which has been kept in view throughout has not been controversy, but simple

exposition. The first duty of the critic—and, indeed, of every student who desires to profit by what he reads—is to understand what he reads, and if possible to understand it in the sense in which it was intended by the writer. This is the motive by which I have been actuated both in the study of this book and in preparing this review.

A time may come for the critical and thorough examination of the teaching of this volume, but so far as this publication is concerned, probably that time has not yet arrived. The whole of this question is at present before the courts of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and it would be scarcely respectful to that great Church, or fair to Dr. Briggs, to attempt to forestall its conclusions. Even if we possessed all the learning, the philosophical insight and logical acumen which would enable us to deal effectively with the profound and difficult questions involved in this discussion, probably no interest would be jeopardized by waiting until the great men who have it under consideration have had an opportunity of saying their last word. From what we know of the ability and scholarship of the learned and godly men who compose the courts of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, we have a right to conclude that all that can be truthfully said in the present state of Biblical criticism and cognate branches of learning, both for and against the positions taken by Dr. Briggs, will in all probability find expression during the course of the pending investigation. In the meantime, the safest attitude for the earnest student who is intent above all things upon knowing the truth is one of interested observation.

There is a zeal for the truth which is not according to knowledge. We are prone to confound substance with accidents, the spirit with the letter; or—to borrow a figure from Dr. Briggs, —to confound the jewel with its setting. Even the clearest thinkers among us may not be able at all times to discriminate between what is essential and what is accidental. And yet, "What is the chaff to the wheat?" The chaff, it is true, has a value and importance peculiar to itself. It differs, however, from that of the wheat in that it is of limited duration, while that of the precious substance which it encloses is permanent. As a familiar

example of what is meant by these figures, criticism has robbed our English Bible of some of its literary beauties. The student of the revised version misses some rare gems of expression; but he is reconciled to the loss, though he feels it more or less keenly by the consideration that he has by the very process acquired a clearer comprehension of the truth. And should this process be carried still further, may it not bring us new cause for thanksgiving?

There is a feeling of perturbation and alarm which we sometimes experience when the sacred writings are subjected to severe and searching criticism which is born of unbelief rather than of faith. We are not afraid when the gold goes into the furnace. We know that the worst that can be done to it even by putting it into the fire is to remove the baser elements with which it has become mixed; and that though in size and weight it may be somewhat diminished, this loss will be more than compensated by resultant purity of the precious residuum. It is only when we have less or more doubt with respect to the genuineness of anything that we shrink from seeing it tried. What a din and pother has been made in our time not only on account of the attacks which have been made upon the Holy Scriptures by enemies, but because of critical tests to which they have been subjected by friends who recognized their own highest interests and the highest interests of universal humanity as being bound up with their sacred truths, but who refused to put implicit confidence in anything that would not bear the severest test which honest criticism could subject it to. But what has been the result of these terrible things that have so frightened us? The spiritual, the divine, the saving truth contained in these inspired writings is now more widely diffused, has a stronger hold upon the confidence of mankind, and is more influential in the affairs of men than it ever was before.

And what has been will be. History has not ceased to repeat itself. Triumph has ever succeeded trial in the history of the truth in the past; and we may be sure that if there is a God above us who superintends the affairs of the world, the same order will be maintained in the future. Men may in some instances believe less as the result of the trial of their faith, but if they be-

lieve less, what they do believe they will hold with firmer grasp. But in any case, whether we will or not, this process of criticism will go forward. It is a law of Divine Providence, that that which is of the greatest value shall be subjected to the severest trial. No marvel that God's Word is a tried Word. If the furnace is for the gold and the fining-pot for the silver, to what sort of ordeal may we not expect to see that subjected which is the foundation of the Church of God, and of the dearest hopes of men? And if all things work together for good to them that love God, can we doubt that all things will work together for the triumph of that truth which is God's supreme instrument of good to mankind, the grand instrument through which He puts Himself in communication with His intelligent creatures in this world? Truth is the outbreathing of God Himself, and it is as imperishable, indestructible and eternal as its divine source.

Let us have faith in God, and we shall have faith in His Word and its ability to endure the severest strain that can be put upon it. But in our zeal for the defence of the Holy Scriptures it may be possible for us to load them with responsibilities that the inspired writers themselves have not assumed. We should not claim less for these writers than they claim for themselves; but we should be careful not to claim more. We should hold them strictly responsible for the exact and infallible correctness of what they professed to be inspired of God to teach. But to go beyond this and to assert of them and for them what they do not assert for and of themselves, is surely to assume a grave responsibility, and to impose a strain upon the faith of honest students of the Bible which it ought not to be called upon to bear. It should be remembered that the writers of the sacred books were the religious teachers of the age in which they lived. As such their paramount duty was to instruct their own contemporaries. But in order to do this, one of two things was necessary, either for them to adapt their teaching to the existing state of knowledge or to teach the people to whom they were sent a perfect system of science, of history, and, indeed, of everything pertaining to the secular aspects of human life as a preliminary step in the process of instruction. But as the latter was impossible, they were by necessity shut up to the former.

If, then, the Bible is found to faithfully reflect the state of knowledge existing at the time that the several books of which it is composed were written, including its defects and errors, there should be no reason for surprise. Besides, the democratic character of the sacred books should not be overlooked. The design of the Bible, both as a whole and in its several parts, was the instruction of the people, in the most comprehensive acceptation of that term. The main object of its authors, though they often addressed themselves to kings and persons in authority, political and ecclesiastical, was to instruct what has come to be called, in these latter times, the masses. The language and illustrations which they employed were, in the proper grammatical sense, popular. They used the language of the field, of the street, of the market-place. And with the true instincts of popular instructors and religious reformers of the people, they seized upon everything that they knew to be of interest to those to whom they addressed themselves, in order to make the impression which they desired, and to move them to the course of action which they believed the Divine King would have them to pursue. It is the ethical and spiritual element in their teaching by which they are to be judged. This is to their histories and essays, their poems and their public addresses, in their entirety, what the jewel is to its setting, the wheat is to the chaff, what the soul is to the body—in one word, what the spirit is to the letter.

Then our zeal for the Bible should not lead us to overlook the claims of the Church and the Reason. It may be doubted whether evangelical protestantism has ever done full justice to the authority of the Church, and the part which it has played in the formation of the Canon of Holy Scripture. We say of the books included in it, that "these and only these have been received by the Church as of divine authority from the beginning." This is not the place to attempt an explanation of this proposition; but, however it is explained, it shows us how closely the Church and the Book are bound up together. It must be true that it was to the Church, in some sense, that these divine communications were made. The Church is the divinely appointed custodian to whose care they have been intrusted. It was the

Church to which was committed the responsibility of selecting from the mass of religious books and tractates, which were produced during the apostolic age, those which contained a record of the Christian revelation, and witnessing to their divine authority. And the living Church of to-day stands in no less intimate relation to these sacred books than it did in the first three Christian centuries, during which the New Testament Canon was taking shape.

Here is a field of critical enquiry which, though beset with formidable difficulties, is too important to be ignored. Sooner or later, the Evangelical Church will have to fairly grapple with the delicate and difficult problem glanced at in the preceding paragraph. And before the solution of this problem is complete, the claims of the Reason, in the profoundest acceptation of that term, will have to be considered. A rationalism which exalts itself above the authority of the Bible and the Church, in such a way as to make itself independent of all light supernaturally communicated from above, is, of course, to be deprecated. But the irrationalism that ignores the divine element in human nature, the nexus between the human and the divine, the foundation upon which all communication between them rests, the organ of inspiration, and the judge of all professedly divine communications, in such a sense as to make any authority, whether it be that of a book or of a society, independent of it, is surely no less to be deprecated. Whatever quality or measure of inspiration may belong to the Bible and to the Church, nothing can take the place or supersede the necessity of the inspiration of the individual soul. It is a precious privilege to be permitted to read the utterances of inspired men who lived in the distant ages of the past—utterances which have been treasured up by the Church of God and handed down to us and to all coming generations. It is a still greater privilege to be permitted to come into personal and direct contact and communication with the Divine Source of all light and love. And what has been said of the relationship between the living Church and the Holy Scriptures, may be affirmed with equal truth of the relation of God to the individual believing and obedient soul—it is as intimate to-day as it has been at any period in all the past. And the

highest function of the Bible and the Church is to bring individual souls, through the mediation of Christ and by the agency of the Holy Spirit, into personal contact and communication with the Divine Father.

Toronto, Ontario. W. S. BLACKSTOCK.

WHAT IS MAN?

WE answer, the Mind, and that neither the body nor the life of the body is the man nor any part of the man. Man is not a compound but a unitary essence—an individual Intelligence of the Spirit order. Because indivisible man is indestructible by means of decomposition, and as the idea of annihilation implies a something becoming nothing, it is unthinkable. This is the conception of man which was held with perfect clearness by Socrates, Plato, Bishop Butler, and St. Paul, and which has been assailed with marvellous power and lamentable success by modern, sensational "positive philosophers." They conceive man to be a purely physical being, or organism, a material compound of many parts, whose career as an organism terminates in dissolution. This doctrine, in its most fundamental elements, has invaded the Church, and, strange to say, learned divines have enlisted as its champions. In resisting its conclusions they have defied admitted facts and the laws of logic.

But, we may be asked, if neither the body nor its life is any part of the man, what are they, and what is their relation to each other and to the Mind or man? An answer to this question calls for a science which is yet to be given to the world —the Science of Life. As an aid in this respect, the science of biology, so called, amounts to nothing, because the term has come to be used only as another name for physiology. Christian philosophers seem to be timid in the presence of this problem of nature, and shrink from making an attack which promises only disastrous defeat.

Discreet silence is regarded as the better part of valor. Still, the question of life is before us, and as stubbornly as ever holds its position in every pathway of philosophic thought. The fact

of the existence of an organic world, animal and vegetable, is too palpable and too stupendous to be ignored, and the silence of a writer in regard to it is a confession that he is unable to touch this, the basal factor in philosophy. Of what value then are his conclusions?

But vital phenomena must be disposed of, and if, as a matter of convenience, we refer them to mind or assign them to matter as their cause, when *in fact* they have a root of their own in a vital world, in either case our philosophy will be confusion confounded into chaos. To identify life and mind as one, if separate entities, is to make a proper conception of either impossible. To treat the phenomena of mind and matter as having a common root before the fact has been demonstrated is to corrupt logic and expose investigation to contempt. Any system of psychology, or physiology, or speculative philosophy, which fails to solve the problem of life on its own proper basis, be that what it may, is essentially defective and worthless. To incorporate in an argument based on things and facts the elements of a known but unsolved factor is to announce conclusions which we know are not true. A knowledge of the value of the unsolved factor—the χ—might utterly change the question. The reduction of the problem of life—that is, a knowledge of this χ—is the desideratum of the philosophy of this age.

Do life and mind give proof that they are separate and independent existences? This is the honest and crucial question. Let us see. The new-born babe is a living being, and as a fœtus it was a vital development. All kinds and forms of organic bodies have stages of development, and at every stage their life is absolutely perfect. The dormant life of the acorn is the life that pervades the mighty oak, and that is reproduced from year to year in the seed it bears—it never changes. In accordance with this law which pervades all nature, the life of the infant is the life of the man, and does its work as perfectly. Apparently at birth the infant is as destitute of an active intellect as anything else that is born. All the parents can hope is that a mental capacity exists which in time will be developed. It is difficult to conceive, if life and mind are but different

names for one and the same substance, that at the birth of the child the life should be competent to keep in motion the machinery of the body, and at the same time give no evidence of thought. Its mental capacity, which in a few days is developed into mind, presents phenomena which are new in its history, such as purpose, will, desire, discrimination, and these are wholly unlike vital phenomena. Two agencies are now in the field of observation, the one unconsciously keeps the body in motion and the other is self-conscious, thinks, wills and feels. The one is ceaselessly active, the other, even in its most rudimentary state, seems to sleep. Matter organized into lungs is made to appropriate the air, the heart as a pump-station receives and drives the blood through the veins and the arteries, and all the other organs of the body perform their legitimate functions. In all these physico-vital operations, the child's mind has no more to do than it had with the life of the fœtus, or than it has with the life of a bird or a tree.

The *matter* of which the body is formed—heart, lungs, kidneys, liver, veins, arteries, nerves, skin, bones, etc., is exactly what it was—carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, calcium, iron, chlorine, etc.—before it became a part of the body, for matter is as incapable of change as it is of annihilation. Hence the matter of the *body* is as incapable of performing vital functions as is the matter of the ground or of a stone. In all organisms the powers of life subordinate physical and chemical forces and laws to their own behests. Chemical forces are never supreme, except in the undigested food in the stomach and in the worn-out and cast-off parts of the body, and these form no part of the body proper. The human life, then, is the body-builder and conservator, and, as a result of its absence, dissolution takes place—dust returns to dust as it was before. Whilst mind returns to God who gave it, the life of the body may go back, as Tyndall says, to that "deep and Unfathomable Life" whence it came.

The most common and abundant kinds of matter—thirteen kinds in all—are used in the structure of organisms, animal, vegetable and human, and these by the Creator were co-related to the myriad kinds and forms of life that make up the vital

world. Each individual kind of life seems to be endowed with a force which so adapts it to the forces of certain kinds of matter, that it is able to work the matter into a structure that is suited to its wants. The eagle life constructs wings with which to soar on the air, the turtle life a shell to burrow in the mud. So far as we can see, mind sustains no direct relation to matter. Man can no more form a mustard seed than he can create a sun.

Vital functions have no consciousness of their own operations. There is as much thought in the flowing of a river as there is in the circulation of the blood, and in a trip-hammer or in a pump as in the beating of the heart. There is life in our hands and in our feet, but we never try to think with our fingers or toes. A tooth-ache is a vital sensation, cognized by the mind, but the nerve of the tooth knows nothing of its own irritation or of the irritation it causes in the mind. Thought may be dull and flagging, but a Spanish fly blister applied to the body will tend to divert rather than fix attention on a given subject. All vital phenomena are cognized by the mind as objects, not of the conscious self, but of something external to itself. By the sensation of touch, mind detects the beating of the heart, and by the sensation of hearing, the ticking of a watch, and the one object is as objective to itself as the other. The fact is, we are as unable to detect thought or purpose in the life of our own body as in the life of a bird or a tree.

The instincts of the bee, the beaver and the bird seem to be separate forms of wisdom, each perfect in its kind, not learned, not acquired, but ready-made and invested, and these kinds of life are manifestly an incorporation, and an expression of a wisdom and a purpose and a power which are external and infinite. Each kind of life is as marvellous in its limitations as it is efficient in its functions. The bee and the spider could not be partners in the same work, and no vital form can do anything but develop and reproduce itself.

The phenomena connected with the development of the Mind of the child are wholly of another and different order. At an early stage of its physical growth, the mother is delighted to witness the flash of thought, the action of will, and the impulse of feeling—desire and aversion. On the instant she distin-

guishes the phenomena of mind from the phenomena of life and matter. As instinct and nervo-vital irritations are noticed in connection with perception, discrimination, purpose and desire, she perceives that, though intimately associated together, they have nothing in common. The different classes of phenomena exist independent of each other, they are indifferent to each other, and never by blending form a compound; mind acts in the realm of thought, will and feeling, and it can act in no other. Its first cognition is probably the sensation produced by the irritations of hunger. This is followed by the cognition of the pleasure of taste. At two and a half months old, it will reject with an expression of dislike a sucking-bottle filled with water or with milk too little sweetened. At fifteen days old, it will recoil from its nurse's hair falling on its face and frown its dislike. At the age of seventeen days, its mind will be attracted by a light and by bright colors. Some children at a month old will give attention to music. After a little they learn to amuse themselves by making a noise. At six weeks, through fear, they will recoil from the caresses of a stranger. The smile of the babe indicates the presence of thoughts which give pleasant emotions. Thus, during its waking hours, a child gives a thousand opportunities to study the unfolding of its mental being, and it will be easy to note that the vital and mental natures act on two parallel lines, and run on harmoniously, but never unite and form a unit of phenomena. In sleep, mind may retire into an apparently unconscious state, but the life of the body carries on its work as usual.

The conception of man as a compound of matter and mind is grossly absurd. Mind, as an unextended existence, though existing in space, does not occupy, that is, fill, a part of space, nor sustain spatial relations to any other thing. As extension is one of the essential properties of matter, every atom demands a portion of space. In the absence of room for its existence, it could not exist at all. Hence, as it is a conceded fact that the extended cannot come into contact with the unextended—with that which does not occupy nor fill a portion of space—it follows that matter can never be brought directly into contact with the unextended mind. Yet it is clear that mind and body

have a wide and powerful influence over each other. Mind controls the hand that guides the pen of the writer, the brush of the painter and the chisel of the artist. The agility of the acrobat and the rope-dancer illustrates the control the mind has over body. How these things can be is the problem which puzzles the world. The materialistic philosopher, by holding to the existence of but one substance, matter, disposes of the problem by destroying it. The monistic idealist, by holding to the existence of a hypothetical infinite, whatever *it* may be, as the only substance, ignores the existence of both mind and body; hence he solves the problem by destroying it.

It is amusing to see how this problem perplexed Descartes, one of our greatest, boldest, and most original philosophers. He wisely held that the essential property of matter was extension, and that the mind, the ego, was the man proper. How the unextended mind and extended matter could come into contact—act and react upon each other—was for a long time an insoluble mystery. But his genius was equal to the emergency. He undeified the Almighty One, and as a ligament or life used Him as an intermediary between mind and body. But it was too much for him to say that God was also the life of toads, snakes and animals, and hence he affirmed that they were automatons, an opinion in which he has been followed by Bishop R. S. Foster. Laromaguirre sums up Descartes' philosophy as follows: "External objects determine certain movements in the bodily organs of sense, and these movements are by the nerves and animal spirits propagated to the brain. The brain does not act immediately and really upon the soul; the soul has no direct cognizance of any modification of the brain—that is impossible. It is God who, by a law which He has established when movements are determined in the brain, *produces analogous* manifestation of the conscious mind. In like manner, suppose the mind has a volition to move the arm; this volition is of itself ineffective, but God, in virtue of the same law, *causes* the answering motion of the limb. The body is not, therefore, the real cause of the mental modification, nor the mind the real cause of the bodily movement. God, as the intermediary, affects both." The factors in this philosophy are matter, mind, and

God, and God acts as an intermediary between mind and body. Is He not thus made a factor in philosophy to suit an occasion? And as He is confessedly infinite and incomprehensible, may He not be made to fit in with other factors as may be necessary to reach any desired conclusion? All such arguments exhibit the stress of the writer, but afford no light to the subject discussed. Any conclusion, to be satisfactory to the logical mind, must embrace all that is contained in the premises of the argument, and no more. Why arbitrarily appeal to God as the intermediary between mind and body, when manifestly a human life is present to serve that purpose?

The thinking world has so keenly felt the need of an intermediary connecting link between mind and body that any notion has been welcomed which would serve the purpose of a plausible theory. The hypotheses of "animal spirits" and "nerve currents" were once quite popular, but their day is past and they are regarded as fictions having no place in science or philosophy.

Since the time of Locke it has been fashionable to regard the mind as a *tabula rasa*, or a sheet of white paper, passive, inactive and incapable of action till impinged upon through the sense organs by some external object. What paper is to the writer, canvas to the painter, and the tablet is to the carver, mind is to stimulated nerves. This conception of mind is the key note to Lotze's philosophy, and he is servilely followed by his imitators in this country. Every work on psychology which has ever fallen under our notice assumes more or less distinctly the correctness of this conception of mind. Bishop R. S. Foster emphasizes it as a crucial point in his philosophy. But logically it is the baldest materialism, and purer fiction was never written. The HOW or the WHY of a thought or a feeling or a purpose is as profound a mystery as the essence of mind itself. The nervous system and mind never come into contact, nor do the nerves afford the faintest conception of the passageway from body to mind or mind to body. Tyndall admits as much. We think it correct to regard the brain as the special organ of the mind in carrying forward its cogitations, but we know nothing of its *modus operandi*. The truth seems to be that the

mind is a self-active subject of its own thoughts and purposes. It holds an imperial position in the realm of thought and *uses the sense organs as instruments* for the accomplishment of its researches.

But finally the facts of human experience demonstrate that the body has a life of its own, and that it is independent of the mind. The disease known as the softening of the cerebral brain may proceed so far as to utterly destroy that organ and reduce its substance to the consistency of thin cream. When the mind's castle is thus destroyed, its whereabouts is a matter of curiosity but not anxiety. We have now before us a living body which apparently is mindless, and if, in such a demolished brain, mind finds in the *medulla oblongata,* or anywhere else, a place of refuge, it has no means of manifesting a thought or a purpose. But the cerebellum remains untouched, the life of the body continues, the physical organs perform their functions as usual, the action of the nerves is normal, the body eats, drinks, sleeps and walks about, but in no way can the presence of a mind be detected. *Vital sensations have become the root of all activity.* When hungry, the body is vitally irritated, but it has no idea that food will satisfy its wants. Set it to eating, and it will continue to eat so long as food is within reach. This lamentable phenomenon of humanity may continue in this condition for years, and the facts of the case demonstrate that the life of the body primarily pertains to the body, and that the MIND IS THE MAN—a spirit Intelligence which for a brief season occupies it.

If, then, man is a self-active and self-directive thinker, dwelling in his relation to this world in a "house of clay," we should, in our everyday labor and ordinary business, regard him as such. The *truth* in the case should occupy the mind. Our conception of him should embrace his individuality as it exists *per se* without regard to his relation to matter, life, or angel, or God. A conscious thought of man as man, when pure, is a fine intellectual achievement. As matter is no part of the thinker, man, his entity will not be affected by its dissolution. The conception will then be clear that *mind is substance* in essence spiritual, and inasmuch as it is inconceivable that a something should become nothing, man will be regarded as incapable of annihilation.

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THE CHURCH'S NEEDS.

EVERY period of Church history has been marked by the discovery and supply of some need. These have differed with the age which caused the need, until we have come to consider Church life and organization very far advanced toward perfection; and yet how far it is from that very desirable goal a few moments of calm reflection will show us. Also that the present day has needs as peculiar to itself as any of past days. These are of a more or less pressing character, according to the standpoint from which we look upon the work of the Church. To some they may seem merely desirable, to others absolute necessities, for the success of the Church's work in this generation. These differing opinions we do not propose to try to reconcile, but simply to direct ourselves to the task of indicating what we conceive to be the present need of the Church.

The Church is not passing scathless through the ordeal of unrest which is agitating the world at large. Christianity in its records, principles, and practice, is being subjected to the keenest and closest research. One sage after another turns aside for a moment from his labors and utters his dictum, making the hearts of some tremble and quake at the verdict given. The outside influence of science has assumed a position, with great assurance as to its own indispensability, of paramount importance; and as some apprentice philosopher gives utterance to his puny thunderings, the knees of men begin to shake with fear, and their faith in the truth and power of the old gospel begins to waver. These and other influences of a like character are making themselves felt in the Church. Changes are taking place in the standards of doctrine upon some hands, while others speak low or with indecision upon certain points which the oracles have not yet declared upon; and on every hand there is a more or less distinct appeal for broadness of thought and expression. The pulpit re-echoes the spirit of the times, and scientific sermons, economical treatises, or a refutation of some phase of current philosophy are delivered. All this is very well in its way, and marks progress made, but without going back to the old

days of superstition and ignorance, when witches were burned and men of science condemned as heretics, and yet withal, days when the cause of God prospered, is it not possible to pay too degrading a devotion at the shrine of science, and in our humiliating unrest to pay too great a price for the benefits we receive from investigation and criticism?

We need to ask ourselves whether this is consistent with an advanced state of Christian life, after 1,800 years of experience, we go back to the standard of the Ephesian Church, and allow ourselves to be more or less adversely influenced by the fulminations and theories of doctrine mongers. Intellectual unrest may bring many pathetic scenes in a man's life, but it is to be doubted whether it makes him any better Christian, or fits him better for service in the Master's cause. Broadness is not without its dangers. Its practice has not been encouraging, as examples, we witness Emerson, Beecher, Theodore Parker, and Lyman Abbot. What was gained in extent was lost in depth; what was gained in quantity was lost in clearness; while on the other hand, "He who lived the best life said the way of safety was a narrow one." So long as Christianity continues to be what it is, a spiritual religion, the old rule must stand good. "We walk by faith and not by sight." Says one writer, "It is my conviction that a man's character may gain more good from downright, stable, dogmatic, positivism, than from a wavering and indeterminate Christianity" (Selby's Sermons, p. 119), a sentiment which seems a counterpart of Spurgeon's manly utterances on the same line. We may modify our intellectual beliefs just as much and as often as we please, so long as we retain our faith in God unmoved. We need a more thorough-going belief in the power of the gospel and the God of the gospel to accomplish His work, not "blown about by every wind of doctrine," which may cross our path, and degrading His cause by waiting like a beggar for the crumbs of comfort which fall from the scientific rich man's table.

The spirit of criticism of the principles and practice of Christianity may render us great service as it points out our needs, and even our enemies may become our friends by so doing, but if our enemies and our friends, with-

out any appearance of collusion on their part, both point to the same need, it must be both patent and emphatic. When J. C. Morison thinks "a true Christian like the flower of an aloe that appears once in a century, or like the marvellous calculating boy, a kind of curious and beautiful moral phenomena, endowed with rare spiritual gifts, at whom others can only gaze and wonder;" or while J. S. Mill says, "Not one Christian in a thousand guides or tests his individual conduct by reference to the maxims and precepts of the New Testament. The doctrines have no hold upon ordinary believers—are not a power in their minds. They have an habitual respect for the sound of them, but no feeling which spreads from the words to the things signified, *and forces the mind to take them in, and make them conform to the formula*" (Essay on Liberty, p. 24). We feel like discounting very largely such statements as coming from men who had no practical knowledge whereof they wrote, with a strong bias in the opposite direction, and consequently a natural exaggeration of the true facts of the case.

At the same time, we have to admit that the sting of such statements comes with the fact that they are half truths, which makes them the harder to meet and controvert. Dr. Dale says, "One great effect of what we call the evangelical revival consists in its failure to afford to those whom it has restored to God, a lofty ideal of practical righteousness, and a healthy, vigorous, moral training. The result is lamentable. Many evangelical Christians have the poorest, meanest, narrowest conceptions of moral duty, and are almost destitute of moral strength" (Evangelical Revival and other Sermons, p. 48). We may not be disposed to go even as far as does Dr. Dale, but the facts are too palpable and significant, as every conscientious minister knows, to be altogether overlooked. A recent correspondence and discussion in the pages of the *Methodist Times* shows how the canker is eating its way into Church life, when some of its members will unblushingly defend, in the columns of a public newspaper, the use of tricks of trade, by themselves and others, and that with a sophistry worthy of any Jesuit doctor. To blind our eyes to such and corresponding facts is folly, and to countenance their practice is treachery to our God and His cause. Another writer says:

"May we not infrequently meet with men who would not cheat, or scheme, or bear false witness, for a moment with their eyes open, but they have acquired a wonderful knack of closing their eyes when it is convenient to be momentarily blind. Our sins assume popular forms and ramifications; of course we do not sin in loud, flashing colors, if we make any pretentions to piety. As a rule, they are sins into which we fall in company with men we esteem, whose sagacity we trust, and who, by their excellence in some things, lead us to think very lightly of the moral errors they illustrate in other things." "It is true that there is a large number of Christ's spiritual precepts which the Christian does understand, and yet which he fails to fulfil, and fails even to make, as they should be made, the working standards of his life. Why? Not because he is not a sincere and earnest follower of Christ; not because he is not ready to deny himself, take up his cross, and follow his Lord; but because his conscience has not been sufficiently educated for him to discern precisely where and how in his daily life he is called upon to realize those precepts in practice. We content ourselves with pointing out an imperative and urgent duty incumbent upon all evangelical Christians—the better education of the Christian conscience" (Davison's Christian Conscience, pp. 201, 202 and 204). To indulge in mutual recriminations, and attempts to shift the blame upon the shoulders of others, is an almost sure sign of guilt; let us apply ourselves vigorously to the correction of the fault. If we are still true to our own doctrinal standards, and still hold and teach Christian perfection, both by precept and example, the duty is doubly incumbent upon ourselves, whatever others may do in the matter. We need a revival in morals as well as in religion, if we as a Church are to continue to live and teach that doctrine. "Through the lack of clear delicate discriminations the Christian life misses its highest possibilities of success, if it does not come to wreck altogether itself. Delicate regulating power from within is what is needed" (Selby's Sermons, p. 103). The comparatively low standard of Christian morals in this busy age is certainly not encouraging to those who hold to the theory of the evolution of morals; surely a much higher standard might safely be

looked for and expected. Doubtless much progress has been made in morals in general, but there seems to be a corresponding lack of progress in the higher walks of Christian morality and practice, which proclaims a lack in some place, and which is most plainly seen when we question ourselves closely, that amidst all our safeguards, defences, attractions, and bustle, we have left the conscience to be its own keeper, until it has ceased to recognize and apply the higher discriminations of spiritual truth. To point out an evil is often an easier task than to suggest a remedy. "But it must be said that the Christian conscience of to-day will never possess that keenness of insight, tenderness of susceptibility, and accuracy of decision which belongs to it, unless the old-world practices of meditation, self-examination, and self-discipline be maintained and cultivated. Those who care least to be alone with themselves and God, most need that solemn, searching, divine communion" (Davison's Christian Conscience, p. 238). If ever we as a Church and individuals are to attain to the height of the doctrine we teach, it can only be by exercising ourselves to have "a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man," the attainment of which will add both to our usefulness and blessing in this our day and generation.

J. W. DICKINSON.

Bible Study.

ANALYTICAL STUDIES IN THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

BRIEF OUTLINE OF EZRA, NEHEMIAH, ESTHER, WITH HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH.

THE historical period to which these books belong stretches over one hundred years, from the accession of Cyrus and the return from the captivity, B.C. 536, to the second visit of Nehemiah to Jerusalem, B.C. 432.

The following dates are important:

Accession of Cyrus and Return of the Exiles	B.C. 536
Foundations of Temple Laid	" 535
Darius Hyslaspes	" 522
Work on Temple Resumed under Haggai and Zechariah	" 520
Temple Completed	" 516
Xerxes (Ahasuerus)	" 485
Esther made Queen	" 479
Mission of Ezra	" 458
First Mission of Nehemiah	" 444
Second Mission of Nehemiah	" 432

Jaddua, the high priest, is mentioned; he came to the office 351. This may indicate the date of the final editing or compilation of the books from the manuscripts of Ezra and Nehemiah, which evidently form the basis of the work.

These books form a supplement to the books of Chronicles, and resemblances in general scope indicate that they were all compiled from earlier contemporaneous records by the same writer, or perhaps school of scribes. Of such, a school tradition would lead us to believe that Ezra himself was the founder.

The books seem written with an especial purpose of tracing the restoration of the old theocratic institutions and the origin of such new observances as were added after the return. Among

the old institutions firmly re-established were the Sabbath, the feast of tabernacles, the passover, and the reading of the law. Among the new institutions were the feast of Purim and the feast of the Dedication.

The literature before us does not constitute a continuous history or even chronicle of the period. It is rather a collection of sketches of important events transpiring during the period. Our fundamental analysis of the three historical books may therefore be constructed on the principle of separating these sketches from each other. In connection with the historical sections thus obtained, we may arrange our material from the collateral prophetic books.

HISTORICAL SECTIONS.

I. Account of the Return. Ezra, chapters i. 1 ; ii. 70.
II. The Beginning of the Building. Chapters iii. 1 ; iv. 5.
III. Further Interruptions. Chapter iv. 6-24.
IV. The Final and Successful Effort. Chapters v. 1 ; vi. 13.
V. The Work of Haggai. Haggai i. and ii.
VI. The Work of Zechariah. Zechariah i.-viii.
VII. The Dedication. Chapter vi. 14-22.
VIII. The Book of Esther.
IX. The Visit and Work of Ezra. Ezra, chapters vii.-x.
X. Nehemiah's Preparation. Nehemiah, chapters i. 1 ; ii. 8.
XI. Nehemiah's First Visit and Work. Chapters ii. 9 ; iv. 23.
XII. The Struggle with Poverty and Danger, and the Completion of the Wall. Chapters v. 1 ; vii. 19. Ending with the Recovered Register. Chapter vii.
XIII. Recovered Chapters from the Work of Ezra. Chapters viii., ix., x.
XIV. Registers. These in one case extend down to the times of Alexander the Great, viz., the Register of Priests which includes Jaddua. Chapters xi. 1 ; xii. 26.
XV. The Dedication of the Wall. Chapters xii. 27-47.
XVI. Reformations. Chapter xiii.

We should further associate with this outline the study of the prophecy of Malachi, especially in reference to the reformation specified in Section xvi., and the psalms of the return, particularly from cvii. to cxlvi., as exhibiting the religious condition of the returning exiles. The study of the latter part of the book of Isaiah, *i.e.*, from the fortieth chapter to the end, will

also throw a flood of light on this period. With this introductory outlook over the whole field, we may now proceed to examine the particular passages selected for the lessons of the quarter. These will be found in Sections I., II., V., VI. (twice), VII., X., XI., XIV., XV. and VIII.

Section I.—The Return of the Exiles.

Chapters I. and II.

This section includes:

1. The Proclamation of Cyrus. Chapter i. 1-4.
2. The Patriotic Enterprise Itself. Chapter i. 5, 6.
3. The Gifts of the King. Verses 7-11.
4. The Roll of the Patriots. Chapter ii. 1-67.
5. The Gifts of the Chief Fathers. Chapter ii. 68-70.

Sub-Section 1.—The Proclamation of Cyrus.

Chapter I. 1-4.

(*a*) Cyrus the king; (*b*) the prophecy of Jeremiah (Jeremiah xxv. 1-14; xxix. 1-11); (*c*) the divine influence upon the mind of Cyrus; (*d*) the proclamation, containing (1) acknowledgment of God as the God (verse 3); (2) of the Divine providence in bringing Cyrus to the throne; (3) of the Divine command to rebuild the temple; (4) the exhortation to the prophet to undertake this work; (5) exhortation to all neighbors to help them in this work.

Questions:

1. What was the previous religious history of Cyrus? And especially what was his previous connection with the leaders of the Hebrew faith? (See Josephus' Ant. Jud., xi. 1.)

2. Why is not the prediction of Isaiah referred to? (Isaiah xliv. 26-28, and xlv. 1-7.) Is this a prediction addressed to the Hebrew people 200 years before the event, or is it an exhortation addressed to Cyrus just before the conquest of Babylon or before the issue of the proclamation?

3. Did the Lord stir up the spirit of Cyrus by means of prophets who had access to him, or was there a special operation of the Holy Spirit on the mind of Cyrus himself?

4. Did Cyrus under such influence become a believer in and a worshipper of the true God?

5. From what point should we reckon the seventy years of Jeremiah?

Sub-Section 2.—The Great Patriotic Enterprise.

This sub-section names (*a*) the leaders, viz., the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, the priests, and the Levites; (*b*) the Divine inspiration of the people; (*c*) their special enterprise, the rebuilding of the temple; (*d*) the co-operation by contributions of those who did not undertake the journey to Jerusalem.

Questions:

1. Who were these fathers of houses and priests?
2. Why were the Levites so few in number?
3. Where can we find the best account of the great religious awakening which resulted in this return of the exiles? (See Isaiah xl. to end, and Haggai and Zechariah and the Psalms cvii. to end.)
4. How does it compare with the idolatrous proclivities of the chosen people before the captivity?
5. Was the enterprise purely or principally religious, or was it in part or largely political?

Sub-Section 3.—The Contributions of Cyrus.

These consisted in the restoration of the ancient vessels of the temple. Compare 1 Kings vii. 45 to end.

This lesson affords an excellent example for the inductive study of the ancient religion in its relation to great national movements.

Section II.—The Beginning of the Work.

Chapters III. 1; IV. 5.

This section includes six sub-sections, as follows:

1. The settlement of the exiles in the surrounding cities. Chapter iii. 1.
2. Their gathering to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the altar and establishment of worship. Verses 2-5.
3. The preparations for the temple. Verses 6, 7.
4. Laying the foundations. Verses 8, 9.
5. The celebration. Verses 10-13.
6. The interruption of the work by their enemies. Chapter iv. 1-5.

This is followed by examples of the tactics of their adversaries as shown in the reign of Smerdis and Artaxerxes.

Sub-Section 1.—The Settlement of the Exiles in the Cities of Judah.

See for the extent of these settlements Chapter II. They embraced Ramah and Bethel on the north, Jericho on the east, Bethlehem on the south, and probably all the places mentioned lay within twenty miles of Jerusalem. By this settlement in their cities they would be prepared for the seed-time in October. The further analysis of this brief section is unnecessary.

Sub-Section 2.—Their Gathering to Jerusalem and Their Rebuilding the Altar and Setting up Worship.

We may note (*a*) the seventh month, the great month of festivals (See Leviticus xxiii. 24, etc.); (*b*) the common impulse, "all," "as one man"; (*c*) the leaders Jeshua (the high priest) and Zerubbabel (the prince of Judah); (*d*) their first care, "they builded the altar" on the old foundations; (*e*) they established the daily sacrifice; (*f*) they kept the feast of tabernacles; (*g*) they re-established all the special offerings; (*h*) they also afforded the old facilities for private sacrifices.

This primary work continued for six months, *i.e.*, until after the harvest of the following year.

Sub-Section 3.—The Preparation for Building.

This included (*a*) the securing of carpenters and masons; (*b*) a grant of timber from the royal forest in Lebanon; (*c*) the hiring of the Phœnician mariners to bring the timbers by sea to Joppa.

Sub-Section 4.—Laying the Foundations.

We may note (*a*) the date (May, the month of founding the first temple); (*b*) the leaders Zerubbabel and Jeshua; (*c*) the foremen of the work (the priests and Levites): of these there were four bands, led by Jeshua, Kadmiel, Judah or Hodariah, and Henadad. Their first work was the clearing of the space and the laying of foundations.

SUB-SECTION 5.—THE CELEBRATION OF THE EVENT.

(*a*) This consisted of a choral service of song by the priests in their apparel and with their trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, after the ordinance of David, King of Israel; (*b*) in response, all the people shouted with a great shout because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid; (*c*) but the ancients wept when they remembered the first house.

SUB-SECTION 6.—THE INTERRUPTION.

(*a*) The adversaries are from Samaria; (*b*) they propose to join in the building; (*c*) they are refused permission; (*d*) they set up opposition which succeeds in preventing progress for about twenty years; (*e*) an instance of this opposition in the time of Ahasuerus (Smerdis?); (*f*) a letter of the days of Artaxerxes.

Note the fidelity of the historian in giving these unconnected fragments as they came to his hand without attempt at uniting them in consecutive narrative.

We shall now pass to Section V., from which the next Sabbath School lesson is taken. Collateral to the final and successful effort at the rebuilding of the temple were the labors of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah.

SECTION V.—THE WORK OF HAGGAI.

HAGGAI I. AND II. SEE ALSO EZRA VI. 14.

Note 1. That seventy years were now (B.C. 520) nearly completed since the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, B.C. 586. Hence the stimulus to resume the work. (See Jer. xxv. 11.)

The work of Haggai includes four prophetic addresses.

Sub-section 1.—First prophetic address: Arise and build. Chapter i. 1-15.

Sub-section 2.—Second prophetic address: The glory of the latter house. Chapter ii. 1-9.

Sub-section 3.—Promises of a good harvest to those who are working. Chapter ii. 10-19.

Sub-section 4.—A special promise to Zerubbabel. Chapter ii. 20-23.

Note 2. That the first address is the means of recommencing the work at the beginning of the festal month, September, after fifteen years of delay, largely their own fault.

Note 3. That the second address, seven weeks later, sustains the enterprise against the discouragement arising from the lack of means to make the building what they could desire.

Note 4. That the third address keeps the people to their work although seed-time was now far advanced, by a promise of special blessing. The final address was perhaps to strengthen Zerubbabel in the difficulties related in Ezra v. 3, etc. Read the entire prophecy in connection with Ezra. Chapters iv. and v.

Sub-Section 2.—The Glory of the Latter House.

This address to Zerubbabel, Joshua and the people (*a*) appeals to the old men who can compare the present building with the former house; (*b*) but encourages them to be strong and work; (*c*) because the Spirit of the Lord remaineth among them; (*d*) God will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and so shall this house be filled with glory; (*e*) further that the silver and the gold are the Lord's, and He will make the glory of the latter house greater than the former and in this new house will He give peace to His people.

Questions:

1. What is meant by the Spirit of the Lord? Verse 5.
2. What by the shaking. Verses 6, 7.
3. What by the desire of all nations. Verse 7.
4. What by the glory and peace of the latter house?

Section VI.—The Work of Zechariah.

Chapters I.-VIII.

This includes:—Sub-section 1.

(1) A preliminary exhortation. Chap. i. 1-6.

(2) Seven visions bearing on the work. Chap. i. 7; vi. 15.

(3) A prophetic instruction on fasting. Chaps. vii. and viii.

Sub-section 2 includes seven visions, as follows:

(*a*) The vision of the angel riders looking for the shaking of the earth which shall prepare for the Lord's kingdom.

(*b*) The vision of the iron horns and the smiths who shall fray them.

(*c*) The vision of the measurement of Jerusalem for her restoration (the walls).

(*d*) The vision of the restored priesthood and the Branch.

(*e*) The vision of the Divine Spirit in the work.

(*f*) The vision of the Judgment-roll.

(*g*) The vision of God's war chariots.

NOTE.—Each of these seven visions has its significance for the encouragement of the people. A further shaking of the nations is needed to prepare the way. The four great oppressing powers shall yet be fully punished. Jerusalem as well as the temple shall yet be rebuilt. The priesthood and the Branch of the house of David shall be re-established. The Divine Spirit, like oil, shall flow from the golden bowl through the golden pipes, from the olive branches (the Lord's anointed servants) to give light to all God's workers. God's judgments shall cut off all sinners, and God's conquering power shall go forth to open the way for the extension of His people northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward. (Please read the visions through at this point.)

(*c*) The vision of the restored priesthood. Chap. iii. 1-10.

The vision is a judgment scene.

(1) The judge is the angel of Jehovah.

(2) The man on trial is Jeshua, the high priest.

(3) The accuser is Satan.

(4) He is rebuked because the Lord hath chosen Zion, and the Lord's high priest is a branch plucked out of the fire.

(5) The priest is indeed clothed with filthy garments.

(6) These are taken away, and thus is iniquity cleansed.

(7) He is crowned with a fair mitre.

(8) The charge is given to him and his brethren.

(9) They are designated as "*types*," and the great Servant the Branch is promised.

(10) The foundation stone already laid is under the care of the seven-eyed Spirit of the Lord, who will engrave its carving.

(11) The iniquity of the land shall be removed in a single day when He shall come.

(12) His time shall be peace and prosperity.

Questions:

1. Was Zechariah acquainted with the predictions of the Branch or Shoot of David delivered by Isaiah and Jeremiah. (Isa. xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5, 6; xxxiii. 15, 16.)

2. Was he further acquainted with the "Servant" predictions of Jeremiah, and the second part of Isaiah? (Jer. xxxiii. 19-26; Isa. xli. 8 and xlii. 1, etc.; liii.) If so, compare Isa. liii. 10 with Zech. iii. 9.

(*d*) The vision of the golden oil of grace. Chap. iv. 1-14.

The vision is an allegorical presentation of the influences of the Holy Spirit flowing through the appointed channels to give light to the people of God.

The order of the allegory is as follows:

(1) The primal fountain of grace is the Lord of the whole earth. Verse. 14.

(2) By Him stand two olive branches, "sons of oil," pouring their God-given produce into the golden bowl. Verses 3, 11, 12. Compare Rev. xi. 4.

(3) From the golden bowl, through the seven-fold pipes into the seven lamps, the oil flows to give light to the people of God.

(4) This light is to be the strength of the people. Verse 6.

(5) By it all obstacles are to be overcome, and the work completed with joy. Verses 7, 8, 9.

(6) The Divine omniscience shall see the end, the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel finally testing the work, and rejoice in its completion. Verse 10. Translate as follows: "For those seven eyes of Jehovah which run to and fro through all the earth rejoiced when they saw the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel."—*Henderson.*

Questions:

1. Who are the two original fountains of grace with the God of the whole earth mentioned here in Zechariah and again in Revelation?

2. Are they the Spirit and the Word bearing witness? That is, Jesus Christ the faithful and true witness and the Divine Spirit speaking through an inspired ministry. Then, here they are represented by Zerubbabel and Joshua. In the Christian era they were represented by our Lord's ministry and the apostolic ministry. They ultimately represent the work of the Second and Third Persons in the blessed Trinity, working for human redemption.

Section VIII.—The Dedication.

Chapter VI. 14-22.

This includes three sub-sections:

1. The completion of the work.
2. The dedicatory service.
3. The passover following.

Sub-section 1.—We note here: (*a*) that the elders led in the work; (*b*) that the two prophets contributed largely to its success; (*c*) that the favoring edicts of the kings are recognized; (*d*) that it was finished on the third day of the twelfth month, *i.e.*, a month before the passover—B.C. 515.

Question:

Why is Artaxerxes, who came to the throne thirty years later, mentioned here?

Sub-section 2.—The dedicatory service. This was celebrated (*a*) by the children of Israel (representing all the tribes), the priests, the Levites, and the rest of the captivity (possibly not reckoned in the genealogies); (*b*) by offerings sufficient to feed from fifty to seventy thousand people, besides a sin-offering of twelve goats for the twelve tribes of Israel; (*c*) by the re-organization of the priests and Levites in their divisions and courses, according to the law. (See Num. iii. 6 and viii. 9.)

Note that the law organizing the priests and Levites was then known and recognized. This was fifty-seven years before the work of Ezra.

Sub-section 3.—The passover service. (*a*) This followed at the regular time, a few days or weeks after the dedication.

(*b*) It was kept with the legal purity, showing again that the zeal for the law existed prior to Ezra. (*c*) It anticipated the great reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah by calling for separation from all idolatry. (*d*) It was an occasion of great joy.

Question:

Why is the king Darius here called the King of Assyria?

This event was followed by an interval of fifty-seven years, of which we have no record, unless some of the psalms of the return may have been the work of the sons of Asaph during this period. The 85th is an example of a class of psalms which breathe out the joyous, grateful spirit of the returned exiles, while their hearts were still fresh with the first exulting spirit of praise. The 87th is another. So again 92-100, 107, 111, 115, 124, 126, etc.

Then followed the mission of Ezra, which was especially designed to beautify the temple with the gifts of the king, amounting to about $3,000,000, and to restore the knowledge and observance of the law among the people. (See chap. vii. 6, 10, 27.) Tradition says that in connection with this visit he collected the sacred books and rewrote them in the modern or Chaldee characters. Modern criticism would lead us to believe that this work continued after his time, and amounted to a re-casting or re-editing of all the pre-existing sacred literature, combining the old materials into the present sacred books, with editorial introductions, headings, and annotations. All parties unite in acknowledging the ancient materials as handed down from the preceding ages. We shall meet the public result of the work of Ezra in a subsequent lesson, about fifteen years after his arrival in Jerusalem.

Section X.—Nehemiah's Preparation.

Nehemiah I. 1; II. 8.

The first seven chapters of the book are a record written by Nehemiah in the first person, and headed "The words," or "history," "of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah."

This section contains three sub-sections:

1. The events by which Nehemiah became acquainted with the state of affairs in Jerusalem. Chapter i. 1-3.
2. His fasting and prayer. Verses 4-11.
3. The interview with the king. Chapter ii. 1-8.

Sub-section 1.—Nehemiah hears from Jerusalem.

The sub-section opens (*a*) with date, November or December, B.C. 445, the season when the king resided at the winter or southern palace Shusan, the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, fourteen years after Ezra's visit; (*b*) the messengers, Hanani, Nehemiah's own brother, and certain Jews with him returning from Jerusalem; (*c*) the report which they bring. The people are in great reproach and affliction, and the wall of Jerusalem is still broken down.

Question:

Is this consistent with the supposed political character of Ezra's visit fourteen years before?

Sub-section 2.—Nehemiah's Fasting and Prayer.

Note that he betakes himself to God for help. His prayer contains (*a*) invocation of God as the God of heaven, the great and terrible God, the covenant-God; (*b*) confession of the sins of himself, his father's house, and all his people; (*c*) pleading the ancient promise of the covenant and the needs of the redeemed people; (*d*) special prayer for success in his enterprise on their behalf.

Note (1) the three great elements of the Hebrew conception of God in the introduction of Nehemiah's prayer; (2) his broad view of the whole moral and religious situation in the confession; (3) his strong, practical faith in the pleadings and petition.

Sub-section 3.—Nehemiah's Visit to the King, and its Divinely-directed Result.

This includes (*a*) his customary official work; (*b*) the king's question as to the cause of his sadness; (*c*) his frank and full

reply; (*d*) the king's favorable question; (*e*) Nehemiah's prayers for guidance; (*f*) his bold request of the king; (*g*) the king's grant and assistance.

Inductive study on God's method in Providence of answering prayer.

Section XI.—The Commencement of Rebuilding the Wall.

Chapter II. 9; IV. 23.

The section includes six sub-sections:

1. The journey to Jerusalem. Chapter ii. 9-11.
2. The night inspection. Verses 12-15.
3. The matter laid before the rulers. Verses 16-20.
4. The beginning of work. Chapter iii. 1-52.
5. The opposition of Sanballat. Chapter iv. 1-8.
6. Praying, watching, and working. Verses 9-23.

Sub-section 6.—Praying, Watching, and Working.

This sub-section includes (*a*) Nehemiah's threefold resource, prayer, watchfulness, and work; (*b*) the discouragement of the enfeebled men of Judah. These were the second generation after the return, and without the spirit of their fathers, and the heaps of rubbish disheartened them; (*c*) the murderous plots of the adversaries; (*d*) the fears of the men from the northern villages of Judah; (*e*) the redoubled watchfulness of Nehemiah; (*f*) his military address to the rulers and the people; (*g*) the plots of their enemies are thus frustrated, and the work proceeds; (*h*) but with due caution, still keeping arms and working, and organized to meet attack; (*i*) even lodging in Jerusalem to guard the work, instead of going to their homes in the villages round about; (*k*) they did not even lay off their garments by night, that they might be ready against attack.

Inductive study on the relation of human effort to Divine Providence.

In the three succeeding chapters, evidently from the pen of Nehemiah, and a continuation of his record, we have further incidents in this heroic struggle, and finally the completion of

the wall and the setting up of its doors. Nehemiah then addresses himself to the organization of the people according to their genealogy, on which much stress was henceforth laid, as they were contrasted with the Samaritans, who were not pure Hebrews. The people in this roll had been located in their cities. An effort seems to have been next made to provide Jerusalem with inhabitants, as recorded in chapters eleven and twelve, ending in the grand dedication of the wall at the close of the chapter. In the meantime the strictly historic order is dropped, and three chapters are devoted to the final work of Ezra in the instruction of the people in the law of Moses. This we have in chapters viii., ix. and x., forming

Section XIII.—Recovered Chapters from the Work of Ezra.

These chapters, viii., ix., x., are the sequel to the statements of Ezra vii. 6, 10. They represent the result of much careful labor and perhaps search for the copies of the ancient sacred books, or for persons who had knowledge of their contents. It is very difficult in our day to estimate the effect of such a national catastrophe as the captivity, following the destruction of the city and temple by war and fire, on the national literature, in an age when the copies were few and the readers also few. The work of collecting and restoring that literature must have been exceedingly difficult, and in all probability involved in many cases dependence on the memory of the scribes who had been students of the law. Even private fragments of manuscripts and portions of books may, under these circumstances, have been exceedingly valuable. Ezra may have been occupied in this work for twenty years or more after his return, as he had been engaged in the studies which prepared him for it before his visit to Jerusalem. He seems to have commenced the public reading of the law to the people only after the coming of Nehemiah, *i.e.*, fourteen years after his own return. Of his occupations during this period, we have only the tradition preserved among the Jews that he restored the law and collected and transcribed the sacred books into the modern characters.

The present section gives us the result of these preliminary labors in seven sub-sections:

1. The reading of the law. Chapter viii. 1-82.
2. Discovery of the old ordinance of the festival of tabernacles. Verses 13-15.
3. Celebration of the feast. Verses 16-18.
4. General confession of sin. Chapter ix. 1-3.
5. The prayer of the Levites. Verses 4-38.
6. The signers of the covenant. Chapter x. 1-27,
7. The terms of the covenant. Verses 28-39.

Sub-Section 1.—Reading the Law.

We observe (*a*) that this was at the request of the people; (*b*) that the law was then recognized as the law of Moses; (*c*) that all who could understand, both men and women, were present; (*d*) that the reading continued from morning till midday, and the people were very attentive; (*e*) that a number of men were associated with Ezra in this reading, which was from a pulpit or high stage from which both reader and book could be seen by all the people; (*f*) that all the people stood up at the reading of the law; (*g*) that the reading was introduced by prayer and adoration; (*h*) that a large number of Levites assisted Ezra in the exposition of the law, either translating or enlarging so that the people might understand; (*i*) that the people were so overcome by the reading that they wept; (*k*) that they cheered them to new courage, bidding them rejoice (1) because the day was holy, and (2) because the joy of the Lord was their strength; (*l*) so the people did eat and drink and send portions because the holy law was restored to them.

Questions:

1. Was this giving the sense the beginning of the Targums or Chaldee paraphrases of the Scriptures?
2. Was the explanation given afterwards in smaller companies?
3. Have we here an example of a great religious awakening of the olden time? Compare 1 Samuel vii.

Section XVI.—Reformations.

This includes four sub-sections:

1. The purification of the congregation from foreigners. Chapter xiii. 1-9.
2. The payment of tithes to the Levites. Verses 10-14.
3. The observance of the Sabbath. Verses 15-22.
4. The putting away heathen wives. Verses 23-31.

Sub-Section 3.—The Sabbath.

(*a*) The breaches of the Sabbath law consisted in farm work on the Sabbath, bringing in their produce to market on the Sabbath, trading with the men of Tyre on the Sabbath; (*b*) Nehemiah expostulates with the nobles as being responsible for the conduct of the body of the people, and warns them that by these sins fresh penalty is incurred; (*c*) he himself by closing the gates prevents the traffickers from entering the city; (*d*) he threatens with punishment the merchants who lodged without the city wall; (*e*) these strong measures put an end to the infringement of the Sabbath law; (*f*) to secure the future he gave command to the Levites that they should prevent the desecration of the Sabbath for the future; (*g*) finally Nehemiah prays for the reward of this trying work.

Read the book of Malachi in connection with the four great branches of reform introduced by Nehemiah.

Note especially chapter i. against neglect and pollution of the Lord's house; chapter ii. against the unfaithful priests and against heathen marriages; chapter iii., amongst other things, robbing God of His tithes and offerings. Probably Malachi co-operated with Nehemiah in this work of reform.

Section VIII.—The Episode of Esther.

This belongs historically to the fifty-eight years which intervened between the first return and the visit of Ezra, *i.e.*, between Sections VII. and IX. We have, therefore, so placed and numbered it. It is, however, representative, not of the restored people, but of the condition of the people in the land of their captivity. It lays before us—

I. A scene from the court of an oriental despot, resulting in the divorce of Vashti.

II. A second scene resulting in the enthronement of Esther—this was probably six years later, after Xerxes' disastrous Greek campaign.

III. A third scene of conspiracy to murder the monarch.

IV. Another sketch of the elevation of Haman, possibly the Umana of Persian history.

V. His plan of revenge against Mordecai and the Jews.

VI. Mordecai's plan to secure help.

VII. Esther's heroic response.

VIII. Her first step.

IX. The elevation of Mordecai.

X. Her second step and the downfall of Haman.

XI. The elevation of Mordecai to be prime minister, and Esther's final work for the salvation of her people.

XII. The victory of the Jews.

XIII. The feast of Purim and final notice of Ahasuerus.

Our lesson is from

Section VII.—Esther's Devout and Heroic Acceptance of the Difficult and Dangerous Task.

The proposal of Mordecai was that "She should go in unto the king to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people."

Note 1. That this entirely ignores the law which forbids any man to enter the monarch's presence unbidden under pain of death.

Note 2. That it puts the influence of Esther unsupported against that of the king's favorite minister.

Our lesson describes at full length the conduct and spirit of Esther under the trying ordeal.

1. She is fully awake to the magnitude of her danger and the difficulty of her undertaking. Hence (*a*) she sends to Mordecai a full statement of the law of the royal court to which he had made no reference in his proposal; (*b*) she adds the further circumstance that for thirty days she had not been bidden to

visit the king; (*c*) she receives from Mordecai the answer that she in the king's palace cannot hope to escape; (*d*) that if she shrinks, she and her friends will be Haman's first victims, while the Divine deliverance may come to others from elsewhere; (*e*) that God may have brought her to the kingdom for such a time as this.

2. In the spirit of faith of a saint and the self-sacrifice of a martyr, Esther undertakes the work; (*a*) she calls the whole Jewish people of the city to three days of fasting and prayer on her behalf; (*b*) she herself and her attendants prepare for the ordeal by the same religious solemnity; (*c*) "And so," she says, "will I go in unto the king which is not according to the law, and if I perish, I perish."

3. In the execution of the task, she uses the most perfect tact and judgment: (*a*) on the third day, in her royal apparel, she presents herself in the inner court of the king's house; (*b*) her appearance wins the king's favor—the golden sceptre is extended, and her first step is secure; (*c*) she uses this first step merely to strengthen her hold upon the king for the final struggle; (*d*) she merely invites the king and his favorite minister to banquet with her on the morrow; (*e*) even yet she delays until she is confident of full power, and requests the presence of the king at a second banquet. Meantime God prepares her way, and at the third interview she faces the final struggle with Haman himself and conquers.

Questions:

1. Why is the reference to God in this book so veiled that His name is never once mentioned?

2. Is there any inconsistencey between the diplomacy of Esther and her profound religious spirit and lofty courage?

Note, through all these later Jewish books, the unity of prayer with human effort.

A SYLLABUS ON THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

BY PROF. GEO. S. BURROUGHS, PH.D.

I. INTRODUCTORY.

1. Certain reasons why the study of Esther may prove profitable: (*a*) Not often read, nor to any extent used devotionally; (*b*) a book out of the line of general Bible study, compare Philemon, 2nd and 3rd John in New Testament; (*c*) attention should be called to the third division of the Hebrew collection of Old Testament Scriptures, not confined to the Pentateuch and the Prophets; (*d*) questions of canonicity and of the relation of Old Testament books to the apocryphal sections and scriptures wisely to be considered at the present.

2. The method of approach to the book: (*a*) The dogmatic and theological; (*b*) the historical and literary. How may we avoid some misconceptions regarding revelation, and see its true end? (God's purpose in revelation is to reveal a divine-human character—accomplished in Jesus of Nazareth—and through the revelation to show the means by which man can reproduce the same kind of Christ-like character.)

II. THE CONTENTS OF THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

(*A*) Summary:

Part First: The peril of the Jews, its cause, its development. Chapters i.-v.

1. Introductory, the banquet of Xerxes, and the degradation of Vashti. Chapter i.

2. Esther takes the place of Vashti, and Mordecai saves the life of the king. Chapter ii.

3. Haman attains power, is angered at Mordecai, plots and decrees the destruction of the Jews. Chapter iii.

4. Mordecai urges upon Esther to seek the king's favor for her people; she consents, and they engage in fasting. Chap. iv.

5. Esther is graciously accepted of the king, but Haman plots to have Mordecai impaled. Chapter v.

Part Second: The deliverance of the Jews from their peril, and the establishment of the feast of Purim. Chapters vi.-ix.

1. Haman is forced to honor Mordecai. Chapter vi.

2. Haman's plot is discovered to the king, and he is impaled. Chapter vii.

3. Esther and Mordecai—who has been exalted to Haman's position—send forth, with the king's permission, a decree that the Jews may defend themselves upon the day fixed for their destruction. Chapter viii.

4. The Jews defend themselves against their enemies, and feast in rest and gladness. Chapter ix. 1-19.

5. The feast of Purim is enjoined upon the Jews by letters of Mordecai, and they resolve upon its observance. Chapter ix. 20-32. (A resume.)

Appendix: Further statements regarding Mordecai. Chapter x.

(*B*) Remarks:

1. The artistic arrangement of the book.

2. The minuteness of details, including names, etc.

3. The relation of ix. 20-32 and chapter x. to the former part of the book.

III. Certain Inquiries Regarding the Book.

1. Its position in the Hebrew and English Bibles. (Belongs to priestly history, and was written to account for the existence of the feast of Purim.)

2. Its liturgical use among the Hebrews: (*a*) Its relation to the feast of Purim; (*b*) the estimation in which it is held by them. (Hebrews look upon it as a book of consummations.)

3. The question of its canonicity, (*a*) among the Hebrews, (*b*) among Christians.

4. Relation of the book as it appears in our English Bible to apocryphal sections found elsewhere.

5. The literary character of the book:

(1) Is it history? (*a*) Xerxes, his character and circumstances in his history as otherwise known; (*b*) modern knowledge regarding circumstances and customs referred to in the book, *e.g.*, palace (i. 2, 6), feasts (i. 2-8), magi (i. 13), princes (i. 14), scribes (ii. 12, viii. 9), poets (iii. 13, viii. 14), etc.; (*c*) the feast of Purim, and its observance.

(2) Is it fiction? (*a*) Artistic form; (*b*) improbable situations and events. (Fiction is based on truth.)

(3) Is it a poetic and didactic presentation of historic facts? Compare Ruth, Job, Ecclesiastes. Wisdom literature in relation to history and prophecy; future study in this field. (It contains a personal element.)

6. The date of the events referred to in the book: (*a*) Rawlinson, 444-434 B.C.; (*b*) chronology, etc., in "Book of Esther," by Lowell Hebrew Club.

7. The author, his time and place of writing; conjectures and their value. (Unknown, but must have been a Jew, long resident of Persia; probably a younger contemporary of Mordecai.)

IV. Moral and Religious Teaching of the Book.

1. Moral and religious difficulties: (*a*) Name of God not mentioned; (*b*) prayer not spoken of; (*c*) the spirit of the actors in the book not Christian. (Do not need God demonstrated; avoids references to Jewish institutions that would be displeasing to Persians.)

2. Some points to be considered: (*a*) An Old Testament writing; (*b*) "The answer in the thing itself," words or deeds; (*c*) the past and present value of the book to Hebrews in persecution. The Bible for all men, in all ages, in all experiences. (Record of secular history may be God-inspired and consecrated to His purpose.)

3. God's over-ruling plan: (*a*) How do we see it? (*b*) how does He accomplish it? (*c*) personal lessons for present life. (We need God in experience. Unless we believe God in all things, we do not believe in Him at all. The book indicates that the "Jews of the dispersion" were as much under the Divine care as were their brethren in Palestine.)

Editorial Reviews and Notices of Books.

Eschatology; or, The Doctrine of the Last Things, according to the Chronology and Symbolism of the Apocalypse. By F. G. HIBBARD, D.D., author of "The Psalms Chronologically arranged, with Historical Introductions," "History and Geography of Palestine," "The Commentary on the Book of Psalms," etc. New York: Hunt & Eaton. Toronto: William Briggs. 12mo, pp. 360. $1.50.

KO'ΛΑΣΙΣ ΑΙ'ΩΝΙΟΣ, or Future Retribution. By GEORGE W. KING, Pastor of the Broadway Methodist Episcopal Church, Providence, R.I. New York: Hunt & Eaton. Toronto: William Briggs. 12mo, pp. 267. $1.20.

The Doctrine of the Future Life: From a Scriptural, Philosophical and Scientific point of view, including especially a Discussion of Immortality, the Intermediate State, the Resurrection and Final Retribution. By JAMES STRONG, S.T.D., LL.D. New York: Hunt & Eaton. Toronto: William Briggs. 12mo, pp. 127. 75 cents.

The opinion has been expressed by some profound students of the Bible and of the signs of the times, that eschatology, or the doctrine of the last things, is probably the field on which the great battles of Christianity are to be fought during the next fifty years. This judgment is founded, in part, upon the fact that there are so many questions connected with this important branch of enquiry which remain to be answered, and in part to the fact that so much attention has been paid to this matter of late. Of the interest which is taken in this subject, we have an illustration in the three books which we now introduce to our readers. The appearance simultaneously of three such works, issued by the same publishing house, is, in itself, an incident not without significance. The publication of books, like everything else connected with manufacture and commerce, is regulated by the law of demand and supply. If such books were not called for, they would not be forthcoming.

Not one of these works claims to be an original and comprehensive treatment of the entire subject; indeed, they can only be regarded as more or less important summaries. Dr. Hibbard's book is, indeed, a comprehensive discussion of the subject as he finds it set forth in the order of events marked out in the Apocalypse. And, like all the other works of that writer, it is marked by conscientious and painstaking search for the truth. Dr. Strong's little book, as he tells us, comprises the substance of lectures and discussions by the author during the course of many years, though it is now written out afresh and published, we may believe, as the result of the thought and research of a lifetime. This fact, especially when the eminent ability and scholarship of Dr. Strong is taken into account, should be a sufficient recommendation of his book.

The remaining volume, though by an author who is not so well-known as either of the others, is probably the one which will excite most interest among theological students and divines. It is a serious, earnest, and, as it appears to us from a necessarily hurried examination, a pretty thorough discussion of the question of the duration of the punishment of

the finally impenitent wicked. Those who are interested in the study of this awful subject will do well to possess themselves of this work. On the whole, we judge that this trio of little volumes has a mission of usefulness, and we wish it the largest possible measure of success.

The Bishop's Conversion. By ELLEN BLACKMAR MAXWELL. With an introduction by Bishop Thoburn, of India. Cloth, $1.50. New York: Hunt & Eaton. Cincinnati: Cranston & Curts.

This is another book that should go into missionary libraries. The purpose of the story is to correct the false ideas sometimes current in England and America, concerning the method of work and style of living of missionaries in the foreign field Mrs. Maxwell, instead of discussing the subject in an abstract way, has brought it practically before her readers by introducing scenes from real life, illustrated by many incidents of actual occurrence. As a practical missionary, she is enabled to vividly and forcibly draw these pictures, not from the imagination, but from the very scenes of action. The sketches are drawn from India, but will as faithfully represent mission work in China, Japan, or any other foreign field. A perusal of this book will make the reader a more intelligent and enthusiastic supporter of Christian missions.

Save Your Minutes. A narrative of the Boyhood of Earnest Carlton. By OMER T. GILLETT, A.M., M.D. Cloth, 90 cents. Cincinnati: Cranston & Stowe. New York: Hunt & Eaton.

The motive of this book is to assist in the dissemination of scientific truth relative to alcohol. The author seeks to combat the drink traffic by stating the truth about alcohol in the form of a story in which fact and fiction are harmoniously combined. Many of the experiences, sayings and doings of the different characters are based upon true incidents, and the statements concerning alcohol are authorized by good authority.

Questions of the Heart. How Reason Helps Faith to Answer them. By HENRY TUCKLEY. Cloth, 90 cents. Cincinnati: Cranston & Curts. New York: Hunt & Eaton.

This is a volume for preachers, teachers, adult scholars, and all persons who are perplexed with "questions of the heart" that must be answered through the head. It is intended to be a guide and instructor of the young, and a comforter to the suffering and bereaved. The appeals are made not to the emotions, but to the intellect, the effort being to satisfy and gratify the heart by clearing and enlightening the mind. The author says: "The great need at the present day is not for more feeling upon these topics, but for clearer vision with reference to them." The subjects treated are: The Bible; Immortality; Heavenly Recognition; The Resurrection; The Problem of Suffering; The Unpardonable Sin; Guardian Angels; Fallen Angels. These are all considered in the light of Scripture, aided by the side-lights of nature and common sense. They are great themes, treated, not with the profundity of the trained theologian, but for that great class of Christians who believe without knowing why, or who do not believe so fully as they desire, because their knowledge on these things is so limited. There is certainly a field of usefulness for this book.

Peloubet's Select Notes on the International Lessons for 1893. Cloth, $1.25. Boston, Mass.: W. A. Wilde & Co.

Illustrative Notes on the Sunday School Lessons for 1893. Cloth, $1.25. New York: Hunt & Eaton.

Pentecost's Bible Studies from the Old and New Testaments for 1893. Cloth, $1; paper, 60 cents. New York: A. S. Barnes & Co.

The Monday Club Sermons for 1893. Cloth, $1.25. Boston and Chicago: Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society.

This set of helps for Sunday School workers, being so well and favorably known, scarcely needs introduction or commendation, as each has secured a permanent place in the literature on the International Sunday School lessons. 1893 will complete the twenty-first year of the present system, and the third circuit of the Bible in that time. These four books look at the lessons from a little different standpoint, and together make a complete kit of tools which we can highly commend. They are for sale at Toronto: William Briggs.

Ezra and Nehemiah. Their Lives and Times. By GEO. RAWLINSON, M.A., F.R.G.S. Cloth, 75 cents. London: James Nisbet & Co. Toronto: William Briggs.

The faithful Bible teacher will see it not only helps lesson study, but aids to such a personal knowledge of Biblical facts as will enable him to realize the truth, and present it for the development of character. In order to this, the teacher's mind should be furnished with the historical background of the lessons; as the first quarter of 1893 is principally in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, a thorough acquaintance with the lives of these leaders is requisite. The book before us is in the "Men of the Bible" series, and is a companion volume to Farrar's *Lives and Times of the Minor Prophets*, which could be studied with great profit. Any who purpose doing thorough work in taking the Bible Union examination, should procure and carefully read this work on the lives and times of Ezra and Nehemiah. It is a valuable contribution to Biblical literature, and throws much light on the books of the Bible bearing their names.

Pulpit Bible Reading. A Study in Vocal Exegesis; or, the Art of Sacred Reading. By JAMES T. DOCKING, S.T.B. With introductory chapters by C. WESLEY EMMERSON, M.D., LL.D., President of the Emmerson College of Oratory, Boston, and PROF. I. W. CHURCHILL, A.M., of the Andover Theological Seminary. Reading, Pa.: Frank J. Boyer. Paper, 25 cents.

This little booklet contains many excellent suggestions, and may be perused with profit by public readers of the Bible. The main essay is, however, marred by grammatical errors, some of which are no doubt typographical, and by inelegant expressions which should be corrected before a second edition is published. Surely the fact stated in the remark, "a fellow reading the narrative of the crucifixion yelled out," etc., might be expressed in a more graceful manner. And, is there not a great deal of extravagance in the following: "In good old-fashioned times, people used to take their Bibles to Church; now, if they should bring any book, the most appropriate would be the dictionary?" The statement, we are happy to believe, is not true for this latitude.

Seven Great Lights. By REV. KERR B. TUPPER, D.D. With an introduction by REV. W. F. MCDOWELL, D.D., Chancellor of the University of Denver. Cincinnati: Cranston & Curts. New York: Hunt & Eaton. 90 cents.

These seven great lights are Martin Luther, Thomas Cranmer, John Knox, John Wesley, Jonathan Edwards, Alexander Campbell and Charles H. Spurgeon.

The story of their lives is well told. Such men are not only worthy of remembrance, but the more we know of their great deeds the better for ourselves.

The Crusade of 1383. By GEORGE M. WRONG, B.A., Lecturer in History in Wycliffe College, Toronto. James Parker & Co., 6 Southampton Street, Strand, London. Williamson Book Co., Toronto. 50 cts.

This is a well-written and interesting account of what is known as the Crusade of the Bishop of Norwich. The nominal object of the Crusade, so-called, was to aid the cause of Pope Urban VI., against Pope Clement VII., the latter being one of the Avignon Popes of the "Babylonish Captivity." But, as the author shows, the real object in the opinion and desire of many was to weaken the enemies of English commerce in Flanders, and of English claims in France. The issue was not satisfactory to England, and especially not satisfactory to the militant Bishop of Norwich.

The Sermon Bible. Acts vii. to 1 Cor. xvi. Toronto: Willard Tract Depository. Price, $1.50.

Like the volumes already noticed in this quarterly, this one is made up of quotations, bearing upon many texts, from the sermons of distinguished ministers of the past and present. It will be a useful volume, like its predecessors, in the minister's library.

Bernard of Clairvaux. The Times, the Man and his Work. An Historical Study in eight lectures. By RICHARD S. STORRS. 8vo, pp. 589. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

There are few more imposing figures to be found in the entire field of ecclesiastical history than the saintly Abbot of Clairvaux. It is true, indeed, it is not easy for us to insert ourselves into the circumstances of the times in which this great man lived, so as to form a just estimate of his character, or to rightly compute the value of the work which he did, and the influence which he exerted. Bernard was a mediæval ecclesiastic, and partook of the spirit of his time. And it would be a cruel wrong to judge this Christian hero of the twelfth century by nineteenth century standards. Every one of us is, to a greater extent probably than we dream of, the creature of the age in which we live, and of the peculiar environments in which we found ourselves when we entered upon conscious existence. Dr. Storrs has recognized this, and, therefore, very properly prepared the way for the introduction of Bernard upon the scene, by two introductory lectures, the first dealing with "The Tenth Century—its extreme gloom and fear," and the other devoted to the discussion of "The Eleventh Century—its reviving life and promise." These lectures are in themselves a valuable contribution to the history of a period respecting which too little is known, and which is full of interest.

The remaining lectures are devoted to Bernard, his personal characteristics, his monastic life, his theology, his qualities as a preacher, the part he played as a controversialist, especially in his conflict with Abelard, and his relation to general European affairs. Of course the history of such a man is substantially the history of the Church, and even of Europe during the time in which he lived and labored. He was too great a soul, and too

commanding a genius to not mix himself up with every movement of the age, either religious or political. He left his impression upon everything that was going on. He was a genuine reformer, and the life and zeal which he infused into the Church of his time has never been wholly lost, and was not perhaps the least of the factors by which the reformation of a later day was brought about. Dr. Storrs has performed a real service to Christianity in calling up this august figure from the dim and distant past. The study of this great character cannot but do good. Dr. Storrs has done his work well, and his book will doubtless have, as it deserves, a wide circulation.

The Life of our Lord in simple language for little children, with numerous *illustrations*. Paper, *quarto*, 100 pp. 30c. London and New York: Frederick Warne & Co.

This is a brief account of the chief incidents in our Lord's life, and while the author has used easy words, and those most familiar to childhood, he has followed closely the style of the sacred text. The writer's effort has been to place the story of the Saviour's life within the intelligence of the young, in which he has admirably succeeded. It is sure to be read by children with interest, and they will thereby become imbued with the loving, self-sacrificing spirit of Jesus.

Sparks from the Anvil of a Busy Missionary. By REV. T. J. SCOTT, D.D., twenty-eight years missionary to India. Paper, 25c. New York: Hunt & Eaton.

The author says: "The lines of this book were written when the heart felt that these thoughts must have expression." These "sparks," having scintillated through many newspapers, are now put in permanent form. This book on the Church's great mission work is treated from the standpoint of personal observation and experience, with special reference to subjects that will be of practical interest to all who are interested in missions. It is full of information regarding the work in India, and would be of great help to a person preparing a talk or paper on that department of missionary effort.

Hints on Child-Training. By REV. H. CLAY TRUMBULL, D.D., Editor of the *Sunday School Times*. Cloth, 8vo, 300 pp. $1. Philadelphia: John D. Wattles. Toronto: Wm. Briggs.

This work is the ripest result of the life-time study and experience of a Christian educator in the sphere of the home-training of children, as distinct from their teaching in the week-day school or the Sunday School. Every precept in its pages has been tested by the principles of Christian philosophy, and by actual experiment in more than one generation of little ones. It is a series of thirty articles on the nature, scope and methods of the wise training of children. Among the thirty subjects, we mention "Will-Training Rather than Will-Breaking," "The Place of 'Must' in Training," "Denying a Child Wisely," "Training a Child to Self-Control," "Training a Child's Appetite," "Training a Child's Faith," etc. This book is full of useful suggestions to every parent, that might be followed with great advantage to the coming generation.

The Soul of Man. By DR. PAUL CARNS. The Open Court Publishing Co., Chicago. Price $3.

The following outline will furnish but an imperfect idea of the rich and varied contents of an interesting, although, in many respects—as the author anticipated—an unsatisfactory volume:

I. The Philosophical Problem of Mind. II. The Rise of Organized Life. III. Physiological Facts and Brain Activity. IV. The Immortality of the Race and the Data of Propagation. V. The Investigations of Experimental Psychology. VI. The Ethical and Religious Aspects of Soul-Life.

The author is an earnest and able advocate of what is called Cosmic Monism. In another work from the same pen, monism is defined as "That philosophy which recognizes the oneness of all-existence." Again: "The disposition of our mind must thus naturally lead us to a monistic philosophy which attempts to understand all the single phenomena of the universe, as well as the whole of reality, by one universal law, or from one all-embracing principle."

These statements will prepare the way for the following from the present volume. "In reality objects have no separate existence; they exist in a constant flux, and the full and exhaustive comprehension of one object would include a comprehension of the whole universe. If this is true at all, it is most true of ourselves. The human soul is nothing more nor less than a certain action of the universe upon one part of the universe and the certain reaction following thereupon."

Matter and mind are not to be viewed as two distinct entities. "Matter and mind (the elements of feeling) are to be considered as one, not the same, but one. They are as inseparable as the two sides of a sheet of paper. If we look at it from the mind side, its activity represents itself as elements of feeling, and all kinds and degrees of actual feelings. If we look at it from the matter side, its activity represents itself as motions, or as all kinds of potential and kinetic energy."

This effort to unify in some way facts so apparently different as are physical and mental phenomena has been struggling hard to make itself a permanent place in philosophy from the time of Leibniz down to Professor Bain's "Double-faced Unity." In some form it lies at the basis of all idealism in the history of speculative thought. These diverse phenomena, apparently representing duality of existence, impress us with the belief in the absolute permanence of the one and the possibly transient, or at least temporal, character of the other. We speak of the one as subjective; of the other as objective. On this the author remarks: "The subjective world is transient; it grows by degrees; its existence is very precarious; it flickers like a candle in the wind, and will disappear again. The objective world, however, is eternal, it is indestructible. Experience teaches that it constantly undergoes changes, but that in its totality it is imperishable. The objective world is in a certain sense a part of the subject. In another sense we must say that the subject is a part of the objective world. Indeed these two sentences represent the same truth, only viewed from two standpoints. The subjective world being transient, and the objective world being eternal, the question presents itself, 'How does the subject originate in or among the objects of the objective world?'" This is the question discussed throughout the volume. It is dealt with in the light of the most recent physical and psychological science, constituting a volume of rich and racy contents, and destined to gain for itself a wide circle of readers; but we hardly think it will secure a large number of followers. Out of the great All we come, to it we return. There is an immortality of soul-life, but not of individual existence.

Deaconesses, Biblical, Early Church, European, American. By LUCY RIDER MEYER. 8vo, pp. 242. Cranston & Stowe, Cincinnati. Price 75 cents.

This is the third edition of this interesting book. About three-fourths

of the volume is devoted to an account of the history and practical working of the Chicago Training School and the Chicago Deaconess Home. At the close is a brief but valuable bibliography of the subject by Dr. Chas. M. Stuart. The book contains several engravings of the buildings and the workers.

Illustrative Notes. A guide to the study of the Sunday School Lessons for 1893. By JESSE L. HURLBUT, D.D., and ROBERT P. DOHERTY, Ph.D., 8vo, pp. 387. Hunt & Eaton, New York. Price $1.25.

Dr. Hurlbut has for twenty years been engaged in the preparation of lesson helps in connection with the International Series of Sunday School Lessons. His well-known ability and matured experience eminently fit him to be a teacher of teachers. To him has fallen the task of preparing the "Outlines" and "The Hints to Teachers," while to Dr. Doherty has been assigned the extracts from many writers, the expositions, the "Background" and the "Practical Thoughts," and the Rev. Wm. A. Dickson has gathered the "Illustrations for the use of Teachers." The book is full of information clearly and systematically arranged, and finely illustrated with maps, plans and pictures. Sunday School teachers and students would do well to obtain a copy.

The Voice from Sinai. The Eternal Bases of the Moral Law. By F. W. FARRAR, D.D., F.R.S., Archdeacon of Westminster. 8vo, pp. 314. Thomas Whittaker, New York. Price $1.50.

All but three of these sermons on the Moral Law were delivered in Westminster Abbey, in November, 1891, and January, 1892. This book is one of many on a very fruitful and important theme, which reaches through all time and all classes of men. Archdeacon Farrar brings to its discussion all his large stores of historical and biographical readings, all his deep knowledge of and sympathy with great social questions, all his aptness and pungent force of utterance, and all his vigor and enthusiasm of soul kindled by a noble theme and a vast and interested audience. The style is charming; but the rugged rigor of the law is not lost to sight under the clinging vines and blooming flowers of poetry and rhetoric. In addition to a sermon on each commandment, Farrar gives an introduction on the nature and scope of the Decalogue, and discourses on "The Ten Words," the voice of God, "The Law our Tutor to bring us to Christ," "The Manner of Keeping the Commandments"—*toti, totum, semper*, and at the close "Thou shalt not." The book is much needed in this age of laxity of thought and life, and should be much read.

Apologetics; or, Christianity Defensively Stated. By ALEXANDER BALMAIN BRUCE, D.D., Professor of Apologetics and New Testament Exegesis, Free Church College, Glasgow. Author of "The Training of the Twelve," "The Humiliation of Christ," "The Kingdom of God," etc. 8vo, pp. 521. $3.00. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Upper Canada Tract Society, Toronto.

The best defence of Christianity, doubtless, is Christianity itself. If mankind could only be so far delivered from antagonistic prejudices and prepossessions, as to give to the religion of Jesus Christ a fair hearing, and to calmly and dispassionately consider its claims, other proofs of its divine origin would be unnecessary. The recognition of this fact, as we understand it, underlies the argument of this work. According to Dr. Bruce's own explanation, in the sub-title of his book, it is "Christianity Defensively

Stated." There are two ways, of course, in which such a statement might be made: it might take an abstract and theoretical form ignoring all classes of enemies to the truth, and at the same time furnishing the material for resisting these attacks; or, without abandoning the scientific method which has just been described, it might take the form of applied science, making the application to the various forms of assault which has been made upon the citadel of truth. The former is perhaps the most scientific; the latter is the most practical. And each, as will be readily seen has its own peculiar advantages.

The former of these methods is the one specially affected by the German apologist. They distinguish between *apology* and *apologetic*. The former is a reply to definite attacks upon Christianity; the latter is such a statement of Christianity itself as anticipates and provides for all forms of attack from whatever quarter they may come. Ebrard says: "Apologetic is that science which, from the essence of Christianity itself, determines what kinds of attacks are possible, what sides of Christian truth are open to attack, and what false principles lie at the foundation of all attacks, actual or possible." Every theologian can readily understand the supreme value and importance of a work successfully constructed on this plan. And yet the probability is that, to the great bulk, even of preachers and teachers, it would be less useful than a work more concrete and practical, dealing more directly with living issues, and approaching more nearly to a popular style.

Such seem to have been the considerations which determined the plan of the work under review. "It is," as the author tells in the preface, "an apologetic presentation of the Christian faith with reference to whatever in our intellectual environments makes faith difficult at the present time. The constituency to which it addresses itself consists neither of dogmatic believers, for whose satisfaction it seeks to show how triumphantly their faith can at all possible points of assault be defended, nor to dogmatic unbelievers, whom it strives to convince or confound, but of men whose sympathies are with Christianity, but whose faith is stifled or weakened by anti-Christian prejudices."

The plan, the scope, the aim of the work, as thus indicated, is admirable, and there is much in the manner in which it is worked out that is worthy of hearty commendation. The introduction, for example, consisting of two chapters, contains an historical sketch of Christian apologetics, and an exposition of the functions and method of apologetic is of great value. Book I., which deals with "Theories of the Universe, Christian and anti-Christian," including the "Christian Facts," the "Pantheistic, Materialistic," and the "Deistic" theories of the universe, "Speculative Modern Theism," and Agnosticism, is, on the whole, admirable. It is in Books II. and III. that sober Bible students, who have not accepted the conclusions of what is known as the higher criticism, will find it difficult, and in some instances impossible to follow him. It will be interesting, however, even to such to know what can be said in defence of the Christian religion from the rationalistic standpoint. And nowhere probably can this be found better stated than in this volume.

It will be seen that it is Christianity, not the Christian writings which Dr. Bruce essays to defend. It is the revelation which God has made to mankind, not the book which contains the record of that revelation, which is the object of his apology. He distinguishes sharply between these two. He holds that the revelation was made, that the religion existed before the sacred books were written, and he seems to think that this light and life might have continued to exist without these writings, though he knows of no other means of preserving them that would have been so conven-

ient. He accepts the doctrine of the Westminster Confession of Faith, that "Holy Scripture is most necessary" as beyond question, if the words "most necessary" be taken as implying a very high degree of utility, amounting to a practical necessity; but he enters his caveat against the statement of this doctrine which would make the knowledge of the Scriptures absolutely necessary in order to salvation.

But enough has been written, perhaps, to indicate in a general way the character of this book. It belongs to a class of works which no theological student who desires to be in any sense up to the times should be without. Judiciously and cautiously read, it will no doubt prove a source of great profit; but read without care and discrimination, its effects may be unsettling and mischievous.

English Compound Words and Phrases. A Reference List with Statements of Principles and Rules. By HORACE TEALL. Funk & Wagnalls Co., Toronto. 8mo, pp. 311. Price $2.50.

There is, perhaps, no subject upon which lexicographers differ more than in respect to the use of the hyphen in the construction of compound words. This will readily be seen by anyone who will take the trouble to compare the standard dictionaries of the English language. Hitherto this matter has not been regulated by any definite and fixed rules. The learned author has, and apparently with a good deal of success, attempted to remedy this defect, and in so doing to meet a felt want. The book will no doubt be a favorite with people who aim at anything like absolute correctness in the use of compound words and phrases.

Some Christian Endeavor Saints. By REV. FRANCIS E. CLARK. Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society, Boston and Chicago. Pp. 247. Price $1.

A series of brief, spicy articles, many of which have already been printed, but all of which are of permanent value. The Christian Endeavor Saints are intensely modern, practical people, not all of them young in years, but all young in heart. So also the men and women whom Dr. Clark addresses with his keen humor in the *Golden Rule* sermons and epistles are types whom we all recognize. Many are the people who will find the coats here displayed making an uncomfortably close fit to their own peculiarities; yet the spirit of the maker is so genial that one cannot be offended. The recipes furnish food for serious thought as to the make-up of life, while not failing to coat the medicine with the sugar of fun. While members and supporters of young people's societies will find most pleasure and perhaps most profit in reading this book, no one who cares for the attainment of spiritual ends will consider the time spent in reading it wasted. The unusually dainty cover adds much to the attractiveness of the book, which will make an inexpensive yet valuable gift for young people.

The People's Bible. Discourses upon Holy Scripture. By JOSEPH PARKER, D.D., London. Vol. XVII., Old Testament, Hosea-Malachi. 8vo, 456 pp., cloth, $1.50. New York and Toronto: Funk & Wagnalls Company.

This is the concluding volume of Dr. Parker's pastoral notes on the Old Testament, and it covers a vast and interesting field from Hosea to Malachi. These sermons are not only for the theologian, but of special use to the Christian man or woman who is anxious to get greater illumination upon the Divine Word. Dr. Parker says: "I have been but an

instrument in God's hand"—an instrument to make clear many dark passages; an instrument to find for us God "enshrined and concealed in words;" an instrument to discover for us the "larger meanings," and thus we are led through these last books of the Old Testament, which ends with a curse, to the incomprehensible blessing of the New Testament, and we hear the words: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

A commentary of the Old Testament upon the old lines of critical research and theological disquisition is of value only to the student, and even then the work appeals largely, if not entirely, to the mind. But here is a work, covering the ground from Genesis to Malachi, while in a certain sense very critical, manifesting a high degree of scholarship, yet it appeals to the heart, to the religious experience, to the spiritual life. It seems that Dr. Parker has attempted, and wondrously succeeded, to unveil the hidden glories of the Old Word that we may rejoice and be glad.

There are but two more books on the New Testament to follow and complete this series, making, in all, twenty-five volumes, Parker's People's Bible.

The New Womanhood. By REV. J. C. FERNALD. Introduction by Marion Harland. 12mo, $1.25. Boston: D. Lothrop Co.

Mr. Fernald has chosen a large field for observation, thought and analysis in his strong and readable volume. The progress of the ages has brought about for the women of to-day an opportunity for a new womanhood—a sphere in which every faculty may be trained and tested to its highest capacity, and every grace of mind and body may be made to serve a higher purpose and play a higher part in the work of life than ever it has had opportunity to do before. Mr. Fernald sees and appreciates this, and his series of papers—or rather consecutive chapters—are full of timely suggestions, practical deductions and helpful aids toward achievement. He treats in vigorous and direct fashion such problems of the hour as domestic duty, home development, work and wages, cooking, co-operation and education, marriage and divorce, study, hygiene, false and true ideals of life, reading, self-support, man and maternity, property, caste and culture, and other matters equally important and equally imperative. It is a thoughtful, a purpose-filled, an incisive book, and every woman, whether maid or mother, worker or "lady," should read and heed its trenchant and helpful pages.

So close and practical a student of domestic problems and woman's real work as Marion Harland seconds Mr. Fernald's words of wisdom, and by a characteristic introductory chapter pleads for a broader knowledge of the New Womanhood by woman herself, and separating it from the fads and follies of men-haters and social reformers, shows the New Womanhood to be the speedy and sure uplifting of the whole race—"male and female created He them." Woman as the home-maker is the pivotal idea of the work, and self-control and self-help its mainspring and its inspiration. The book is a searching study of the best phase of the "Woman question."

Genesis Printed in Colors. Showing the Original Sources from which it is supposed to have been Compiled. With an introduction by EDWIN CONE BISSELL, Professor in McCormack Theological Seminary, Chicago. Hartford, Conn.: Belknap & Warfield. Cloth, $1.25.

Prof. Bissell has fairly earned the right to speak on the questions of Old Testament criticism which are now attracting such general attention. Besides an important contribution to the subject in "The Pentateuch: Its

Origin and Structure," etc. (1885), and numerous articles of his which have appeared in leading periodicals, it has been matter of special study and instruction during the eleven years in which he has been Professor of Hebrew in the Hartford Theological Seminary.

In the present book a most unique and practical method has been adopted to show the positions of higher critics as it respects Genesis.

By means of ink of different colors, of which not less than seven kinds are used, not only are the three principal sources from which Genesis is supposed to have been compiled, independently displayed, but, in some cases, the alleged source of these sources. Also, passages where the analysis is still in question, and even, the part in minutest detail, which the ancient editor is conjectured to have had in the work.

The particular form of analysis presented is that found in the German work of Kautzsch and Socin; but it is held to be fairly representative of current views.

Prof. Bissell's well-known, conservative attitude toward this criticism, whose results he thus candidly presents, appears in his Introduction, and is well expressed in the motto of the title-page: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

The book, while eminently adapted for use in the class room of theological seminaries, is in a form to interest and to be easily comprehended by all intelligent students of the Bible.

Revival Kindlings. By REV. MARTIN WELLS KNAPP, Editor of the *Revivalist*. Boston, Mass.: McDonald, Gill & Co. Albion, Mich.: The Revivalist Publishing Co. Cloth, 336 pp. Price $1.10. To subscribers for the QUARTERLY, 75c.

This is a new book of striking and stirring facts and incidents intended to help kindle revival fires. The subjects treated are revival kindlings, revival fire, revivals, revival preparation, revival prayer, revival workers, revival methods, revival results, Jonahs, infidelity, death scenes of the saved and the unsaved, the peril of procrastination, "getting saved," and receiving the Holy Ghost. It is a crowded arsenal for the religious teacher, an illustrative to the seeker, and a winning messenger to the unconverted. The reading of this book will certainly be an inspiration to any minister in revival work. That it may be put within the reach of all we have arranged to have it sent, postpaid, to our subscribers for 75c.

God's Image in Man. Some Intuitive Perceptions of Truth. By HENRY WOOD. Author of "Natural Law in the Business World," etc. Boston: Lee & Shepard. Cloth, 258 pp. Price $1.

Two editions of this attractive, suggestive book were exhausted within a few weeks of its issue, and in response to a demand from abroad an English edition has been published by Elliott Stock, of London. Those who are orthodox to historical evangelical theology may not always agree with Dr. Wood's theories, but they will be inspired by his thoughts and quickened by his spirituality. The book is written from the standpoint of the divine immanence, and hence has the spirit of the new orthodoxy. It is a layman's common sense exposition of modern ideas of religion and man's relation to the universe, free from unnecessary incumbrances or dogmatic prejudice. The book will prove interesting and instructive to all thinking people. The subjects treated are: The Nature of God, Revelation through Nature, Direct Revelation, Biblical Revelation, Revelation through the Son, The Universality of Law, The Solidarity of the Race, Man's Dual Nature, The Unseen Realm, Evolution as a Key, From the Old to the New.

Womanhood. By PRESIDENT BLACK, of Missouri Valley College. Cumberland Presbyterian Publishing House, Nashville, Tenn.

These are a series of lectures delivered by Doctor Black while pastor of a Presbyterian church in St. Louis, Missouri. Their titles are, "A Wife's Wages," "Women of Society," "Women as Public Teachers," "The Ideal Wife," "More about the Ideal Wife," and "Women and Christian Progress."

While the titles are in themselves eminently suggestive, the lectures are still more so. The style is terse and epigrammatic, and withal plain for the wayfaring man to understand. Dr. Black is an advocate of equal laws and equal rights for man and woman. The anomalous position of the wife in some homes, where she is a sort of hired girl without the hired girl's freedom, and more than the hired girl's responsibilities, is forcibly set forth in the first lecture. We suggest to the publishers that they print this by itself, with one of those dainty vellum and gold bindings that we have learnt to know, so that it may be presented as a souvenir of his altar vows to every bridegroom. The same could be done with "The Ideal Wife," and presented to the bride; while for the old maid—the dear old maid—that many of us know and love as well, there could be the gift of "Women and Christian Progress," in similar delicate wrapping.

Wendell Phillips, the Agitator. By CARLOS MARTYN. Funk & Wagnalls, Toronto and New York. The Funk & Wagnalls Co. have undertaken to publish a series of twelve eminent American reformers; they have already given us "Howe, the Philanthropist," "Abraham Lincoln, the Emancipator," "Horace Greeley, the Editor," and now we have "Wendell Phillips, the Agitator." The whole series are printed in large type on excellent paper. Cloth, $1.50; paper addition, $1.00.

Mr. Martyn was personaliy acquainted with Mr. Phillips, and he has, therefore, written this biography with admirable intelligence and sympathy, and so produced a life-like picture of the man and the times in which he lived. Perhaps the best test of a book is its power of inspiration. This volume ought to inspire every manly and heroic soul with fresh enthusiasm in the cause of right, and quicken the blood of the dreamer into active circulation.

There is this, also, noteworthy about the book. It abounds in copious quotations of Mr. Phillips' own words, so that the work is in a great measure a handbook of his opinions. There are appended three orations, never before published, on "The Lost Arts," "Daniel O'Connell," "The Scholar in a Republic." From these we see that Mr. Phillips had all the qualities of the great orator, the language of the people in unmeasured flow, warm intuitive sympathy, wonderful power of repartee, a magnificent intellect, wonderful earnestness of purpose, and a remarkable self-control.

If there be any "higher education" needed to help a people on to greatness and to elevate man from coarse and sordid pursuits, it can surely be found in the study of biographies such as this. We congratulate Mr. Martyn on the excellence of his work, and think he may justly claim to be Wendell Phillips' Boswell.

Biography of Dio Lewis, M.D. By MARY F. EASTMAN. Fowler & Wells Co., New York.

We believe in ideals, especially in a religious ideal which may be defined as a product of sanctified imagination; an ideal which is the outline picture, of possible usefulness and success, conceived under the incitements of faith, love and hope, where it be a self-sacrificing life. There is a logical impediment to the growth of faith in the heart of the man who has no ideals. An

ideal, though unfulfilled, must exert a tremendous influence upon personal character, and tend to move the mind of God from whom all fulfilment must come. These are the thoughts that impress us on reading the above biography. Surely if ever a man was an *idealist*, Dio Lewis was one—his life was rich in faith and immensely practical.

As a boy he was noted for an investigating turn of mind for strong religious feeling, bordering on the mystic, and for his capability of working. He early became a homœopathic physician, and at once devoted himself to introducing temperance, hygiene and physical exercise into the schools of Virginia. Then the Dio Lewis system of light gymnastics was developed, a system which, in these days of Delsarte movements and calisthenics without end, cannot, in our opinion, be surpassed as a gymnastic training for girls. Joining the Sons of Temperance, his first action is to protest against the exclusion of women. Very speedily he put his theories into practice regarding women, by forming them into committees for active temperance work. His school at Lexington, for the education of girls, was a marked success. But his life-work began in earnest when he removed to Boston and built a private hotel. Thenceforward he was known as the most enthusiastic temperance advocate, and there are not a few hydra-headed evils in Boston and neighborhood that would be still rampant with fiendish glee if Dio Lewis had not lived. The women's temperance movement is one of the most wonderful uprisings of the age, and it was mainly, if not entirely, due to him. Its successes are too recent to require extended notice here. They are of our own period and time, and the future is still theirs.

As a record of a noble life, the book is full of inspiration as a piece of literary workmanship. It is very unequal, and conveys the impression of a hastily designed patchwork quilt. Without doubt, the real biography of Dio Lewis is yet to be written; meanwhile, we accept with thankfulness the volume as a genuine heartfelt tribute to his memory.

Ezra and Nehemiah: Their Lives and Times. By CANON RAWLINSON. Cloth, 75 cents. London: James Nisbet & Co.; Toronto: Wm. Briggs

An Introduction to the Books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther. By A. H. SAYCE, M.A. Cloth, 90 cents. London: The Religious Tract Society; Toronto: Wm. Briggs.

As preparatory helps for the accurate student of the Old Testament books, from which the Sunday School lessons of the first quarter of 1893 are taken, both of the above works will be found invaluable. Any teacher who reads them carefully will go before the class with a much more intelligent conception of the topic in hand.

Ezra and Nehemiah belong to that excellent "Men of the Bible" series. In addition to the accounts given in the Bible, we have here the advantage of all the light that is thrown by recent research upon the history of their times. The aim of the author is to reproduce the scenes in which these two reformers lived, and thus enable us to reproduce in our minds the times and character of those great leaders. The chapters showing their relation with the Persian government and rulers, and those describing the material and religious condition of the Jews in Judæa, together with the accounts of the first and second reformations, enable one to study the books of Ezra and Nehemiah from a much more intelligent standpoint.

Sayce's Introduction is a successful effort "to set before the reader a brief but intelligent account of the books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther, and a history of the times to which they belong." This book is really a

commentary in the form of a continuous narrative, enriched with the results of the most recent monumental discoveries. The testimony that is here given, by the quotations from the tablet inscriptions, to the truth of the Old Testament Scriptures is most valuable—the books, age and work of Ezra and Nehemiah all being thus confirmed. The language, author and purpose of the book of Esther is considered, objections to it answered, the plot and execution of Haman, and the feast of Purim, examined, and the apocryphal additions disposed of. He closes his comments on this seemingly secular book by calling attention to this fact: "God's inspiration is not confined to a particular kind of literary work or a particular description of narrative." In an appendix is given translations of the "Great inscriptions of Darius, the son of Hystaspes, on the rock of Behistun," and of "Xerxes at Persepolis."

The Minor Prophets—

For the benefit of those who are interested in the studies on the Minor Prophets, and are enquiring for works of reference, we wish to recommend as among the most concise and suggestive commentaries the "Cambridge Bible" series, for sale by Wm. Briggs, Toronto; *Hosea*, by Cheyne, $1; *Obadiah* and *Jonah*, by Perowne, 75c.; *Micah*, by Cheyne, 45c.; *Haggai* and *Zechariah*, by Perowne, $1; *Malachi*, by Perowne, 30c. Also the "Hand Books for Bible Classes" series—the Presbyterian News Co., Toronto. The Post-Exilic Prophets (*Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*), by Marcus Dods, 70c. The six Intermediate Minor Prophets (*Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*), by Principal Douglas, 50c. And as a valuable supplement to any or all of the above works, "The Lives and Times of the Minor Prophets," by Archdeacon Farrar, in the "Men of the Bible" series, 75c. Wm. Briggs, Toronto.

Men and Morals. By the REV. JAMES STALKER, D.D., author of the "Lives of Christ and Paul," "The Preacher and His Models," etc. Cloth, 8vo, pp. 192, $1. Toronto: Willard Tract Society.

This book consists of eight addresses on important themes of faith and conduct, delivered to students at Yale University, Moody's School at Northfield, and at Glasgow University. They are very readable and instructive, and will be specially interesting and profitable to young men. The subjects are: The Four Men; Temptation; Conscience; The Religion for To-day; Christ and the Wants of Humanity; Public Spirit; The Evidences of Religion; Youth and Age. Our subscribers may procure this volume from the manager for 50 cents.

The Need of Minstrelsy, and other Sermons. By REV. E. A. STAFFORD, D.D., LL.D. Cloth, 8vo, 317 pp. $1. Toronto: William Briggs.

This is a memorial volume of one of the Associate Managing Editors of this QUARTERLY, for which Rev. D. G. Sutherland, D.D., LL.B., another of our staff, has written a commendatory introduction. Dr. Stafford was so widely and favorably known as a preacher that the public will be glad to know that these nineteen sermons are so preserved as to be available for all. To enjoy and profit to the full extent by their reading, one will have to reproduce in imagination the personality behind them. The sermons selected are truly characteristic of the preacher, each one being eminently practical, and all who read them will have a larger and truer conception of Christian life and character. They are preceded by a brief biographical sketch by the editor, and followed by his very able address before the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the

United States. We are glad to have this monument of our co-laborer's work.

Four Centuries of Silence; or, from Malachi to Christ. By REV. R. A. REDFORD, M.A., LL.B., Professor of Systematic Theology and Apologetics. Cloth, 8vo, 258 pp., $1.50. London: James Nisbet & Co. Toronto: Willard Tract Society. To our subscribers, 90 cents.

The aim of this volume is not to set forth a history, but to call attention to the deeply interesting period between the *old* and the *new* dispensations. The facts discussed will confirm the faith of those who accept the authority of Scripture, and illustrate the wonderful method of Divine Providence in preparing the way for the higher revelations of Christianity. This volume, which first appeared as a series of articles in *The Homiletic Magazine*, is a contribution to the settlement of the question of revelation from the historical standpoint. The "four centuries of silence" were very eventful years in Jewish history, and must have been preparatory of the coming Messiah. That this great gulf can be leaped and ignored in a proper study of the revelation of the divine will is impossible, hence the present work is a valuable contribution to biblical literature, one that should be in every Scripture student's library.

BOOKS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL LIBRARIES AND PREMIUMS—

John Remington, Martyr. By MRS. G. R. ALDEN ("Pansy") and MRS. C. M. LIVINGSTON. Extra cloth, crown, 8vo, bevelled boards, 70 cents. Toronto: William Briggs.

This is a powerfully written temperance story, setting forth the deep degradation that comes to the vendor as well as the user of strong drink. The purpose of the tale is not only to expose the evils of the drink traffic, but to show how the temperance worker arouses the enmity and persecution of the anti-temperance party by his reformatory labors.

The Guinea Stamp. By ANNIE S. SWAN (Mrs. Burnett-Smith). Cloth, 8vo, $1. Toronto: William Briggs.

This is a new story from the pen of that most cheerful lady writer whose works have already given such profit and pleasure to so many. The plot of this story is laid in Scotland, and bears on the social-purity question. It demands in wedlock purity for purity. The book should be read by young men and women, also parents.

The Chautauquans. By JOHN HABBERTON, author of Helen's Babies. Cloth, $1. Toronto: William Briggs.

Next to the enjoyment and advantages of a season's visit at the original Chautauqua, reading of it and the work done there is to be desired. As might be supposed from the author, this book is not a mere dry detailed sketch of Chautauqua life, but the life itself sketched with all the reality of this pen-painter who has himself experienced what he describes.

Marjorie's Canadian Winter. A story of the "Northern Lights." By AGNES MAULE MACHAR. Boston: D. Lothrop Co. Toronto: The Williamson Book Co. $1.50.

This is a well-written story for the young, giving a true picture of life and cherishing the spirit of enlightened patriotism and cheerful Christianity. It appeals by its noble precepts and sterling examples to the higher nature, and tends to mental and spiritual development of a sound, broad and judi-

cious sort. In this tale, Miss Machar has given a fine description of Canadian life and character, full of pure, wholesome, entertaining and instructive lessons.

The History of the Origin and Development of the Governing Conference in Methodism, and especially of the General Conference of the Methodist Church. By REV. THOMAS B. NEELY, D.D., PH.D., LL.D. Cincinnati: Cranston & Stowe; New York; Hunt & Eaton. 12mo, pp. 452. Price $1.50.

The Republic—To Methodism, Dr. By H. H. MOORE, D.D. Cincinnati: Cranston & Stowe; New York: Hunt & Eaton. 12mo, pp. 363. Price $1.00.

These two volumes are among the latest contributions to the literature of Methodism which is not only steadily, but rapidly increasing. Already, it is said, there are 800 volumes in the Astor Library, in New York, on this form of Christianity in its various phases; and evidently the end is not yet. Indeed from the freshness and vigor of these books, we infer that the theme is as far as ever from being exhausted. They are both written from the United States standpoint, and have a special interest for Methodists in that country. But the Methodism of Canada and that of the United States are too closely related for anything that greatly interests our co-religionists on the other side of the international boundary to be a matter of indifference to us. Dr. Neely's book will be scarcely less valuable to students of the ecclesiastical polity of Methodism in Canada, than to those of that of the Methodism of the United States. The Doctor applies to the elucidation of his theme the historical method, and his work is characterized throughout by a conscientious and painstaking thoroughness which will give it a permanent value. No one who desires to understand all about the genesis and evolution of the ecclesiastical polity of Methodism in any of its branches can very well do without it.

Dr. Moore's book is of a lighter character, and more popular, is no less valuable nor less worthy of a wide circulation. Such books, no doubt, sound a little boastful to non-Methodist readers, who have not studied the subject very carefully; but it is evident that the debt which both the United States and Canada owe to this form of Christianity can scarcely be overstated. No other ecclesiastical system had the elasticity that was necessary to overtake the early settlers, who spread like locusts over every part of this continent, and to prevent them from sinking into absolute barbarism; and it is not, perhaps, too much to say that no other branch of the Church, at the time, had the zeal and self-denial that were necessary in order to meet and overcome the difficulties and hardships with which the work was beset. But the men who represented Methodism in the past, and laid these countries under such lasting obligations have labored, and we have entered into their labors. The question now is, shall we be able to wear their armor and repeat their acts of heroism in the high places of the field.

The Writings of Thomas de Quincey. Essays in Philosophy. Houghton, Mifflin & Company, Boston. Price $2.00.

This volume consists of a series of papers mainly devoted to philosophers and philosophical subjects. In addition we have "Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected," and "Memorial Chronology on a New and more Apprehensible System, in a Series of Letters to a Lady." The philosophical papers discuss Suicide, Casuistry, Sir Wm. Hamilton, Sir James Mackintosh, Herder Lessing and Immanuel Kant, the whole

constituting a rich and varied collection from one of England's greatest and most versatile writers of prose.

To the student of philosophy, the papers are invaluable; to one who delights in the arts of rhetoric, there will be found here everything to charm and please while the book itself in its mechanical execution is a credit to the publishers.

Instructions to Young Converts. By DOUGAN CLARK, M.D., Publishing Association of Friends, Chicago.

These "Instructions" are very clear and comprehensive, covering the whole field of Christian privilege and duty. They will prove very useful not only to those specially addressed, but to all Christians. The little book is not too bulky to be easily carried in the pocket, so as to be consulted in spare moments.

Regeneration. By GEORGE NYE BOARDMAN, Professor of Systematic Theology, Chicago Theological Seminary. F. H. Revell Company, New York and Chicago. Willard Tract Society, Toronto. Price 75 cts.

This book is a very satisfactory discussion of the Christian doctrine of the new birth. It maintains that while the manner in which the new birth is effected is not fully comprehended, the fact of the new birth, in the transformed life, is demonstrated; as in the lives of Paul and Augustine, and many others, of whom it says, "the sound of their voices come up, like the sound of many waters. from all quarters of the earth."

To the preacher the discussion will suggest a variety of topics confirmatory and illustrative of the fundamental truth, "Ye must be born again."

The Great Discourse of Jesus Christ the Son of God. A Topical Arrangement and Analysis of all His words separated from the context. Anson D. F. Randolph & Company, New York. 12mo, pp. 361. Price $1.50.

This work has a history, and the story of its genesis is both interesting and instructive. It is the result of the struggles of one who, finding himself in darkness, was seeking for the light, and who was divinely guided to seek for this in the words of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The thoroughness of his examination of the sayings of Him who spake as never man spake is seen in the completeness of the analysis of them which he has made. The arrangement is such that in this book we have something like a complete body of divinity in the words of the Great Teacher Himself.

Life of James Evans. The inventor of the Syllabic System of the Cree Language. By REV. JOHN MCLEAN, M.A, Ph.D. Cloth, $1. Toronto: William Briggs.

We have had none too much of Canadian Methodist biography, in fact there is a generation of Methodists fast coming forward to take the place of their fathers, who know little or nothing of what these self-sacrificing pioneers endured for the cause of God in this land. Our Brother McLean has conferred a great favor upon our Church and country in giving us this volume, which reads with all the charm of a romance. In this book he has given more than a sketch of James Evans' life and work; it is in reality a general survey of Methodist Indian mission work in Canada until the time of the death of Mr. Evans, with its results. There should be a missionary department in every Sunday School library and this book should

be in it. Gleanings from its pages would form a most interesting topic for a woman's missionary meeting, or for missionary night in a young people's society.

At the Place which is called Calvary. By REV. EDWIN H. BURGESS, Presbyterian Minister of Stellarton, N.S. Cloth, 75 cents. New York: A. D. F. Randolph & Co. Toronto: Wm. Briggs.

Sermonic literature seems to be on the increase. Thus the press is aiding the pulpit in preaching the Gospel. The first, which gives its name to the book, is a communion sermon, and a fair index of the liberal, vigorous, original thought of this volume. He treats the subject under three heads: 1. Calvary tells of God's love to us; 2. Calvary proclaims God's justice; 3. Calvary offers salvation to all—in which he combats most logically the traditional Calvinistic doctrines of the atonement and election, even daring to attack the Westminster Confession and Shorter Catechism, saying: "I hold that our Church should have no room in its standards for any theory of the atonement or of election that does not coincide with John iii. 16." The other sermons are "Jesus our Friend;" "Is not this the Carpenter?" "Setting the Plumb-line;" "Excuses;" "Repentance;" "Christian Unity and Humility;" "Burdens, and the Burden-Bearer." These are not sensational, but thoughtful, evangelical sermons that will add to the storehouse of any Gospel teacher.

The Shekinah in the Soul. By REV. J. D. DINNICK. Paper, 10 cents. Toronto: Wm. Briggs.

This is an able discourse on Ephesians i. 18-20, of a deeply spiritual character. The line of thought running through the sermon is the nature, method, and purpose of divine illumination, and is treated in a very clear and convincing manner. It is safe, sure, sound teaching on the higher attainments in Christian life through the Holy Spirit.

How to become a Christian. By REV. LYMAN ABBOTT, D.D. *How to Learn How.* By HENRY DRUMMOND, F.R.S.E., F.G.S. New York and Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Co. Toronto: Wm. Briggs. Vellum, 20 cents each.

The first of these booklets consists of five simple talks to the young, explaining in a very clear manner the way to be a Christian. They are adapted to the child-mind, and entirely free from theological and philosophical terms, yet filled with the philosophy of salvation. The other contains two addresses to Christian workers who have to deal with young men. The subjects are, "Dealing with Doubt," and "Preparation for Learning," and as might be expected are treated in a very common-sense and practical way. Drummond rightly maintains that the Christ method is "teach," "give facts," the scientific spirit.

The Old and New Testament Student with the November-December number completes its fifteenth volume. It has passed into the possession of the University of Chicago, and will be continued hereafter as *The Biblical World.* The new journal will be devoted to the cause of Bible study and Bible work in a much more extended form than its predecessor. The editorial management is in the hands of the Biblical faculty of the University. Monthly, 80 pp., $2 per year; to our subscribers, $1.60.

The Expository Times is the ideal publication of its kind. The January number is full of short, pointed articles upon live Biblical questions; its Bible Study Guild is flourishing. Monthly, $2; to our subscribers, $1.60.

The Quarterly Review of the Methodist Episcopal Church South comes to us as promptly and regularly as usual, and is always welcome. The learned editor, evidently, has not been converted to the doctrine of Anglo-Israelism, by Dr. Poole's book. He even goes so far as to call this doctrine a mania. Only think of it, "The Anglo-Israel Mania!"

The Atlantic Monthly holds on its way steadily, without any perceptible diminution of force. It deserves, as it enjoys, a wide circulation. One of the very best of the monthlies. In the January number is an article on "George William Curtis and Civil Service Reform." Francis Parkman begins a series on "The Feudal Chiefs of Acadia." "Penelope's English Experience," by Kate Douglas Wiggin, is very interesting, as are also "Reminiscences of a German Nonagenarian," by E. P. Evans. "Shakespeare in Love's Labor Lost," by Sir Ed. Strachey, and "Edward Augustus Freeman," by John Fiske, are fine contributions.

The Quarterly Register of Current History has come to hand in good time, and fully sustains its high character. We have spoken so highly of this work and its usefulness that we need not say more than that it continues to be all that we have represented it to be.

Quarterly Review of the United Brethren for October. The following is the list of contents of this able quarterly:—"Our National Perils," "Moral Power, and how to Generate it," "Divine Healing," "The Holy Ghost," "Inspiration of the Scriptures," "The Christian Church," together with the usual editorial matter and book reviews.

The Yale Review for August and November. This journal is devoted to History and Political Science, and to students in these lines especially the articles are full of interest and value. We notice that Dr. Woolsey's article, "An Inquiry concerning our Foreign Relations," is directly in the face of the popular opinion and party outcries of the United States.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church Review for October. The list of contents is, as in other numbers, long and varied. We would especially commend the symposium on "Education for the Masses." In the tenth article are some sharp sarcasms at the boasted superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race. It should, however, have been entitled "Ham *vs.* Japhet."

The Andover Review, in the December number, concludes the series of able editorials on "The Divinity of Christ." There are also strong articles on "The Ethical Basis of Taxation," "The New Natural Theology," "Widening Christian Life and Thought," and "The Place of the English Bible in Modern Theological Education." The last is an address by Prof. Taylor, at the opening of the College in Andover Theological Seminary, which should be read by all who are interested in the ministry of the future. In the November number is a very interesting article on "Methodism and the Andover Theology," in which it is shown that while Andover has drifted from Calvinistic orthodoxy, she has come into sympathetic relations with Arminianism on the doctrines of Christian consciousness, inspiration and the absoluteness of Christianity. The *Review* is hereafter to be published as a bi-monthly, at $3 per year, and will be furnished our subscribers at $2.40.

Christian Thought for December contains articles on "J. Stuart Mill, our 'Modern Aristotle,' and the Theistic Argument," "What was man before he was?" "Shop and Girls," "Philosophy and Physical Science," "Notes

on Theism," by Dr. Buckley, and "What we suppose all intelligent people knew about Bible facts." Price $2; to our subscribers, new, $1; renewals, $1.40.

The Popular Science Monthly is publishing a series on "New Chapters in the Warfare of Science." Other articles in January number are "The Study of Man," "Marriage among the Ancient Israelites," "Evolution of Civilization and the Arts," "The Rotation of the Farm," "The Logic of Organic Evolution," "Profits of Legitimate Business not too large," "Totemism in the Evolution of Theology," and illustrated articles on "A Captive Comet," and "The Inventor of the Lightning Rod."

The Treasury of Religious Thought for January is on our table, replete with good things as usual. The full sermons are four in number, each one of which is excellent and a credit to its author. The Leading Sermonic Thoughts are by Dr. Broadus, Archdeacon Farrar, Rev. T. Harper, Bishop Bowman and Dr. Stalker. Prof. Wolf has a fine article on "Revelation, the Answer to Agnosticism." Dr. Burdett Hart gives an exquisite penpicture of Dr. Carpenter, Bishop of Ripon. Prof. Ince, of Oxford, discusses the "Educational Value of the Old Testament." The question, "Are We Good Stewards?" is answered by Rev. W. H. Temple. A very notable article on "Profanity in the Home," by Dr. Smith, of Edinburgh, should be pondered by all. Prof. Schodde writes most instructively on "Fresh Light from the East." Price $2.50 per year; to our subscribers, $1.50.

The Preacher's Magazine completes its second year with December. The prominent feature of this periodical, in addition to the homiletical, is Mark Guy Pearse's series of articles on "Moses, his Life and its Lessons"; the papers for the members of the "Union for Biblical and Homiletic Study"; "Introduction to the Books of Holy Scripture," and the Notes on the Sunday School Lessons. Subscription, $1.50; to our subscribers, $1.35.

The Charities Review is a journal of practical sociology. The November issue which begins Volume II. is a special "charity organization number," filled with special articles dealing with charity and relief work and workers. In the December number is an able article on "The Sweating System." 20c. per number, $1.00 per year of eight numbers.

The Missionary Review of the World for January shows that the great evangelical movements of the age continue to have in the *Review* a watchful and enterprising guardian. The same painstaking care to cover the whole field that has characterized the magazine in the past is clearly indicated in the present number. Rev. A. T. Pierson, D.D., who is supplying the pulpit of the London Tabernacle at present, continues, as editor-in-chief, to supply the usual amount of editorial matter, and to mould the policy of the *Review*. His son, D. L. Pierson, of Princeton, N.J., is managing editor. Dr. Gracey, Dr. Gordon, and Rev. Mr. Leonard continue in their respective departments. $2 per year; our subscribers, if new, $1.50.

The New World is one of the strongest periodicals that comes to our table. It is a quarterly review which completes its first volume with December, which contains, among other thought-provoking articles, "The Future of Christianity," and "Progressive Orthodoxy." The book reviews touch the Religion, Ethics and Theology of all countries. $3 per year.

The Homiletic Review for January begins the twenty-fifth volume. In the review section we would call attention to "The Progressive Nature of

Revelation," and "Theological Thought in Germany," and in the sociological, "What the Workingman may ask of the Minister." The sermonic and exegetical is good, as also the other sections. $3 per year, to our subscribers (new), $2.

Arthur May Mowry contributes a very suggestive paper, on "How Civil Government is Taught in a New England High School," to the December *New England Magazine*. It will interest teachers, and all those interested in the furtherance of true ideas on good government. Eben E. Rexford's serial story, "One of a Thousand," is brought to a happy conclusion.

The frontispiece of *The Chautauquan* for January is a pretty group of statuary, "Children Playing," from the Trocadero collection, many casts from which are to appear in the French exhibit of the World's Columbian Exposition. There is an unusually interesting table of contents, among which we notice a valuable contribution on "Railway Development in Canada."

Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science for November contains "Effects of Consumption of Wealth on Distribution," "Standard of Deferred Payments," "Social Work at the Krupp Founderies," together with Miscellaneous Articles, Personal Notes and Book Reviews. The quantity of matter is increased in this number without increasing the size by using smaller type for all except the leading papers. This is the periodical for the student of sociology. Price $1 per number, and well worth the money.

The reader who has been so wise or so fortunate as to have accumulated and preserved the numbers of the *Review of Reviews* for the past year is in possession of a finer portrait gallery of current celebrities in all departments of worthy human activity than could possibly be secured in any other way for twenty times the price of a year's subscription to the *Review*. Each number contains nearly a hundred illustrations, a large majority of which are admirable new portraits of men and women in whom there is or should be a wide public interest.

In the numbers for October and November of *Divine Life*, there is a paper by Rev. Dougan Clark, M.D., on "The Holy Spirit's Guidance," scriptural in tone, and therefore antagonistic to the infallible judgment idea, which has strangely led some astray. The November number has an article by Dr. Lowrey, on "Sinless Holiness." Reference is made in it to the well known statement of Mr. Wesley, who says he never uses this term. But Dr. Lowrey endorses its use, as also that of the term, "Sinless Perfection." It seems to us that it would be far better for writers upon this theme to avoid the terms referred to, and be content with those which are more easily understood, as "Scriptural Holiness," and "Christian Perfection," according to Mr. Wesley's example.

Amongst the serial magazines of the day, *Lippincott's* has a well deserved place of its own. It was the first monthly periodical to publish a complete story by a well known author with each issue; and many well known novels have first appeared in its pages. During the currrent year they have been running through its pages a series of valuable articles on "Modern Journalism as seen in our great Dailies," each article being written by a specialist of the branch under description. In addition there are always valuable editorial notes and comments on the sayings and doings and personages of the month. As a valuable tonic to while away a tedious hour, we recommend a dose of *Lippincott's Magazine*. Price 25 cents.

VARIETY IN CLASS-MEETING EXERCISES.

VARIETY is the soul of life. God loves variety. Turn where we may, we see it as His thought and plan.

In methods of work it is often the inspiration and the key to success. Fossilization either in forms or experiences indicates danger. The law of sameness is the law of death.

We would not uphold variety for mere variety's sake. A passion for new methods, regardless of reason, betokens weakness rather than strength. Exalting the manner above the matter, the plan above the purpose, the how above the why, is both unwise and unwarrantable.

Variety, however, is good. All things are set to its music. It is the poetry of nature, and may we not add, the poetry of grace. We are built on the law of change. We look for it. We need it. We profit by it. It is the law of compensation. It seems to balance the wants, and give an equipoise to our being, whether physical, intellectual or spiritual.

The design of the class-meeting renders very appropriate, we might almost say indispensable, this law of variety. The class-meeting is to build up Christian character, to instruct, to comfort, guard, cheer, quicken, counsel, according to the need and condition of its members. Variety therefore naturally and necessarily enters largely into it as an element of progress and power.

The class that is merely formal, going through its round of exercises with drill-like precision—strictly orthodox, of the "straightest sect," "A Hebrew of the Hebrews"—may be like Saul of Tarsus, a "persecutor of the saints," rather than a helper.

The class that smells of age, that has nothing fresh, nothing lively, nothing buoyant and bright and new, that is made up of experiences musty with time—experiences that were "*mummied*" years ago—should have had its funeral and been laid away in its grave long ere this. Our God is not a "God of the dead, but of the living."

In outlining "variety in class-meeting exercises," it is difficult to state any formula or indicate any definite course. To

do so is to be in danger of committing the very error which we would condemn.

It should be largely spontaneous, the outgrowth of the occasion, taking its color from its surroundings; a mirror of the influence which pervades and the thought which rules.

The class-meeting should be free to take whatever form seemed to be indicated by the leadings of the Holy Spirit. Thus at the very outset, a hymn, a prayer, a passage of Scripture, an experience, a special request, an incident, might change the aspect of the entire service, making it one of praise, or supplication, or promise, or testimony, or consecration, to the lasting benefit of all present.

There is much point and meaning in the advice given by one of large experience in leading a class. "Observe no stereotyped method. No hard and fast rule can be laid down, neither is one desirable. Sing, pray, read, speak, just when you think it will be helpful. Avoid fossilized phrases. Avoid also a fixed formula in asking for experiences. Seek to make the meeting as spontaneous and conversational as if it were round your own fireside. Never press timid persons to speak; like children that are shy, they will generally find their tongues if you let them alone. 'While I was musing the fire burned, then spake I with my tongue,' has been the experience of many trembling mutes since David's time."

The old custom of formally calling on each member in routine may exist somewhat to-day, and in some hands may possibly be a successful and efficient method. We doubt not but it is. There are other methods, however, which commend themselves to our judgment as more inviting, and more in keeping with what we regard as the spirit and design of the service.

The family thought and feeling should largely prevail in the class-meeting. The class is an inner circle, a home within the home, where all conventionality, and coldness, and difference, and formality, and constraint, should, as far as possible, be laid aside; where confidence and freedom should abound. It should, therefore, be spontaneous and cheerful, warm as the cottage fireside, bright as the glow from the blazing hearth, a place to be desired, longed-for and loved, where to speak will

be easy, even for the weakest; where experience will brighten experience and heart will strengthen heart; always spiritual, never trivial or flippant; always sincere and candid, never concealed or restrained; always enwrapped in the atmosphere of true devotion and permeated by the spirit of true oneness in Christ.

In many cases, promise-meetings have been found to be very helpful, the members quoting one or more of the precious promises of truth. Thus younger and more timid ones may be prompted to speak. Often will they venture to give a passage of Scripture when they would shrink from uttering any words of their own, and thus will come to them the satisfaction of feeling that they have taken some part in the service.

Praise-meetings are likewise full of benefit. When the special topic is praise, expressed in Scripture language, in the verse of a hymn, either sung or spoken, in some fitting quotation, or in the glad utterance of the individual, there is no light more cheering or life-giving than the light of praise.

Topic-meetings have been found to be attended with great good. The topic stated the week before may be made a subject of thought and prayer, something practical and pointed, such as the leader may see would be especially appropriate and helpful to the members of the class. Thus all are likely to become more deeply interested and more thoroughly instructed in the essentials of Christian life.

Test-meetings may be of great service and blessing. Take as an illustration the graces of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace," etc., and enquire how the members are seeking to illustrate these, or some more practical themes as "private prayer, family devotion, speaking to the converted, visiting the sick, the Rules of the Society," and enquire how far and in what way the members are seeking to fulfil these. Thus make the meeting not only a focus of religious feeling but a centre of religious living.

Motto-meetings may occasionally be used very effectively. Some chosen motto for the week is taken by the class as a whole, or by the individual member, the influence of which shall form the theme of conversation and experience at the next meeting.

Bible readings have been greatly owned. Some truth, or doctrine, or duty, considered, studied, understood in the light of the Word of God. Father Reeves, the noted English class-leader, delighted in this form of class-meeting service.

Question-meetings may have at times peculiar advantage, especially for young Christians. An opportunity given for enquiry on any point affecting spiritual life, if used sincerely, to remove doubt, to solve difficulties, to strengthen faith, to give clearer light, cannot but be promotive of progress and strength.

I have found that special requests for prayer at the outset of a class-meeting have given a peculiar unction, tenderness and power to the entire service, while in answer to earnest pleading, I have not been surprised to hear that at the very time we were engaged in supplication, those who were the special subjects of petition were met and blessed by God.

While the leader may guide the service, it may at times add interest and profit to ask some member of the class to give out the opening hymn and read the lesson, another to respond to the experiences given; or, instead of replying directly to one and the other, a comparison of testimonies may be attended with great good, or at the close, a brief and practical unfolding of the lessons suggested by the various experiences may be of real and permanent benefit.

Whatever form or variety of exercise is used, the aim of the class-meeting should ever be considered. It is not simply to please. It is not merely to spend an hour of devotion. It is not mainly to awaken joy, to raise the emotions and place us on some Pisgal height of feeling. This may be well. Our emotional nature often needs stirring. We are all the better for the hallelujah ecstacy. We need to catch more of the jubilant spirit of Charles Wesley in his exultant hymn:

> "My God, I am Thine, what a comfort divine,
> What a blessing to know that my Jesus is mine;
> In the heavenly Lamb, thrice happy I am,
> And my heart it doth dance at the sound of His name."

The class-meeting is, however, pre-eminently for self-examination and heart-searching. Its great aim is to quicken, revive

and strengthen; to bring the individual face to face with his own inner life; to gird each member for greater usefulness, and rouse to more earnest zeal in Christian work. The exercise that can best conserve this end is most to be valued and employed.

No dull, prosaic sound of spiritual duty will effect this. No mere methodical routine will avail, no long, cold, formal, speech-making experience will answer. There are some who think they have a special mission to harangue in the class-meeting. It would rather seem as if they had a special mission to kill. Against these the wise leader will ever be on his guard, and will, if possible, so direct the exercises of the hour, that such a one will have it to say: "I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth."

It might be well if these long-winded friends would occasionally follow the example of the colored parson who, when asked whether he intended taking a few weeks' vacation in the summer, replied: "Accordin' to present program, yas sir, I am gwine to hab de fust furlow dat I've 'joyed de last lebben year."

"Indeed," was the answer; "then you must certainly feel as if your brain needed rest."

"Not zactly, sah," was the reply, "not zactly. You see I aint fishiatin' with dat sort o' congregation dat 'quires any brain intment. All dey wants is just plain old-fashioned revival zortin', dat kind don't 'quire any brain rest. No sah! I'se jest gwine off ter rest my mouth."

No sombre service that shuts the door and pulls down the blinds, and welcomes the shadows, seemingly implying that solemnity, dulness and melancholy are synonymous with goodness, will promote the desired end, but a service that is warm, joyous, crisp and earnest, spontaneous and practical, full of soul and full of song. A singing class that sings with the spirit as well as with the understanding, will seldom fail to be a successful class.

"Class-meetings," says good old Daniel Quorum, "be like awls and needles, they'll go so long as ever you can keep 'em bright, but when they get dull they'll rust, and then it be

hard work." Daniel tells us how he dealt with his own class: "I get my own heart put into tune, and then the rest 'll take the right pitch from me; and then the fire burnin' I get away to meetin'; we always begin with a good, cheerful hymn, one o' them that do stir up your soul, and a good old tune that you can sing without thinkin' about it. Give me a 'trumpet metre' to 'Arise, My Soul, Arise,' or, dear old 'Jerusalem' to the hymn:

> "'My God, the spring of all my joys,
> The life of my delights,
> The glory of my brightest days,
> And comfort of my nights.'

"Bless 'e, why, by the time you're gone through that, and had a bit o' downright earnest prayer, the fire is burnin' in every heart, and you're all aglow with joy, no fear of freezin' the tender lambs to death then; more likely to warm the old ones up to shoutin' pitch."

"The dullest class-meeting I ever attended," says one, "was where there were about twenty men and not one woman, and such singing. The atmosphere was warm on the street, but was exceedingly cool in the class-room."

An efficient class-leader gives his experience thus: "I devote one evening in a month to prayer and singing exclusively; one to an experience-meeting with an occasional word of encouragement, reproof, or advice; the other two evenings to Scripture recitations on some subject previously announced. I use every effort to make my meetings as varied as possible."

Another successful leader speaks thus: "The exercises are varied by good, earnest, quick-time singing. Sometimes I have volunteer speaking, at other times close, searching meetings of enquiry."

Another leader writes: "I sometimes announce a particular theme for prayer and study during the week. At intervals I request all the members to try and live nearer the cross than they ever did, and say to them, 'I want you on next Sabbath to tell how you have lived during the week.' O what meetings follow these individual weeks! What witnessings for Jesus! What seasons of grace! Both old and young love to attend."

The secret of success in all variety of service is *Heart.* A heart all on fire, coupled with sanctified common sense, will go far to make a live and progressive class.

A leade thus equipped will ever be on the alert. A master workman, a skilful and wise guide, it will be his constant study and aim to employ any and every method which will best bring joy, and power, and soul to the service, and promote the faith and love of those under his care.

Prayer, and song, and experience; praise, and promise, and topic; question and motto Bible study; the voluntary and the direct, the conversational and the more formal—each and all will be used as the occasion may best suggest and require.

It is the glory of the class-meeting, that, as the precious stone catches the ray of light from whatever angle it may fall, and reflects it with more vivid brightness and beauty, until it glows as a star on the brow of the night sky, so, it (the class-meeting) can take to itself whatever of interest and influence these various exercises and methods may impart, and reflect their light in intenser rays, until not merely as a star, but as a very sun, it shines—a divine fountain of light, giving gladness and heat and life to all within the circle of its reach. God grant that all the classes of Methodism may be of this character.

We are conscious that we have but feebly outlined in this paper the points suggested by the topic. May we not know and hope that some hint has been dropped, or some thought presented, which, taken by the earnest-hearted leader, may be turned to practical and helpful use in his responsible and sacred trust.

No enquiry can be to him of greater moment or more vital interest than this, "How can I best make my class a power?" "How can I best conduct it for the good of its members and the glory of God?" The leader who seeks most earnestly and faithfully to answer these questions in the spirit of wisdom and prayer, will secure the richest and most satisfying reward.

Toronto. J. PHILP.

WORK AMONG THE CHILDREN.

THE Discipline of the Methodist Church recognizes all children as members of the kingdom of God, and regards all baptized children as under the special care and supervision of the Church. It also provides as soon as an age of understanding is reached, that they should be put under instruction in things pertaining to salvation, and formed into catechumen classes with suitable leaders. The principles therein laid down are right, but many a busy pastor is not able to undertake the duties required to carry out the instructions of the Discipline, neither is it always possible to appoint suitable leaders to carry on the work. The very word "catechumen" is a term that many of our people do not comprehend, scarcely understanding what is implied by such "classes."

Whatever may have been the cause, the Church has too long neglected her children. While tenderly cared for in some respects, little systematic effort has been made to secure their decision and early allegiance to Christ. The best time to convert a man or woman is when a child, before becoming unconverted. The Church should continually stretch out her arms to the children with the Master's Spirit, and keep "the little ones" in the kingdom of heaven. What seems to be required is an organization embodying the idea of the Discipline, having a name and plan of operation that would at once suggest methods of work to adults, and enlist the interest and co-operation of the children. Such an organization, we believe, is provided in the Junior Society of Christian Endeavor or the Junior Epworth League.

The object of these societies is to assist and supplement home training and Sunday School work. They are training schools in Christian character and service. Their purpose is to train the heart, head and hand in lessons of personal trust, loyalty and work "for Christ and the Church." The object is accomplished similarly to that of the Christian Endeavor weekly prayer-meeting, by means of officers and committees under an adult superintendent. A pledge similar to the following may be taken: "Trusting in God to help me, I will try to learn and do

His will. I will pray and read the Bible daily, and so far as I know how, try to live a Christian life. I also promise that I will try to be present and take some part in every meeting of the Society." Those who were thought too young, or did not wish to take the pledge, might be allowed to attend the meeting as *trial* members, provided they promised good conduct. Their names should be left on the *trial* roll, but not allowed to serve as leaders for the meetings.

In conducting the regular meetings, a simple topic should be assigned in advance, and a leader appointed, who, under the direction of the superintendent, shall conduct the meeting. Questions may be asked of each member on the topic, or they may say a word of their own on it. Scripture verses bearing on it may be given in advance for them to recite. A short season of sentence-prayers led by the superintendent, and then the leader, should always form a part of each meeting, in which all would be encouraged to take part. Singing should form a part of each meeting, and a five or ten minutes' address on the topic by the superintendent, or someone secured. Such committees as Lookout, Prayer-meeting, Social, Sunday School, Relief, Visiting, Flower, Musical and Temperanc may be appointed; these should each meet occasionally for consultation with the superintendent, and reports of work done would form an interesting part of the regular meetings. A monthly roll-call meeting should be held at which each member should respond or send an excuse. The pledge should be read and explained at this meeting, and the response regarded as a renewal.

This Junior Society may consist of boys and girls between the ages of seven and fifteen, and could stand as a catechumen or a juvenile class in its relation to the Church. Before organizing, it should be talked of and explained in the presence of the parents as well as the children, at a Church service and in the Sunday School, so as to secure the co-operation of all. Get the Young People's Society interested, select a superintendent, call a meeting of those interested and the boys and girls; after devotional exercises, explain constitution and by-laws, which adopt by vote; then the superintendent nominates officers and committees, which the members will elect by show of hands. The Society is then fully organized and ready for work; so far as possible have every member on a committee, and assist each one "to take some part in every meeting." The aim of the work should be not for large numbers but for the improvement of the members, and to this end the programmes of the meetings should be prepared.

Shall we as a Church not do more for our children?

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