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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—THE SACRED SCRIPTURES OF THE EGYPTIANS.

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THE sources from which a knowledge of the Egyptian religion may be gathered are in the inverse order of their value:

(1) The statements of the Christian fathers and earlier Greek and Latin writers.

(2) The express utterances of late Egyptian writers.

(3) The direct testimony gathered from the scarabs, amulets, wall-paintings and memorial tablets.

(4) The long religious texts preserved on coffins, the walls of temples or tombs, and in ten thousand papyri.

These religious texts are sometimes individual expressions of adoration, petition, or praise; but usually they are selections from that mysterious "Book of the Dead," *Per-n-hru*, which appears even before Abraham's day as the well-known sacred scriptures of the Egyptians.

Of this strange work, existing in so many copies, there have been only two complete translations: one in English by Dr. Birch, made over twenty-five years ago, and one in French by M. Paul Pierret, the director of the Egyptian department of the Louvre, made twelve years ago.

Dr. Charles H. S. Davis, editor of the "Biblia," Meriden, Conn., is about to publish an English translation of Pierret's work, giving also the great Turin papyrus in facsimile and chapters on animal worship, the Egyptian Pantheon, etc., at the nominal price of $3.50.

All of these scholars have used in their translations, however, a corrupt text of the Ptolemaic epoch; and for critical scholars the best translation of the "Book of the Dead" ever made, or likely to be made in this generation, will be that of P. Le Page Renouf, which, with a learned commentary, is now appearing in the "Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archeology," and will be completed in eight parts.*

This translation relies upon the critical text of the Theban era

*Obtained from W. H. Rylande, F.S.A., 37 Russell Street, Bloomsbury, W. C., London, England; price, 40 shillings.

(1700–1200 B.C.) which, after ten years of labor, was published by M. Edouard Naville in 1886.

In the Theban era no manuscript has been found containing all of the chapters of this book. Indeed, this *Per-n-hru*, "Going out like the Day" or "Coming forth by Day," ought not properly to be called a "book" at all, but a "collection" of religious texts. It was a growth like the Hebrew Psalms and the Prayer-Book of the English Church.

It would seem that it was not until the seventh century B.C. that the chapters were gathered together into one volume, in which each prayer was made a chapter and assigned a definite place. Previous to that epoch there was no such uniformity; although even 1500 B.C. the order of chapters was, in "general outline," always the same in the large papyri.

Naville believes that the systematic order in later times is due to the fact that the priests of the Saitic period issued an authorized version of their scriptures at that time; but Maspero thinks it is due to all of our existing copies coming from a few great centers, where the scribes always copied the same old Theban originals.

That the oldest chapters of this old book reach back to the pyramid times no Egyptologist doubts, while some, as Maspero, believe that the greater number of the chapters "were composed before the reign of Mene" (*Revue l'Historie des Religions, Paris, 1887*).

It is certain that some of these chapters have been found inscribed upon the coffins as early as the eleventh dynasty.

There is considerable difference between the chapters as they appear in the eleventh dynasty (2500 B.C.) and as they afterward appear in the twentieth dynasty (1200 B.C.) or the twenty-sixth dynasty (600 B.C.). This change, however, does not seem the result of wilful falsification, but to be due rather to the mistakes of copyists and to the explanation of obscure sentences. These mistakes and additions were many, because of the difficulties of the hieroglyphic language, and the great changes which took place in it during the milleniums.

To the scribe of Moses' day the mythologic texts of the pyramid era seemed as antique as Anglo-Saxon appears to the American youth.

It must be remembered that the "Book of the Dead" was not a Prayer-Book in the modern sense, for it was chiefly written for use, not in this world, but in the future world.

It was a collection of magical prayers and formulas which would protect the body from destruction, reunite all its members, put the hue of life upon the cold lips and the light of life into the glazed eyes.

It insured, also, protection to the soul during its hard journey to the Blessed Islands: offering information of and protection from every danger that could possibly affright it.

There were also formulas by the use of which the deceased could assume "any form he chose," being able to take the appearance of a bird, plant, animal, or even of some deity, at will.

These formulas, being so numerous and mysterious that no human memory was capable of retaining them, were written upon the walls of the tombs, or upon the coffins, or upon papyri hidden within the sepulchral statues, or under the mummy bandages—it being supposed that the eyes of the soul could, in the hour of need, read the powerful words and thus work the charm and save itself from harm.

Many of the chapters are so full of mythological and magical allusions as to make it very difficult for a Westerner to understand them. The following chapters given in full are a fair sample of such:

Chapter xxxiii.—Whereby All Serpents are Kept Back.

"Oh, serpent Rere, advance not! Here are the gods Seba and Shu!

"Stop! or thou shalt eat the rat which Ra execrated, and gnaw the bones of a putrid she-cat!"

Chapter xxxiv.—Whereby a Person is not Devoured by the Dweller in the Shrine.

"O Uræus! I am the flame which shineth, and which openeth out eternity, the column of Tenpua. Away from me! I am the Lynx goddess."

Chapter lviii.—Of Breathing Air and Command of Water.

"Let the door be opened to me. Who art thou? What is thy name? I am one of you. Who is with thee? It is Merta. Turn away then, front to front, on entering the Meskat. He grants that I may sail to the abode of those who have found their faces. Collector of Souls is the name of my bark; Bristler of Hair is the name of my oars; Point is the name of its hatch; Right and Straight is the name of its rudder. The picture of it is the representation of my glorious journey upon the canal. Give me jars of milk and cakes and meat at the house of Anubis."

If this chapter is known, he entereth after having gone out.

Such utterances as the above seem very much like nonsense; but it cannot be doubted that at least the oldest chapters contain in the midst of many obscurities a great many profoundities. There can be no doubt that most of the chapters in this "Book of the Outgoing by Day" referred to the soul's journey "through the night of the grave to the light of a new life."

Again and again in various forms the deceased repeats:

"Award to me the life of yearly speech, through countless years of life in addition to my years of life; countless months in addition to the months of my life; countless days in addition to the days of my life; and countless nights in addition to the nights of my life, that I may come forth and beam upon my own images with breath for my nostrils, and eyes which see, amid those who are at the horizon, on that day when brute force is brought to a reckoning" (lxxi).

The title of the first chapter, as written on the papyri of the Mosaic age, is: "The Beginning of the Chapters of Coming Forth by Day, of the Words which bring about Resurrection and Glory and of Coming Out and Entering into Amenta" (the blessed world).

The title of the second chapter is: "Chapter for Coming Forth by Day and Living after Death." The titles of other chapters are: "For Traveling on the Road which is above the Earth;" "Chapter of the Crown of Triumph;" "Chapter whereby the Crocodiles are Repulsed, who come to Carry Off the Words of Power from a Person in the Nether World;" "Chapter whereby One Dieth not a Second Time;" "Chapter whereby Air and Water are given in the Nether World;" "Chapter whereby One is not Boiled in Water or Burned in Fire;" "Chapter whereby All Forms are Assumed which One Pleaseth," golden hawk, moon, lotus-flower, blue heron, etc.

The fifteenth chapter is a prayer that the deceased shall be permitted to reach "the Land of Ages . . . the land of Eternity . . . the land of Life."

Among the very oldest chapters—and by far the most profound in the entire collection—are the seventeenth, the forty-fourth, and the one hundred and twenty-fifth.

Chapter xvii. is preserved on a number of sarcophagi which are centuries older than the times of Abraham. It opens as follows:

Chapter xvii.—Whereby One Cometh Forth by Day out of the Nether World.

"I am he who closeth and openeth, and I am but One.
"I am Ra at his first appearance.
"I am the great god, self-produced.
"His names together compose the cycle of the gods.*
"Resistless is he among the gods.
"I who am Osiris, am Yesterday and kinsman of the Morrow."

These are strange expressions, reminding one of the Scriptures (Rev. i. 8; Heb. xiii. 8, etc.).

Chapter lxiv.

"I am Yesterday, To-day, and To-morrow, for I am born again and again; mine is the unseen force which createth the gods and giveth food to those in the Tuat. . . . I am He who cometh forth as One who breaketh through the door; and everlasting is the daylight which His will hath created. . . .

"I satisfy the desires of the glorified, who are by millions and hundreds of thousands. . . . I travel on high, I tread upon the firmament, I raise a flame with the daylight which Mine eye hath made, and I fly towards the splendors of the glorified in presence of Ra daily, giving life to every man who treadeth on the lands which are upon the earth."

* Twenty-eighth dynasty texts call Ra "creator of His names."

Chapter cxxv. has been translated, at least in part, by every great Egyptologist. It represents the deceased pleading for himself before Osiris in the Judgment Hall—the "Hall of Double Truth,"—where his heart is weighed in the balance against the feather or goddess symbolical of the Divine Law of Truth.

The professions of innocence prove to us that the ancients long before Moses' day had a law written in their hearts, "their consciences bearing them witness therewith," and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them (Rom. ii. 15): "I killed no sacred animal. I gave no false testimony before the court. I did not place God last. I did not make the poor poorer. I did not slander a servant to his master. I was not hot of speech. I was not foul-mouthed. I permitted no man to suffer hunger. I pressed forth no tear. I did not kill. I gave no command to kill. . . . I did not lessen the measure of grain . . . . I did not withdraw the milk from the mouth of a babe" (some papyri add, "as an overseer I did not let the workmen work the whole day for me"). . . . I have not done injustice. O Devourer of Shades from the Cataracts, I have not stolen. . . . O Possessor of Bones, having departed from Heracleopolis, I have told no lies. O Legs of Fire, sprung from the Night, I have not devoured my heart."

And thus it continues page after page: "I have not turned a deaf ear to the words of truth. I have not worked witchcraft. I have not been a swaggerer." And thus he addresses "Fiery Tongue," "White Tooth," Blood-Devourer," "Eater of Intestines," "Bad-Worse," and a score of other mystic beings, declaring that he has done nothing that is forbidden, before he is permitted to enter the gates of the subterranean world.

The Egyptian Scriptures and the Hebrew Scriptures.

In view of the discussion regarding the origin, date and structure of the Hebrew Scriptures and the changes which have taken place in the text since their first publication, a few statements concerning the conclusions to which a study of the Egyptian "Book of the Dead" has led us may not be without some value. The comparison must be limited to the religious texts, as there are no historical narratives in the "Book of the Dead." Some of these conclusions seem entirely in the line of the most radical "higher criticism" of Germany. These Egyptian Scriptures claim to have been of divine authorship. The chapters were sometimes *found*, as the Book of Deuteronomy was found in Josiah's day; but no author was ever assigned to them except Thoth, the god of wisdom. If one rejects this traditional view, he is forced to believe that even the noblest chapters of this great work came from the pen of "the Great Unknown."

Again, this work is full of supernaturalism; a belief in divine appearances and other miracles. Much of it was evidently written

under priestly influence and with priestly bias. Still further, it is almost startling to discover that the "Redactor" has been at work upon almost every chapter; and that in the seventh century—the century so famous in the Hebrew history of the Canon—a seeming codification of the various religious texts took place, and thereafter what had been independent chapters became parts of a uniform and authorized volume.

So far there appears to be perfect harmony between the hypothesis of the higher critics of the Hebrew Scriptures, whose opinions are based solely upon internal testimony, and the conclusions of Egyptologists, who have reached their conclusions, not simply by the examination of late texts, but by a comparison of hundreds of texts of undoubted authenticity, separated from each other by thousands of years. Other necessary conclusions from this study do not seem, however, to fit so easily into the new theories:

1. This book of religion was already written and considerable textual criticism had been expended upon it before the days of Abraham. In the days of Moses, no one could be buried without carrying with him to the tomb a portion of the written word. It is incredible that Moses could have been a religious teacher trained in the Egyptian schools and not put into writing his precepts.

2. While there are many changes which have crept into the text of various chapters, these changes seem to have been due, almost always, to a misunderstanding of the primitive text, or to some comment upon the text, which in after centuries was regarded as the text itself.

All Egyptologists agree that there are few intentional interpolations or falsifications. A text of Abraham's day, when compared with a text of Josiah's day, is the same text, with only such exceptions as can be traced to the blunders of copyists or the addition of explanations. When priestly bias is displayed, it is shown usually, not by mutilating an ancient prayer or hymn, but by ascribing this to some other god than that to whom it was originally dedicated.

Whatever may be said of the Hebrews, the ancient Egyptians were very careful to retain the exact words of their sacred Scriptures, even when they did not understand at all the meaning of the words.

3. While a theological development can be traced in the "Book of the Dead," yet it proves to be very different from what might have been expected. There is no such growth in the Egyptian conception of God and the soul and the future life as has been affirmed by some modern critics of the Hebrew. Indeed, the oldest chapters have the least of magic and the most of sublimity in them. They are the latest, not the earliest chapters, which are the most fetishistic and polytheistic.

Even conservative critics have agreed to the proposition that a book of Scripture could be dated earlier or later than another, because

of its more profound and supposedly "advanced" ideas of God; but the "Book of the Dead" proves that this is not an infallible test. In the oldest chapters there are such lofty conceptions that David's Psalms or the prayers of Moses and the prophets need not be rejected for that reason.

The development in the historic period was not from bad to better, but from good to worse.

In the earliest text of the most ancient chapters the divinity affirms: "I am Yesterday and the Kinsman of To-morrow," but the later addition is: "Yesterday is Osiris, and To-morrow is Ra."

In this same most ancient text it is affirmed of Ra: "His names together compose the cycle of the gods;" but the comment is, "It is Ra who creates the names of his limbs which become the gods who accompany him." A papyrus as old as Abraham's day puts into the mouth of Ra: "I am he who closeth and he who openeth, and *I am but One*," but by the time of Moses, the foolish words had been added, "I was born from Nu."

The latest chapters of this book—some of which were written as late as the Ptolemaic time—are full of such gibberish as the following: "Osiris is the emanation of the two eyes. *Sharshar okket* is the name of one, *Shapurka* is the name of the other. His true name illuminating the earth on the brow of Tum is *Shakaamen-shak-anasa*."

It can hardly be doubted that if the age of the various chapters of this Scripture had to be determined by the spiritual insight and depth of theological knowledge manifested by the writers, there would be an inversion of the chronology which has been established by Egyptologists on the basis of contemporaneous documents. The first would be last and the last first, if the accepted canon of theological evolution were applied.

II.—RICHARD HOOKER, THE ELIZABETHAN ECCLESIASTIC.

By Prof. Theodore W. Hunt, Ph.D., Litt. D., Princeton, N. J.

Hooker was born in Heavitree, Exeter, in 1553, in the same year with Spenser, and but one year before Sidney. Right in the midst of his work, when Bacon and Shakespeare were in the midst of theirs, he shared, in common with them, the general enthusiasm of the time in politics, religion, philosophy, and letters. His education and progressive mental maturity were of the Elizabethan type. He was born and nurtured, he lived and wrote, under the benign and stimulating influence of that age.

It could not but have occurred that he should have been one of its representative spirits, a worthy exponent of its life and literature. As the men of Issachar, in Old Testament history, he had an understand-

ing of his time; was in fullest sympathy with its great historic movements; grasped its hidden meaning and tendencies, and clearly understood the character of that mission to which God had called him as a citizen of England in the Elizabethan era. His family, as that of Chaucer's, Spenser's, and Sidney's, was of some distinction, rather, however, in his antecedents and connections than in his immediate household. It seems, from authoritative records, that the poverty of his father prevented him from educating his sons. We find young Richard, therefore, in the grammar school at Exeter, preparing himself for the pursuit of some one of the mechanical trades. The promise which, as a student, he then gave of later successes led the master of the school to represent his case to a wealthy uncle, who was thus induced to grant him the privilege of more extended culture. This, as in so many other cases, was the turning point in his life, so that the workshop of the artisan was at once abandoned for the more responsible post of English authorship.

The plea of his interested teacher for his hopeful pupil is a very simple and logical one, as he says: "The lad's learning and manners are so remarkable that they must be taken notice of." We next find the progressive pupil at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in the capacity of student and clerk. His reputation was rapidly growing in the college and in all England. Influential friends arose, while the sons of eminent men were freely committed to the care of the Oxford student for instruction and personal guidance. The next important step in Hooker's life was his appearance in London as preacher at Paul's Cross in 1581—a service to which he had been appointed by the Oxford authorities, and through the medium of which he was, at length, most fortunately introduced to the mastership of the Temple. The character of this new vocation now assured him, and its bearings upon his life as an author must always hold an important place in any critical estimate of his work and fame.

A celebrated French writer pronounces him "one of the sweetest and most conciliatory of men." He was naturally recluse in his temperament: opposed to all public discussion, and never more contented than when alone among rural scenes. He thus found his city life in London oppressive to him. The din of the crowded streets, the rush and push of its throngs in their greed for wealth and preferment, were more than his placid spirit could brook. He besought Archbishop Whitgift to assign him to another field of labor where, as he characteristically remarks, he "might behold God's blessing spring out of mother earth, and eat his own bread without opposition."

His request being granted, he removed, first, to Boscomb, near Salisbury, in 1591, and then to Bishopsbourne, near Canterbury, in 1594. Here he delighted in the quietude of his country parish, beloved of all his people, and busily at work upon his great polemic treatise. His sympathetic biographer, good Izaak Walton, represents

him, in his retiracy, as simple in his dress, short and stooping in his person, as he was lowly in spirit, and quite worn out in body with study and holy abstinence. His demeanor was indicative of a contemplative life, as if in daily preparation for death.

The prayer of his heart, that God might spare him to the completion of his literary work, being graciously answered, the concluding volume was scarcely ended ere his departure, November 2, 1600. We are now prepared to note the historical occasion and the salient features of his great literary work—"The Ecclesiastical Polity."

This takes us back to 1584—to his appointment as Master of the Temple. A notable leader of the Puritan and Calvinistic parties was already ministering weekly in the Temple on behalf of what he held to be the essence of evangelical truth.

This evening lecturer was a certain Walter Travers, who was already looking forward to promotion from the lectureship to the mastership of the Temple when Hooker appeared, and who was opposed in his ambitions by the celebrated Cecil.

The old controversy between Anglicanism and Calvinism was now fairly opened, with loyal champions on either side. Mr. Hallam, while deprecating the assumed importance of this war of words, has given us the true picture of Hooker relative thereto, as "one who mingled in their vulgar controversies like a knight of romance among caitiff-brawlers." "The pulpit," says Fuller, "spoke from Canterbury in the morning and Geneva in the afternoon." The greater the opposition to Travers the more outspoken he became against what he termed the dangerous laxity of the forensic preacher, while Hooker, in turn, plied still more successfully his learning and his logic to undermine the heresies of the afternoon expositor. So the discussion went on until it was closed by prelatical authority. Travers was deposed by order of the Archbishop and appealed for redress to the Queen and Council. In the terms of this appeal, Hooker, the Anglican champion, was charged with heresy. A forcible answer to the charge was, of course, at hand; and just here we touch the origin of the polity—the leading polemical prose treatise of that period. Hooker now felt that this important discussion had long enough been conducted somewhat superficially and too much in the temper of a local and partisan issue. He saw, at once, that the questions involved were national and general in their compass, and that, hence, wise and safe conclusions must be reached by safe processes. The bounds and functions of ecclesiastical government must, once for all, be adjusted; and he thus undertakes what he calls "a positive defense of the present government of the English Church against its opposers."

It is a singular circumstance in the history before us, that of the eight books making up the polity, almost exclusive attention has been given to the first, though some of the others, especially the second, third, fourth, and fifth, may be said to contain the substance of the

author's argument. Discussing, in Book I., "The Nature of all Law," as expressed in creation, reason, and revelation, he advances in the succeeding volumes to the special questions in hand. In sketching the life and literary work of Hooker, we must think of him as, first and last, a theologian and churchman—we might say, a literary ecclesiastic. He grasped, as no man of his day did, the historical and ethical meaning of the religious movements then transpiring. Separating all that was incidental to partisan debate from that which inhered in the very nature of things, he aimed to define and defend the position of the Established Church and explain its principles. With a deep regard for the character of Calvin, he was conscientiously disposed to a more flexible creed. Averse to the claims of Cartwright and the Puritan dissenters, he aimed to justify his position before the English religious public, seeking especially to show that, in connection with the Word of God, there must be a resort to human law and reason in the exposition of sacred truth and Church polity. Though he seems, at times, to magnify the province and prerogatives of reason, so as to make it a dangerous factor in matters of faith, there is no real rationalism involved either in motive or actual research. His distinctively theological power is seen at its best as he descants, in turn, upon the vital doctrines of Christianity—the Trinity, the end of God in creation, in Providence, human responsibility, Christ's character and work, and the final authority of Scripture.

It was thus reserved for Hooker as a theologian to give the fullest and clearest statement as yet given of these cardinal truths. A contemporary of Donne and Hall and Andrews, he was a no less celebrated forerunner of Chillingworth and Taylor and Fuller, the first systematic theologian of the English Church and, indeed, of English letters. Of his philosophical character, and especially of his style in English prose, we have spoken elsewhere.* A thinker and a scholar; a theologian, a preacher, and an author; a simple-minded man and a devoted Christian disciple—his name stands forth prominently in an age when names of note were numerous. We think of Hooker in rightful connection with Spenser and Bacon and Raleigh and Ben Jonson, not only because of their common relationship to the Elizabethan age, but in view of a deeper and more intimate relationship of character and mental vigor.

In such books as Hallam's "Literature of Europe," Minto's "English Prose Literature," and Hazlitt's or Whipple's "Literature of the Age of Elizabeth," interesting facts are given with reference to this worthy exponent of sixteenth century England and English. We have often felt that we should have been glad to have heard one of his celebrated morning discourses, whose design was, as Walton tells us, "to show reasons for what he spoke." For some reason or another best known to his contemporaries, he has come down through English history as

* English Prose and Prose Writers.

the "judicious" Hooker. No appellation could better have designated the conspicuous quality of his mind and character.

He had judgment, in the sense of good understanding, and in the sense of a wise and charitable discretion; so that in his more private, pastoral life in the rural districts of England, as in the more public and official life of London, he was ever the same safe adviser and a considerate friend of all who stood in need of friendly offices. His apparent lack of judgment, as seen in his temporary expulsion from Oxford, may be attributed to his youthful years, although, from the testimony of Rainolds, who was expelled with him, and from other trustworthy evidence, the matter must be charged to the account of the vice-president of the college, Doctor John Barfoote.

A more serious reflection upon his discretion is seen in the fact of his untimely marriage and his ready indorsement of Mrs. Churchman's views, who insisted that he needed personal care and that her daughter Joan could probably be induced to fulfil such a mission. Quaint Izaak Walton finds relief concerning it in the doctrine of a particular providence, and insists "that affliction is a divine diet." But, as Burns tells us, the best of men, as the best of schemes, "gang aft agley" and most especially "in the matters and affairs of love."

All faults conceded, however, history has confirmed his reputation as a solid, substantial, sober-minded man, not given to frivolities, and withal of a kind and generous nature, and wholly intent upon giving a good account of himself to God and to his age, "serving his generation," as David did, "according to the will of God."

As we study his portrait given us by Walton we seem to see the distinctive features of a large-hearted and large-minded man.

We learn that, even when a schoolboy, he was a "questionist," ever anxious and inquisitive as to the truth; so that when he came to the great ecclesiastical problems of his time, he sought to meet and solve them in the philosophic spirit.

A good scholar, a good writer, a good preacher, and a good pastor, no marvel that his mother "often blessed the day in which she bare him," and loved him as Monica did Augustine. How the world needs these sterling men! How the Church and the college, literature and society, need them to conserve and support and defend and diffuse the truth!

Just as in old English days, Alfred and Orm prepared the way for Wiclif, and he, in turn, for Caxton and Latimer, so Hooker, at the very opening of the modern era, prepared the way for Warburton, and Barrow, and Chillingworth, and Cudworth, and Chalmers, and that truly apostolic succession of English worthies for whose continuance the English world is ever praying.

MEN speak of a consuming zeal for truth, when the only thing that consumes them is their prejudice.

III.—A HINDU MISSIONARY IN AMERICA.

(BY F. F. ELLINWOOD, D.D., NEW YORK CITY.

(*Continued from page 406.*)

PERHAPS the very clearest evidence of all that Christian missions are fast leavening the general sentiment of India is found in the fact that the various Somajes, in their attempts to reform the corrupt Hinduism which they now openly discard, have embraced almost without qualification the whole body of Christian ethics. Even the Arya Somaj, though bitter in its opposition to Christianity, and claiming that the Vedas are the only source of divine inspiration, presents in its published catechism a body of ethics evidently borrowed from Christianity and widely at variance with the whole spirit of Hinduism. The fact that this applied Christianity is graced with Vedic labels cannot long deceive the educated and intelligent classes of India, much less the outside world. Its true source will in time be acknowledged. But if Vivekananda is correctly reported, he made some graver misrepresentations than any that have been named, so grave as virtually to deny the concurrent testimony of all European residents in India during the last three hundred years. He said he had become tired of answering such questions as these: "Do Hindus burn their widows, and do they throw their children to the crocodiles of the Ganges?" If he had simply said "No, they do not, now that these customs have been made capital crimes by the Anglo-Indian Government," he would have stated the exact truth. But he answered in such a way as to convey the impression that such customs had never had a place in Hinduism. Suttee, he said, existed only as a matter of occasional and unpreventable suicides: it had no connection with religion and was opposed by the priests. He pointed his denials by adding, "And they do not burn their witches." The murder of female infants he treated with ridicule. I shall be pardoned for giving a few facts in reference to widow-burning and female infanticide. The awful crime of the suttee in India was made known to Europeans as early, at least, as the time of Alexander's conquest, B.C. 327. When the Baptist missionaries began their work a hundred years ago, both widow-burning and female infanticide were still rife, as they had been for more than twenty centuries, and these heroic men took measures at once to arouse the sentiment of Christian Europe as well as the efforts of the East India Company. Carey, Marshman, Ward, and Buchanan have all left published records of heart-sickening scenes of widow-burning of which they were eye-witnesses; and before the governmental authorities took any step in the matter, they made investigations on their own account through their native helpers. Carey learned of 438 cases of widow-murder which occurred within thirty miles of Calcutta in 1803. In 1817 reports were made to the civil magistrates of 706

cases in Bengal, and in 1818 the number was 839, making 1,545 in two years. Although great pains were taken to conceal the real facts concerning the custom which, by this time, all the foreigners branded with disgrace, yet, between 1815 and 1826, no less than 7,500 wife-murders were entered upon the public registers in Bengal alone; and if we extend the estimate to all India pro rata and then multiply the number by all the years of at least twenty-two centuries, we shall see that millions on millions of Hindu wives have suffered torture at the behest of a religious system which Vivekananda asks the intelligent communities of America to regard as the ancient source of all true wisdom.

The abolition of the suttee cost a long and historic struggle. Instead of its having been a matter of a few fanatical suicides wholly at variance with the spirit of Hinduism, it has long been a vital part of Hinduism. Though it was apparently unknown to the early Indo-Aryans, and nowhere appears in the Vedas or in Manu, yet it finds sanction in the Mahabharata and the Puranas, and was in full force, as we have seen, long before the Christian era. It is said to have sprung from a legend of the devotion of a mythological wife of one of the gods, and it was sedulously fostered by the Brahmans as a means of exalting their importance and enriching them with costly gifts. See, for example, the list of presents bestowed upon them at the burning of eleven wives and concubines of Roujert Singh at Lahore in 1839.

I have stated that there is no authority for the suttee in the Vedas. All the best modern scholars, however, now charge upon the Brahmans the awful crime of having changed a passage in one of the hymns of the Veda in such a way as to gain an alleged authority. Whoever will turn to that scholarly work of the late Prof. W. D. Whitney entitled "Oriental and Linguistic Studies," pages 52 to 57, may find a full history of this Satanic interpolation in what originally was a beautiful hymn, describing the funeral ceremony attending the death and burial of a husband. Prof. Whitney says: "Authority has been sought for the practice (of suttee) in a fragment of this very hymn, rent from its natural condition and a little altered. By the change of a single letter the line which is translated 'the wives may first ascend unto the altar' (for a last leavetaking of the husband), has been made to read 'the wives shall go up into the place of the fire.'" Sir Monier Williams and other Vedic scholars make the same charge.

An explanation has already been given of the interest which the Brahman priests have in perpetuating the custom. The fact also that the relatives of the self-immolating widow are interested in using their influence is easily explained by a passage in one of the Puranas which states that "a widow burning herself on the fire of her husband brings personal benefit to her own father's family and to the family of her husband." It can be easily understood that such a heritage was one which fanatical families might not easily forego.

As early as the fifteenth century, the Mohammedan mogul, Akbar, tried to suppress the custom, but the influence of the Brahmans was too strong for him. When Carey, Marshman, and other missionaries began to agitate the subject in India and in England, they were cautioned lest they should so antagonize Hindu sentiment as to endanger the British supremacy.

This argument was urged with great force by Lord Ellenborough in the House of Lords. The measures which were used against the system were at first very moderate. A law was passed in 1813 that a civil magistrate should always be present at the burning to see that no compulsion was used. This was necessary because, as witnessed by Carey and others, the bodies of the living and the dead were confined by a pole or a bent bamboo held down by the relatives of the widow, lest in her agony she should break away and fail to accomplish her immolation. In 1824 and in 1827 further measures were taken against the system, but only such as could be enforced "consistently with all practicable attention to the feelings of the people"; and when in 1829 Viceroy Lord William Bentick determined to destroy this monstrous system at all hazards, he found himself embarrassed not only by previous temporizing acts of Parliament, but by widespread protests from timid English residents as well as influential Hindus. Yet he persevered. When, finally, his order was issued making widow-burning a capital crime, "the orthodox Hindus of Calcutta, comprising the great majority of the upper classes, the great landholders, the wealthy bankers and merchants, astonished and enraged at the decision of the viceroy, prepared a memorial to the British Parliament demanding a restoration of their rights." What will Vivekananda say to the fact, officially attested, that eight hundred leading Hindus in Calcutta signed this remonstrance, setting forth that this cruel rite was based upon immemorial usage as well as upon precept, both being equally sacred; "that Hindu widows immolated themselves under *the sanction of religious custom;* that that act was not only a sacred duty, but a high privilege; that the measure would be regarded with horror and dismay throughout the company's territory"?

The question whether missionaries have exerted any influence in bringing about these humane reforms is well answered by the fact that when the despatch was received at Government headquarters, stating that Parliament had confirmed Lord Bentick's order, a special message was sent to the Serampore missionaries congratulating them on "the triumph of a measure for which *they had labored for twenty-five years.*"

As for throwing children into the Ganges, where they are devoured by the crocodiles, Vivekananda bases his argument against the charge upon natural conditions, thus implying that it has ever existed. "The Ganges," he says, "is a rapid stream, and I never saw a crocodile in its waters. So much," he triumphantly exclaims, "for the story about the crocodiles!" Of this I have simply to say that

the Ganges, like the Nile, has its rapids far up toward its source; but, like the Nile, it becomes at length more sluggish, and uniting with the Jumna, it extends over the flat plains of Bengal in a vast delta with a hundred mouths. Did any one ever know of a rapid delta? And would it be considered sound argument to say that because the Nile has its cataracts, it is impossible that it could ever have bred the mummied crocodiles of Thebes and Luxor? I shall be pardoned if my own faith in Vivekananda's conclusions is somewhat shaken by the fact that fifteen years ago a friend sent me from the rivers of India a dessicated crocodile about three feet long.

The murder of female infants in India has, like widow-burning, been practiced for ages. Against this, also, missionary influence, backed at last by Governmental power, has maintained a long and finally a successful warfare. Its existence, or least its prevalence, has often been denied by Hindus or by their Western apologists; but unfortunately the records of the Anglo-Indian Government have preserved an imperishable history of its atrocities and its final suppression. Edward Moor, F. R. S., published in London, in 1811, a history of Hindu infanticide, made up almost entirely of copies from public records. Its facts are appalling, and would be scarcely credible were they not matters of judicial investigation, and given as the testimony of many officers in the civil service.

Vivekananda is not the first Hindu who has appeared on our platforms with specious denials of the cruel custom of female infanticide. Eight years ago a Mr. Joshee, lecturing in Rochester and elsewhere before the Theosophic societies, declared that he "never heard in India the story of mothers sacrificing their babes by throwing them intc the sacred river to crocodiles. The story is false!" But Mr. Joshee added: "Barrenness is considered a reflection on a woman; so some women vow to God that they will give their child to the river. But when they do it, they place the child in a boat, and it is always found and taken care of!" In other words, this offering of children is expected to prove a pious fraud upon the simple-minded river, and in that expectation lies the innocence of the transaction. The truth is that Hindu mothers are often cursed by their husbands for bearing daughters, and the despairing murder at the river's brink is both a riddance of the innocent occasion of the cursing and at the same time a votive offering in the hope of having a son. Among high-caste Hindus, husbands compelled their wives to destroy their daughters to avoid the disgrace of marrying them into lower ranks or the great expense of suitable dowers, while those of lower caste were moved by poverty. Every variety of means was used in effecting the murder.

One of the most earnest of British officials in his efforts to extirpate female infanticide even before the close of the last century was the Hon. Governor Duncan, British resident at Benares. His official papers published in Moor's history show that in one tribe near Benares,

under three Raj Kumars, *all female infants were destroyed* and wives were purchased from other tribes. Major Walker, official resident in Guzerat, in numerous official letters written in 1807, shows that among the Jarejahs also no female infant was allowed to live, and that this wholesale murder was justified by its perpetrators by an alleged religious sanction. The account given was that a certain Brahman priest having been consulted by a great rajah who had difficulty in finding proper matches for his daughters, had advised their destruction rather than compromise the sacredness of caste, and had pledged him to kill any others who should be born. The efforts of Duncan, Walker and others were only partially successful, though by quoting the counter-authority of an ancient Purana they obtained written agreements from the Raj Kumar and the Jarejahs that they would refrain from the practice.

But as late as 1846 some tribes were still found in which all female children were destroyed. The late John Lawrence, afterward governor general, found such a tribe known as the *Bedis*. "You will hardly believe me," he wrote to a friend, "when I tell you that they publicly petitioned me for permission to destroy their female children, which it seems *they had hitherto invariably done*. I sent for some of the most respectable of them and set forth the enormity of the crime and our detestation of it before some hundreds of people, and ended by telling them that the Government would not only never consent to such a villanous crime being perpetrated under its rule, but that we should certainly hang every man who was convicted of such a murder. In the mean time I have issued proclamations and letters to all the chiefs, in which, without mentioning the Bedis, I have denounced, under the highest displeasure of Government and the severest penalties, infanticide, suttee, and the destruction of leprous persons by burying them alive or throwing them into the water." (See "Life of Lord Lawrence," p. 186).

As showing the shocking prevalence of such crimes, in spite of Government surveillance, Sir John observed the invariable rule of swearing every landholder to whom leases were given by what was known as the Trilogue of the British Government: "Thou shalt not burn thy widows; thou shalt not kill thy daughters; thou shalt not bury alive thy lepers." His biographer states that "when the Bedi of Cona, the head of the tribe, and in fact the spiritual head of the Sikh religion, was warned by John Lawrence that he must forbid infanticide throughout his jagheer, he strove to evade the order; and when, with his characteristic promptness, Sir John said, 'You must do it or give up your lands!' the stiff-necked old priest acquiesced in the less of the two evils and gave up his lands." And yet Vivekananda avers that these customs have nothing to do with religion, and that "morally India is head and shoulders above the United States or any other country on the globe."

In his philosophy Vivekananda is manifestly a pantheist. He dwelt upon the infinity of self, which is to be attained by idealizing the non-self and losing the personal individuality in some vague identification with the infinite All. He ridiculed, as many Western theorists do, "the idea of a personal God seated somewhere above the universe"; and while he approved of the character and the main teachings of Christ (this is the fashion now with all who wish thereby to strike the heavier blows at Christianity), he bitterly assailed the Golden Rule. "How excessively vulgar," he said, "is the Golden Rule! Always self, always self, is the Christian's creed. To do unto others as you would be done by! It is a barbarous and savage creed. Instead of the Golden Rule the Hindu believes in the doctrine that all non-self is good and all self bad; and through this belief the attainment of the individual infinity and the freedom of the soul at the proper time will be fulfilled." How large a proportion of those who have been so lavish in their praises of this Hindu swami (teacher) are prepared to abandon a creed which requires men to love God with all their hearts and their neighbors as themselves, and instead of it to grasp after the moonshine—the infinite emptiness of the "non-self," whatever that may be?

On the whole, we must believe that Vivekananda would never have presumed to give these lectures in England, where the history of the religious character and customs of India have long been so well known. And it is a little humiliating to think that he should have so far presumed upon the ignorance of one of our intelligent communities as the reports show him to have done in Detroit.

IV.—THE LORD'S SUPPER A MYSTERY.

By Prof. Thomas G. Apple, D.D., LL.D., Lancaster, Pa.

It has been said that the Lord's Supper, as set forth to the Corinthians by St. Paul (1 Cor. xi. 26) is only a declaration (see Homiletic Review for May, 1894). If it is only that, how, then, does it differ from the preaching of the Word? A mere declaration can be made in language better than by signs. The writer in the Review says: "It is a proclamation perpetually" till He come. *That is all*, "and he (St. Paul) thinks it is enough."

Both our Saviour and St. Paul say more than this. Our Lord says, "This is my body." St. Paul says those who eat and drink unworthily eat and drink to their condemnation, "not discerning the Lord's body." Is this reference to the Lord's body an empty figure of speech? Is there not here a mystery challenging faith? What is a sacrament, according to the teaching of the Church in all ages? St. Augustine says, "A sacrament is an outward sign of invisible grace instituted by Christ." With this definition the teaching of the

Church in all ages agrees. It is not only said, "Ye do show forth the Lord's death until he come," but also "Take, eat: this is my body." A mystery is a manifestation of supernatural power or grace through a natural form. In the Lord's Supper the natural form of manifestation is the bread and wine. What is the supernatural? It is the body and blood of Christ. This means his glorified humanity. "Except a man eat My flesh and drink My blood he has no life in him." Zwingli taught that the Eucharist is only an exhibition of the death of Christ, and this is true as over against the Roman doctrine of the Mass, according to which there is a repetition of the sacrifice on the cross; but in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper there is also a presence of the mystical body of Christ, His glorified humanity, in which, by the Holy Ghost, He is present with his people always to the end of the world. Luther taught that this presence is so tied to the elements of bread and wine that even the unbeliever who partakes of the outward signs at the same time receives the inward grace.

Calvin taught that this presence is a "spiritual real presence," spiritual as over against the corporeal presence of the Lutheran view, and real as over against the merely mental or notional presence in the view of Zwingli; and the Calvinistic view became incorporated in all the Reformed Confessions of the Reformation period. It is the view set forth in the thirty-nine articles of the Anglican Church, the Westminster Confession of the Presbyterian Church, and the Heidelberg Catechism of the German Reformed Church. It is also the view of the confessions of the Dutch Reformed Church, and, we believe, the articles of the Methodist Church. In every one of these Confessions, and all other Reformed Confessions, the Lord's Supper not only exhibits the death of Christ, but also nourishes the believer in partaking also of his body and blood. The Lord's Supper, then, is a mystery for faith. To resolve it into a mere declaration addressed to the senses is to strip it of its real spiritual significance, and make it a mere natural form to awaken pious thoughts in reference to the death of our Lord; and this is to play into the hands of the rationalist, who allows nothing supernatural in Christianity.

V.—LIGHT ON SCRIPTURAL TEXTS FROM RECENT DISCOVERIES.

BY WILLIAM HAYES WARD, D.D., NEW YORK CITY.

THE RIVERS OF PARADISE.

THE question, "Where was the Garden of Eden?" is a fascinating one, and equally requires an answer whether the second chapter of Genesis be regarded as historical, poetical, or legendary. In any case, the writer had in mind a real locality, which he tried to describe; and scholars who treat the story of Eden as a myth are equally under obligation to explain what locality the writer had in mind. This is one of those questions which the monuments have not yet been

able to settle, but for which they provide a great deal of illustrative, if not demonstrative, material.

It is impossible here to give a historical sketch of the various views that have been propounded as to the locality of the Garden of Eden, some putting it near the north pole, many more in America, and others in Babylonia near the Persian Gulf. Where it was, or was conceived to be, must be decided from the description of the four rivers; although, after the rivers are settled or conjectured, it remains to decide whether their head-waters or their mouths are to be regarded as making the "four heads" spoken of as the locality of the Garden. But we may, perhaps, dismiss the conjectures which put Paradise in America or at the north pole, and consider the theories which suppose the four rivers to be somewhere about southern Babylonia. Of these, the one which has of late had the most currency is that first suggested by Mr. Hopkinson, and later developed at great length by the younger Delitzsch, in his book, "*Wo lag das Paradies?*" He begins with the certainty about the two rivers Euphrates and Tigris (Hiddekel), and makes the other two to be the two great canals of southern Babylonia, the volume of whose water was nearly as great as that of the two main rivers—the Pallakopas Canal, which runs along under the Arabian hills west of the Euphrates, being the Pison, and the Shatt-eu-Nil, which runs, or ran, between and parallel to the Euphrates and the Tigris, being the Gihon. Here are four very respectable rivers, and just in the right place; but it is not easy to show that the Pallakopas "compasseth the whole land of Havilah," which ought to be Arabia, where are found gold, onyx and the bdellium. Indeed, that straight canal does not compass anything, and is hardly any nearer to these products than is the Euphrates itself. In the same way the Shatt-eu-Nil cannot, except by much perversion of the natural meaning, be supposed to "compass the whole land of Ethiopia," or Cush, whether Cush be in Africa, Arabia, or the land of the Elamite Kassites. There is no Cush along the straight course of the Shatt-eu-Nil, which left the Euphrates near Babylon and flowed past Niffer, then near Erech, until it again emptied its diminished stream into the Euphrates near Ur of the Chaldees.

The latest considerable discussion of the identity of the four rivers is that by Professor Haupt, of Johns Hopkins University, in a paper read at the last meeting of the American Oriental Society. He supposes the geographical description of Eden to have been written by a Palestinian author, at a time when it would have been as unreasonable to expect an accurate geographical description of a distant region as it would be to require the writer of the first chapter of Genesis to harmonize his account of the creation with modern geology. Of course the Tigris and the Euphrates are perfectly clear. Gihon must be a river which originates near these and afterwards flows about the whole country of Cush, or Ethiopia. Of course there is no such river; but Dr. Haupt supposes the narrator meant to describe the imaginary upper course of the Nile in the Asiatic region east of the Tigris, as well as in the supposed eastern projection of Africa joining western Asia; for we must remember that the ideas of the ancients about geography were very vague and erroneous. Alexander the Great expected to find the sources of the Nile in India, and the earliest maps make another connection between Asia and Africa farther south than the Isthmus of Suez. The Nile would then be thought of as rising in India and flowing around both the Arabian and the African Ethiopia.

The River Pison is in the extreme east, most distant from the writer, and so named first and most fully described. It flows around Havilah (Arabia), whose products are pure gold, the gum bdellium, and the *shoham* stone—translated onyx in the English Version, but really the pearl; literally, the "gray gem," as its Assyrian name indicates. This can be nothing but the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, conceived of as one river flowing around Arabia, but originating from

the same source as the Tigris and Euphrates. The Palestinian writer would have conceived of the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea as much narrower than they really are, perhaps hardly wider than the narrow branch of the sea where the children of Israel crossed. We must remember that the ancients regarded the ocean itself as a not very wide river, and so drew it on their maps, and often called the ocean by the name of river. The Assyrians called the Persian Gulf *nâru marratu*—the bitter, or salt, river. There is no sharp distinction between river and sea in Semitic languages, and it is quite a modern thought to distinguish different bodies of water, such as river, firth, bay, sea, and ocean, and to draw them of their relative sizes and shapes.

So far as the Pison is concerned, this identification of Professor Haupt is very much the same as that of Dr. Tayler Lewis, in his excursus on the Paradise rivers in his translation of Lange's "Commentary on Genesis," published as long ago as 1868. He placed Eden at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates, in lower Babylonia; and then, taking this same idea of the ocean as a river, familiar to every reader of Homer, Pindar, or Strabe, he supposed the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, surrounding Arabia (Cush, not Havilah), to be the Gihon; while the Indian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, washing the shores to the end as far as India, along which he places Havilah, he supposed to be the Pison. It will be seen that he makes both rivers to be ocean streams, one trending eastwardly and the other westwardly, at last, from Eden.

It doubtless will seem very strange to many to think of the broad ocean as we know it as only a river. But we must get out of our modern conceptions to be in a condition to understand ancient ways of conceiving of the earth and the ocean. In the Old Testament the word *nahar*, river, is applied to floods, which lift their waves or voices; in Ps. lxvi. 6 it is applied to the Red Sea; Jonah says (ii. 4), "The river (translated flood) went round me," referring to the Mediterranean; and in Ps. xxiv. 2, or Ezek. xxxi. 15, the same word, "river," denotes the great deep of chaos on which the earth is founded. Equally, rivers like the Nile are called "sea." So Homer speaks frequently of the ocean as a river, and the Greek geographer, Strabe, also speaks of the four great bays, or sinuses—the Caspian and the Pontus on the north, and the Persian and the Arabian seas on the south—as inlets from the ocean streams.

For his view of the two puzzling rivers of paradise, Dr. Tayler Lewis was not at all indebted to Assyriology, and yet he anticipated in good part the views of our ablest American Assyriologists on this subject. The question of the Garden of Eden is one which we can hardly answer satisfactorily until we shall find an elaborate Babylonian poem of the fall of man, such as we have found of the deluge. It is only in minor points, such as those which are treated so fully by Frederick Delitzsch in his volume cited above and covered in part by Professor Haupt, that anything can yet be added to guide a conclusion as to the site of Eden or the identity of the two disputed rivers, Pison and Gihon.

THE mere philanthropist relies on the emphatic proclaiming of human rights and the denunciation of crimes against them—in a word, on the earnest publishing of natural religion. But the Christian is convinced that ethics are utterly unable to change the character of men and reform society. The heart and the conscience are against each other, and the law cannot recover the heart. Hence arises the need of a regenerating power, and therefore in the fulness of time God sent forth His Son.—*Fisher.*

THE Reformation placed great emphasis on individual freedom in religion. So firmly are the children of the Reformation convinced that freedom was then established for all time that its practice can now be omitted.

SERMONIC SECTION.

PRAYER AS A FACTOR IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

By J. E. Rankin, D.D., LL.D., President of Howard University, Washington, D. C.

I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.—1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.

Men have usually reverenced those who have exercised priestly functions; who have seemed to stand between man and God, between human life and the great Author of life. The thought that they had communication with the living God, talked with Him face to face, secured for others forgiveness of sin, grace for present duty, and guidance for the future, has made them objects of especial regard. Men have consulted them in their difficulties, have taken counsel of them in their dangers, and have been inspired and cheered by their words of guidance.

The great nations of antiquity provided for this priestly function, though with many of them it was at the same time a kingly one. This was the case with the Greeks, whose magistrates were also priests, and of whom Max Müller says, "It might be said with just as much truth that the kings were priests as that the priests were kings." Livy tells us that among the early Romans the care of sacred things devolved upon their kings, and after the expulsion of the kings an officer was appointed to fulfil this function, who was called the king of sacred things. In Egypt, the early kings were priest-kings; and according to Herodotus, these were the principal landed proprietors, each temple having vast landed estates, while, according to more modern writers, the families of priests were the first, the highest, and richest in that country, having the exclusive transaction of state affairs, and carrying on the most profitable branches of business—being judges, physicians, architects, and to a certain extent a highly privileged nobility. Something of the same dignity belongs to the families of Church of England ministers to-day. They rank with nobles.

This prepares us for the introduction into early Bible history of the same name and distinction of Melchizedek, king of Salem, to whom even the great Hebrew patriarch Abraham paid tithes as to one greater than himself, as to one having a right to be called "priest of the most high God." It prepares us also for the great leader of the children of Israel, who, though leader and lawgiver, yet often exercised priestly functions, and who provided a permanent economy of priestly offices in the Levitical system; for it is as mediator between Pharaoh and God that Moses goes to Pharaoh; that he enlists the children of Israel in that exodus of so many years' duration which makes such movements as the "Retreat of the Ten Thousand" and Sherman's "March to the Sea" seem like the work of a holiday. He stands between the children of Israel and God when they contend with Amalek. He receives from God's hand the decalogue. It is he who pleads for their forgiveness when they apostatize and make themselves a golden calf at the foot of Mt. Sinai; so that, from the time when God appears to him in the burning bush to the day when he is taken up into a mountain, shown the promised land, and buried without hands, the function of this distinguished man has been largely a priestly one.

Nor is the Christian economy without its priestly function. "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men." It is

true there are no more king-priests or priest-kings. The Hebrew system of sacrifices, too, is superseded; and the great "High Priest" of good things to come has entered into no earthly holy or holies, but has passed into the heavens, where He ever lives to intercede for those that come to the Father by Him. But the priestly function still continues on earth. As is kingship in a free land, it is with the people. The Christian brotherhood takes the burden of a lost world upon itself: is doing for this world that which is needful to consummate among men the work of the Saviour; filling up that which is behind in the supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings, needed more among men, according to the exhortation of the Apostle in the text—and this priestly function in public affairs is according to the will of God.

"Prayer as a factor in public affairs," this is my theme.

Let us, in the first place, look a moment at the intimate relation between those who are in places of civil authority and the great Ruler of all the earth. They are under-rulers, God's representatives in the management of nations; men ordained of God—sometimes given to nations, as Saul was, to chasten them, but always standing in His stead. This shows us why it was so natural to associate the kingly and priestly office. It is a remarkable thing that, while the natural and necessary tendency of Christianity is to give men correct ideas of themselves as God's creatures, endowed with certain inalienable rights, the influence of the Gospel is, on the whole, conservative—restrains men who are even oppressed from actions which would destroy the fabric of society and introduce anarchy itself. When the Apostle wrote the words of the text, Rome, with her line of Cæsars, was mistress of the world. Her emperors were, some of them, the most cruel, the most unjust, the most bloodthirsty creatures who ever exercised sovereignty over men or nations. Nero was emperor at this very time. And yet the Apostle exhorts converted men and women, under their civil authority, first of all, chief of all, to supplicate God in their behalf. Nor have Roman emperors been an exception. Read "A Gentleman of France," and see what things were then. Take the series of rulers in France, or even England, and how many of them have been like spoiled children, wholly unworthy of the dignities which they have borne: capricious, irresponsible, betrayed by their admirers into all sorts of mistakes; bringing themselves and their people into false positions, into bloody wars; disturbing the peace of the world, perhaps, to please a wicked woman or a wicked man. We do not need to go back further than Napoleon III., a man who was for twenty-one years emperor of France; a political charlatan, an adventurer, who stole the Empire from the people, and who by his own rash word precipitated a fatuous war between France and Germany in 1870, and, like his great uncle, though by a series of defeats instead of victories, changed the map of Europe. And this is the stuff of which even in modern times the rulers of nations are sometimes made. We select our own chief executive. And judged by the severer standard of modern times, when Christianity has compelled the world to regard her moral ideals, I think we may claim, on the whole, to have furnished the best rulers the world has ever seen. We have only to repeat such names as Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Grant, to prove this—several of them, indeed, especially Washington and Lincoln, standing high apart in their fitness for the high functions entrusted to them, and short as our national life has been, already admitted into the circle of earth's greatest sovereigns.

These men, and men and women like them, have been in a high sense the servants of God, as Cyrus was when, in prophecy, God calls him His anointed. Washington and Lincoln were God's anointed. It must be so, if God is in

the affairs of men, as we believe. They have been providential men, fitted for their place and their period; impossible, useless, in any other emergency—I mean, except as common material in the fabric of society. It was the feeling that he was God's instrument that led Mr. Lincoln, as he parted with his old neighbors in Illinois, to ask them to pray for him. Was there ever a scene more sublime? There were great uncertainties before him. It was the hour of darkness. The nation was just going into the shadows of those awful birth-throes from which she was to emerge a new nation, wholly free. With that instinct which belonged in part to the man and in part to the period, for the heart-beat of millions was with him in his anxiety, Mr. Lincoln made this request. How like the words of the Apostle in that old Roman period, when Nero was emperor, and when he himself wrote from a prison, and spoke with a Roman soldier chained to his wrist: "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority."

In the second place, this intimate relation between ordinary rulers and the Supreme Ruler of the earth helps us to understand how they may be under God's guidance as rulers and not as persons.

God employs men who serve Him involuntarily. When we read that He "turns the hearts of men as the rivers of water are turned," this is the meaning. Many things that men intend for evil God intends for good. It is said "He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He restrains." There is nothing so unlike God, so ill-suited to accomplish His purposes, as the wrath of man—as two nations in bloody warfare. But if you look at the events which occurred during the early part of the reign of George III. and the events which have sprung out of them, you will see how largely this English king dominated the future of the United States, and through the United States of the whole world. It was his blundersome management, his dogged self-will, that resulted in the disaffection of the American Colonies in the American Revolution, in the birth of the great Republic of the West, henceforth to be the typical Government of all the world. George III. did not mean it—did not dream it as among the remotest possibilities, that God was using him to make possible the largest development of English ideas of freedom in a new world. He meant just the opposite. Here were two Georges: George III., of Great Britain, and our George I.—with never a II.—of Virginia; born only six years apart, the one unfolding into such a narrow-minded king as was sure to alienate the American Colonies, and the other into such a general, statesman, and ruler as was to preside over their crystallizing into a new nation of which he was to be the first president. Doubtless George III., with his self-will, with his high sense of the kingly prerogative, with his determination to take his mother's advice, "Be a king, George," was just as necessary to the fulfilment of God's purposes respecting this continent as the other George—George Washington—guided, too, by his mother, declining for his mother's sake an appointment in the British navy, thus kept for this continent and gradually winning the confidence and rising in the esteem of his contemporaries, until it became true that he was "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," until finally it came to him to be the father of a nation. English indeed, but where English ideas had a better chance than in England itself. Here were two men, on two continents, an ocean between them, in their spheres, which spheres were kingly, guided, the one to drive the Colonies to exasperation, and the other to organize them into a Republic. One was as needful as the other. Whatever the decision as to the personal religious character of

such a man as Washington, of such a man as Lincoln, they both of them felt that they were God's representative men; stood at the head of a movement so much in the line of human progress, so harmonious with the progress of God's kingdom among men, that they did not hesitate to go forward. And God used Jefferson Davis just as he had used George III. They were both reactionists, who could only retard, but could not prevent the ordinance of God; steady it, as it made its onward movement.

People often confound two things that are wholly different. I open the Bible, and I find in Isaiah this passage, relating to Cyrus the Great: "Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him." Men have an unction from God to do things political. This Cyrus, the founder of the Persian empire, how God speaks to him: "I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known Me." "I have guided thee, though thou hast not known Me." This is political selection. There are kings whom God crowned. This is an ordination to sit upon a throne, to lead armies, to conquer nations. When, 538 years before Christ, 200 years after these prophecies were uttered, Cyrus found open to him the two-leaved gates of Babylon and entered the great city, he stood there as God's representative to liberate His captive people. Cyrus did not belong to God's chosen nation; but God predisposed him to the work of returning His captive people to Judea. And in the Book of Ezra we see that he recognized it: "The Lord God of Heaven hath charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem." Doubtless the prophet Daniel, his prime minister, had made the king acquainted with the predictions in Isaiah. And so he sets himself about their fulfilment, as acting under God's patronage and direction, as he really was.

In the third place, I want you to notice how the life of the people of any nation is at the mercy of the rulers of that nation. Modern rulers do not presume to treat the common people as did ancient ones; they do not compel them to build palaces, bridges, tombs, and monuments such as pyramids, without compensation. If you could repeople Nineveh as she was 606 B.C., and later for many centuries, towering in arrogant splendor on the banks of the Tigris, sending forth army after army from her conquering gates, and bringing back host after host of captives for slaves, erecting her palaces and temples at vast expenditure of time and labor and life; if you could bring back the period when Egypt was building her pyramids, and the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph were making their daily tale of bricks under the eye and lash of cruel taskmasters; or even when King Solomon was adorning Jerusalem with his pools and palaces, it would disclose how every great ruler did precisely as Samuel told the children of Israel their proposed king would do: "He will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots; and he will appoint him captains over thousands and captains over fifties, and will set them to clear his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectioners, and to be cooks, and to be bakers." Captives in war were invariably set to the work of city enlargement and city improvement. The renovation of Nineveh under Sennacherib, as described by himself, may well remind one of what Napoleon III. did for Paris. Yes, and what Governor Shepherd did for Washington; though, of course, the latter changes were accomplished under modern conditions and by modern methods. "Of Nineveh, my royal city," writes the great Assyrian monarch, "I greatly enlarged the dwellings; of its streets, I renovated the old and widened those that were too narrow. I made it as brilliant as the sun."

And it was written of Solomon, that he "made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore-trees that are in the vale, for abundance."

It is true that in a large measure all this arbitrary sovereignty has passed away. But still the powers that be hold the destiny of the people largely in their hands; determine whether there shall be war or peace, material prosperity or adversity. The theory of Christianity is that government is for the good of the governed, that the king is on the throne for the sake of the people. And thus you reach the Apostle's ground for these prayers, which are to be offered for kings and those in authority, that men "may lead peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty." In that time, he meant that emperors and their viceroys might be kept back from those conflicts which seemed so much to be according to natural usage; indeed, that was the great business of nations. The second letter to Timothy was written from Rome when Paul was brought before Nero the second time. The thunder of the Roman legions was in all the earth. Rome was the great robber-proprietor among nations, adding house to house and land to land. Peaceable lives were almost impossible; godliness was difficult.

Those of us who remember how it was during our Civil War, recall how the subject wholly preoccupied the public mind; how it was the great business of the period; how the manufacture of munitions of war, the transportation of troops, the care of the wounded, the burial of the dead, the consolation of the afflicted, the successes and reverses of the arms, were the great themes of public interest. In the immediate vicinity of the conflict, the Lord's Day became as any other day, and the Lord's house was converted into a hospital. That kind of life which the Apostle describes, "quiet and peaceable life," in such circumstances was impossible. The economy of peace is one thing, the economy of war a wholly different one.

There is not an emperor on the throne to-day who does not have the power to change the whole domestic, agricultural, economic life of his people for a half-generation. If such a ruler lies sick, apparently near to death, how critically the character and probable policy of his legal successor is scanned. This is why, too, the utterances of such an eccentric ruler as William II., of Germany, arrest so much attention. What does he mean? Does he intend to turn the wheels of national progress backward? To give emphasis to old-time notions of the royal prerogative? What will happen, as to the peace of the world, when the Czar of Russia shall die? How will the death of England's great queen, Victoria, affect the welfare of the nations? These questions are perfectly natural.

My fourth thought is this: To change the form of a government, to constitute it a republic, does not make the rulers any less a controlling factor in the life of a nation. "All in authority" covers presidents and senators, governors and lawmakers, even constables and police-officers. Think how much the welfare of the American Republic depends upon questions of public policy: say the tariff, the coinage of silver, naturalization laws, the government of large cities, the freedom and purity of the ballot-box, the claims of the industrial classes. Intelligent as are the American people, they are sometimes misled. Some of these questions are so new, so comprehensive, our situation as a nation so unique, the proximity to other nations so increased, that our people may easily be perplexed and confounded as to the bearings of them upon our welfare. And the people are those who are in authority here. It is the people who cheat themselves, impose upon themselves, oppress themselves. And it is for the American people, by the American people, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks must be made to God.

How far, too, if prayers were made an acknowledged and open factor in our nominating conventions and national elections; if we added to our discussions and parades, our orations and editorials, this element of appeal to God to be with us, as He was with our fathers, to keep the nation true to the principles of free government, free from foolish vagaries, free from the misguidance of corrupt men; how far this would go toward a state of things in which it would be easier to lead peaceable lives, follow the industries, develop material resources, hold on our way of unexampled national progress, may be readily seen.

And then, when you add the element of godliness; when you look at the interests of Christian institutions: institutions of learning, churches, Sunday-schools, and see how they are affected, whether by national prosperity or adversity, by light or heavy material or industrial burdens, how they are weighed down and hindered by times, how they are blighted by corrupt political campaigns; when you see the effect of setting before the young men of a nation the successes of an unscrupulous adventurer, who wins his way by undermining the character of our institutions, we may well pray for the rulers of the nation, the people, that they may look after their own higher interests, and that of their children after them.

When the government is of the people, for the people, and by the people; when the nation's rulers are taken from whatever workshop or household; when the young men in our schools and colleges to-day will to-morrow wear the ermine of the judge, wield the scepter of logic in the forum or the legislative hall, be in the army or navy, we ought to see that, as never before in the case of a nation, prayer to God for minds in their formative processes is our only safeguard; and that, especially, as we recognize what God has meant and still means in giving this nation a place on the earth, it becomes us to be instant in prayer in her behalf. God only can save us from perils to the ballot, from the perils in the legislative bodies, from the perils by immigration. We must trust in Him; to Him we must pray. "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty."

A SHEAF OF WHEAT.

THANKSGIVING SERMON BY REV. JACOB NORRIS [PRESBYTERIAN], LARAMIE, WYO.

He filleth thee with the finest of the wheat. —Ps. cxlvii. 14.

Paul took bread and gave thanks.—Acts xxvii. 35.

"THANKSGIVING" follows harvest as "the night the day," and brings in its arms a sheaf of wheat. The procession of blessings is so long that we cannot see its end, but its beginning, its drum major, is a sheaf of wheat. At a recent celebration it took hours for the thick column to pass a certain point. How long would it take for the army of God's blessings to pass? It is endless, like a circle. "The rolling year is full of God." "Each blessing to my soul most dear, because conferred by Thee." Though the highly painted brigade of ripened fruits is attractive, the most beautiful is the solid gold of the sheaf of wheat. Nor in the long crowd of fruits—the apple, with its thousand uniforms; the grape, with its coat of many colors; the thousand varieties of plum and pear and peach; the groves of orange, of banana, of fig —do we pass by the gold-tinted and many-ribbed dome of the pumpkin. Since the great Angelo selected it as a pattern for the summit of St. Peter's, it will always attract attention, though in the rear of the long line of delicious fruits. No Thanksgiving picture is complete without it.

But the most worthy to lead all this line is the golden sheaf. Its pedigree is unbroken, its wealth boundless, its benevolence world-wide. Every other plant which furnishes food is unfit in its natural condition. Every other plant needs development. Every vegetable in our garden, in its normal state, is worthless, and man must find out the secret of its nutritious growth. But it is not so with the sheaf of wheat. No doubt the first man had it in its perfect form. It stepped on the planet in company with him. It was made for him. Not the slightest trace of wheat is seen in any of the strata of the earth until we come to those formations contemporaneous with man. We give thanks for thee, immortal grain of wheat! The grain of wheat keeps company with the grain of sense, and it has ever been a ministering angel to the rational creature. We see, then, the aristocracy of wheat. It has never been found in a wild state. It is even more noble than some men. The gold colored corn was more civilized than the copper-colored man. It was once thought that corn and wheat were found growing in a wild state in Persia and Tartary, far from the influence of cultivation, but the botanist has proved this to be false. It was the golden food coined in heaven to be circulated among men. Corn has never been known as anything else than a cultivated plant.

Adam saw as good grain as ever Pillsbury did, and the warehouses in David's time were filled with the "finest of the wheat." Wheat grains have been found wrapped up in the Egyptian mummy case. "The poor form of man lies there brown and hard, and much of it gone to pungent dust. The lord of creation has faded utterly; but the handful of seed has in it the mystery of its wonderful life, and when it is sown, in due time the green blade pushes up through the soil, as it would have done along the Nile 4,000 years ago, and the plumes of its knighted children have this year waved upon millions of acres in our fair land." We have been filled with the "finest of the wheat," and like Paul, we "give thanks." "Charred fragments of bread and large quantities of carbonized barley and other grain have been dug out from beneath the alluvial deposits of the Swiss and Italian lakes, where the swampy dwellings of a singular race stood, at the very least, 2,000 years before the Christian era." Wheat is never, like other plants, self-sown and self-diffused. Neglected of men, it speedily disappears and becomes extinct. All this suggests its high origin. It came directly from the hand of God, from whom all blessings flow. The Greeks and Romans believed it to be the gift of the goddess Ceres, and therefore called all grain cereals, and we only express the same truth when we say to Him, whom these pagans ignorantly worshiped: "Thou preparest them corn, when Thou hast so provided for it." If there is any one thing that we should thank God for more than anything else it is the grain of wheat. We shall see how many other blessings are wrapped up in that little shell. It is the glad angel that has brought your daily bread for 365 days. "Give us this day our daily bread" went flying up to heaven, and brought back in its hand the grain of wheat. It flamed up in summer and harvest, and lit the whole year as the new sun in the east pours forth from its lap the golden light. The grain of wheat has rung its little bell three times a day, and in response each chair is filled. All ages grace the family board. The boy just home from school, not "whining nor creeping like a snail" as he went with "his satchel and shining morning face"—he would not be much of a boy if he had brought the clean face home again—but with an appetite large enough for a thousand grains of wheat—a whole elevator. It was the tiny call of the grain that broke up the school at noon, its little hand that lifted the gates and sent the flood of keen appetites to the well-spread store.

By the side of the hungry schoolboy

during the whole year sat his fair-haired little sister, who never forgot her dolls. They, too, must have their slice of bread. In the kingly high chair—for the weakest in the family is lord of all—sits the prattling babe, wrestling with a grain of wheat in a delicious crust. All bend forward, as you have seen the wheat-stalks bow its heavy head, not with pride, as the Pharisee, but with humble thanks that God had so richly filled its little garden. All bow the head—even the doll, insensible plaything, returns her thanks—there are thousands of strong men who never do—all bow the head in devout thanks for "their daily bread." "Every chair is filled," did I say? What a blessing! Have we returned thanks for that? Every chair filled? No; at the Thanksgiving board one chair is draped. The arm and brain so long nourished by a grain of wheat are paralyzed in death. 'Tis not the same Thanksgiving Day as for many years. Or, perhaps, the tenderest vine that graced the scene a year ago is to-day blooming in heaven, whence it so lately came. These, looked at aright, are new links to bind our hearts to God. As each spring the little grain of wheat, that in the ground has died, rises up to a new life, so a resurrection morn will gather all the scattered and broken links and rebind them together. But there is left one little girl upon whose heart the mother leans.

Every chair full? Yes, and one more baby, too; and in some gardens these flowers come double. What a happy group! How rich a place to sow the little grains of kind words; and of the 250,000 in our language, how many have we goldened o'er with the rich husk of love and charity? Not only has the little grain brought your household together so many times, but millions of others. It is not only aristocratic but democratic. How many children's hearts have been made light by the piece of bread—fresh-made, light-crusted, thick slices, gold-plated. Oh, children, thank God for the hands that can make good bread; that can knead it and watch its growth; that can bake it and paint the flush upon its cheek. Were it not for them, I fear the little grain would have lost half its value. What perfumes sweeten the house like those of the new loaf just fresh from the oven? Have you ever seen them drawn out from their old brick hiding-places, whose bottom was so thickly covered with the red-hot coals? When a boy, I supposed that into such were cast the Hebrew children. Well, here they come out of the house, a slice in each hand, and the mouth full too. Even in those of the big boy, as well as in those of the toddling babe, not only out of the rich man's mansion, but out of the poor man's cottage as well.

The grain of wheat is no respecter of persons. There is no crown which so royalizes the daily board as the golden loaf. But the grain of wheat forms the staple of the delicious cake, it crusts our pies, it dresses our fowls and fish, it prepares our soups, it brings the wholesome porridge—chief of Scotland's food. It not only dresses our flesh when cooked, but it feeds them alive. Without the corn, whence the turkey; whence the savory meats without the grains? Remember to-day the God-sent grasses which have fed our cattle upon a thousand hills. The whole cattle industry in a sense depends upon the little grain, hid away in many a spear. Thanks be to Thee, great and kind Giver of the many showers that have come warm from Thy upturned hand, or been snowed down upon mountain top and there melted by the sun and sent in many little streams down the rocky sides. Thou hast not forgotten the many million mouths of grasses and grains that cried to Thee for drink. And in Thy remembrance of these, Thou hast not forgotten the wider mouths of Thy children made in Thy immortal image.

We thank God for our rich valleys covered with corn, and for our mountain ranges covered with flocks and

herds. It is largely the little grain that makes our city prosperous and happy. Our railroads would be torn up and our locomotives still in death were the little grain of wheat to depart. A scarcity of these is sooner felt than anything else. No long trains of cattle, were corn and grass to fail; no smoke from our chimneys; no early whistles, responded to by scores of industrious workmen. It is even our little city's hope, set down as we are so far from vegetation in the very lap of gold and silver. But gold and silver are only media of exchange—the corn and wheat will save life. But while the grain of wheat suggests the grain of gold, let us thank God for them too. What a rich land he has set us down in! We can trace so many of our personal blessings during the past year to the little grain of wheat. We can see how much of the happiness of our whole city depends upon it.

This is a farming nation. The richest of our imports come to us in return for the grain of wheat. The outgoing ships, laden with the prime beef, are simply carrying over corn to foreign ports, exporting it, wrapped up in the smooth hide of the noble steers. It is said, "If you wish to hear the news, go away from home"; and if you want good American beef, go to Europe. In return for these, we receive delicious things we could not ourselves raise. So that the yellow sheaf not only fills our mouths with its own food, but it brings to our tables the nourishing and delicious fruits of all climes. It is the grain of wheat that controls our markets. It seems as if yellow was a royal color—it paints both our gold and grain. Some have chosen the "golden rod" as a national flower, some the Indian corn. I would vote for the sheaf of wheat. The grain of wheat has played no little part in the world of invention, making it possible to gather the fruits from the boundless acres of the Northwest, where the whole world turns for the "finest of wheat." There is no more beautiful product of the inventor's mind than the reaper and binder, and it jumped out of a grain of wheat. But there is one thing we regret about it. It has destroyed many a love story like that of Ruth and Boaz. It has been so long since some of you have seen the old-fashioned harvest field. Let me hang up the picture in the beautiful words of Thomson:

Soon as the morning trembles o'er the sky
And, unperceived, unfolds the spreading day,
Before the ripened fields the reapers stand
In fair array; each by the lass he loves,
To bear the rougher part and mitigate
By nameless gentle offices her toil.
At once they stoop and swell the lusty sheaves,
While through their cheerful band the rural talk,
The rural scandal, and the rural jest
Fly harmless, to deceive the tedious time
And steal unfelt the sultry hours away.

There is not much time for love and gossip behind a new McCormick.

Not only do we see the ripened fruit of the ingenious mind in the implements of the field, but they also make music in the vast mills which grind the "finest of the wheat" into the finest flour. What once was done with hand and hammer is now accomplished by the most brilliant machinery. And thus the grain of wheat has wrought great things in the field of mechanics. But the little grain says, "Though from the first I have been the friend of man, I have my parasitic enemies, the inimical smut, the envious rust, the deadly worm, and the Hessian fly, and so I knock at the door of science and ask her kind aid to fight these foes, and most nobly has she responded. In the hall of the agricultural laboratory, the patient scientist has found for me relief." And so to-day we thank God that science has been fostered by our State, and that the little grain which has ever gone with culture hand in hand has at last reached Wyoming; that it is progressive; that it comes so near to the tables of our citizens. We can bless science for the purity and abundance of our bread, for new seas of waving grain high up in these, our

proud mountains. This industry is now but an infant, but in the swaddling clothes of nature and science we look to see it grow. Thus the little grain has always led the army of civilization. "But," says the wheat and corn, "we have our worst enemy in man. If he must press the grape for wine to cheer his heart, he ought not to squeeze that life from us which makes brutes of men.

"We were made for strength; men have made us the enemies of power. We want to bring happiness to every home; men have made us the instruments of misery. We were made to fill the granary; men have made us fill the distillery. We were made for bread; men have converted us into beer, and were it not for the beer so many would not be crying for bread."

And so, while we have many thanks to God for the divine that resides in the grains of wheat and rye and barley and corn, we grieve to-day that our land is so scourged by the devils that dwell in them, too. They were made for real value, but men have converted them into speculative, so that with the little grain much of our gambling is carried on. We thank God that our "land still wears," as Shakespeare says, "the wheaten garland of peace;" that cholera halted in its march around the world at our ports; that our ships have been filled, too, with the best of our wheat for the starving poor on Russian soil. We thank Him for the excellent health of our city, for our church and our homes. Some few forms I miss from the congregation, but our lives have been very precious in God's sight. But we thank God above all for that "bread of life" which came down from heaven. As the grain of wheat nourishes the body, so this bread of heaven saves and nourishes the soul. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." And abundant as is the wheat of our land, it can never be as free as this bread of heaven, which we can all receive without money and without price. It is through Him that we receive every other good gift; and the beauty of it is, we receive it every day. The best thing, then, in thanksgiving is to have it flow, like the blessings, constantly. We must not be like an intermittent spring, which discharges itself at a single gush and then dries up till the next harvest.

THE LESSON OF THE TRANSITORY.

BY J. D. WELLS, D. D. [PRESBYTERIAN], BROOKLYN, N. Y.

The fashion of this world passeth away.—1 Cor. vii. 31.

IT is not in any melancholy mood that I place these words at the head of my sermon. Whatever they mean, no one should be sorry that he is passing through "this world on his way to heaven." Our Lord came from heaven to toil and suffer a while in this world, and then went from it into heaven, taking our nature with Him. How impressive and suggestive His words to His disciples. "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world; again I leave the world and go unto the Father!" Equally impressive His words to His Father: "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world!" So it does not greatly concern us whether we stay or go, or the world remains as it is, or its fashion passes away, if only the will of the Lord is done. Young eagles may find the stirring up of their nests, where the parent birds have fed and nourished them till they are fledged, rough and unpleasant for the time, but there is no other way to larger liberty and the joy of using their strength of wing in glorious flight. We need all the resources of grace and providence placed at our disposal. We must learn to use this world as not abusing it, and make ourselves familiar with the revealed fact that its fashion and, as St. John testifies, the world itself passeth away.

The text has larger meaning than we discover on cursory reading. It stands

as a reason for a course of conduct that is not easy; a habit of life, which however rational and obligatory, will make us singular if we acquire it.

If "this world" means the well-ordered, visible globe on which we live a while, then the fashion of it and the meaning of its passing away are not hard to be learned.

But if it means the people themselves in all their relations to the earth, then the fashion of it means a great deal more; and the revealed certainty that it passeth away has strong claims upon our earnest thought.

In both these meanings of the world, its fashion passeth away, and we will give attention to them in their order that we may the more strongly feel the force of the "*for*" connecting it with what goes before. Do so and so, writes the Apostle, "*for* the fashion of this world passeth away."

I. "This world" is our earthly dwelling-place and the sleeping-place of our bodies at death till the resurrection.

But the word has larger meaning—the material universe, from its perfect, orderly arrangement, in contrast with *chaos*. But in what sense the fashion of it—the entire system of worlds in their relation to each other—is passing on and away, is largely a scientific matter, and I do not enter into it.

The revealed truth is enough for us: "There shall be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

We are most deeply interested in the earth as our place of sojourn, burial, and resurrection. Of course we recognize its small proportions even among the planets of our solar system, and its minuteness among the worlds of light that shine in our heavens, and, from their immeasurable distance, are seen only as twinkling stars. But God chose it as the scene of the incarnation, and of redemption for human sinners, by the blood of His dear Son, and that makes it great. "The fashion of this world" known to us as the earth and he globe is the plan and arrangement of its mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms. It "passeth away." I do not understand by this that it is to pass away at some unknown time in the future, but that it is now passing away. Under the laws by which God reveals His immanence, His will, and His activity in nature, it is all the time changing. Not more real were the material changes wrought by God's power in the days or millenniums of fitting it up for man's dwelling-place than are the changes now taking place as the centuries come and go. The stratification of the earth's crust reveals vast changes by fire and water and chemical action that have already taken place. The same forces are active still. Internal heat grows perceptibly less; volcanoes relieve the tremendous pressure within, and flood the regions near them with liquid fire. Streams of lava harden and convert gardens and fields into barren wastes; earthquakes rend the ground and rocks, change watercourses, destroy human abodes and lives, and give a new aspect—commonly one of desolation—to large sections of country. Tornadoes, fire, and flood are mighty forces of destruction. Acting more gently, but with steady and accumulating effect, the summer rains and winter snows and cold disintegrate hills and mountains and change the appearance of the plains that lie at their feet. The fauna and flora of the present earth are greatly different from those of many centuries ago. Brutes of mammoth size, found in this and other lands, and mines of coal, bituminous and anthracite, the products of vast forests, are silent and impressive witnesses that our text in its most limited meaning is true, and they are a prophecy of changes yet to come. As we lie down and rise up: as we set our hands to domestic and other industries; as men go to their farms and merchandise, to their high callings and low callings, to their ambitions, and pleasures, and sorrows—the very earth on which they dwell is waxing old, and the fashion of it, in outward appearance

and structure, is passing on and away, even as God has purposed. "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heaven shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment" (Isa. li. 6). But this is from a late chapter in the prophecy of Isaiah. Let two witnesses from the New Testament testify: "Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thine hands. They shall perish, but Thou remainest" (Heb. i. 10, 11).

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Even the material view of "this world" as the earth, our present home, and the fashion of it passing away, make the text a powerful incentive for obedience to the fervent exhortations immediately before it, and to which I must call your earnest attention before I close.

II. But "this world" and "the fashion" of it have a very different meaning. It is a meaning that involves ourselves, with all the living, in our manifold relations, plans and employments for the life that now is.

No one imagines that the words, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," or the words, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"; or the words, "If the world hate you ye know that it hated Me before it hated you"; or the words, "He will reprove (convict) the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment," or the words of a dozen other scriptures, in which "the world" or "this world" is named, refer to this earthly dwelling-place of ours or to the material universe. They all clearly mean the people who sojourn here, in their many earthly relations and plain employments. An English word in familiar use is the Greek word σχημα, for "fashion," adopted into our language, almost without change, to wit: the word *scheme*. It means a system, a plan, a design, a project. We cannot particularize all the schemes that are limited by their very nature, both in their formation and their execution, to the earthly life. They are exclusive of all that relate to the future life. There is not in them even a suggestion of plans that look to the doing of God's revealed will.

A passage in the First Epistle of John presents the contrast between these plans that are so many bonds to the present world, and the plans that look beyond and above. "The world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

Every one who has the gracious habit of obedience to the revealed will of God is in such relation to God in Christ, the King eternal of the ages, immortal and invisible, the only wise God, to whom belong honor and glory unto the ages of the ages—that he shares the ages of the ages with him. This scheme of life, directed by the will of God, and to the doing of His will, can no more pass away than can the throne of God's mercy and grace and power. So we need have no concern about such passing, providing that with our Saviour we can individually say to His Father and our Father: "I delight to do Thy will, and Thy law is in my mouth."

So we turn back in thought to get as strong an impression as we can of the revealed truth that *the fashion*, scheme, plan, desire, purpose of "this world" passeth away, is passing as we are gathered here.

It is a trite but Scriptural saying that "one generation goeth and another cometh." This general statement covers the universal fact. "*It was appointed unto men once to die.*" The fact of the dying of all men under this divine appointment is deeply affecting

when we think of the many who have gone from the circles of our kindred and acquaintances. We look beyond this limited circle, and we are startled by what our eyes have seen. All the cemeteries on the outskirts or within the limits of our city, and all that are within easy reach of New York and the neighboring cities, have grown to their vast proportions, and received most of their silent denizens, since I came to this pulpit. Not a thousand, perhaps not a hundred, were sleeping in Greenwood then; now there are 400,000. Then there was not a grave in the Evergreens, and but few in Cypress Hills; now there are scores of thousands.

But what are these in comparison with all the buried in the many places of the nation and the world! How suggestive the uncovering of whole cities buried, not the people merely, but the very buildings, and the unearthing of the archives of kingdoms and dynasties whose people and rulers were once as active and schemeful as we are. And the antiquities of the old world are hardly more wonderful than are those of our own new world. Where are the aborigines of America, North and South? We discover their religions; we place them in our museums, and straightway forget the lesson they should teach us. But the destruction of the weak by the strong is not confined to this continent. The Hawaiians are melting away before the representatives of other nations. The Chinese seem to be yielding to the arms, the carnage, and the skill of the Japanese—the island nation, now called the England of the East. England's queen is empress of India. Four-fifths of the great continent of Africa is under European protection. The fashion—aspect, condition of that country and its peoples,—is passing away as I speak.

We speculate about the lost ten tribes of Israel. We cannot recognize them anywhere on the face of the earth with so much certainty as to say where they are. Cities, nations, civilizations, religions have passed away, and others are passing. The process continues. As disciples of Christ and children of God we are reconciled to it, because the passing means the coming of Him whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and whose dominion endureth forever. His reign, whether on earth or in heaven, is a reign of righteousness. Opposition to the revealed will of God, whether by individuals, families, communities, or nations, and the immoralities and crimes resulting therefrom, must come to a perpetual end. The exposure of them, as in New York City now, is the beginning of the end in that locality, and hastens it elsewhere. Nations that pass away have no resurrection, as nations' schemes of evil that fail—and such schemes have always the reason for failure in themselves—disappear at last to be seen no more. "But he that doeth the will of God," the weakest believer, though stripped of all earthly possessions and passed by as beneath the notice of the proud and self-sufficient, has a value in God's sight above the value of all the silver and gold in the world—living or dying is true of all things—and "abideth forever." And there are millions now living on the earth and making their influence for good felt in all the earth. The controlling influence of Christian nations is spreading. During the century, 160,000,000 copies and portions of the Bible have been issued in 320 languages, bringing it within reach of nine-tenths of the human race.

But I do not forget that I am unfolding the text, "The fashion of this world passeth away," for a definite and practical purpose. I wish to use it in its logical connection. So the Apostle used it, without any exposition. He left it bold but impressive in its very boldness and simplicity, to enforce individual and social duties of commanding importance. And here they are in their order.

1. "The time is short," very short for some of us; short at longest for all of us, when we consider the eternity that lies beyond, and the relation of

the short time to the ages of the ages into which every one of us will pass, prepared or unprepared, saved or lost, to live forever in the city of God, or to live forever with those who are without the city because they cannot enter.

2. "It remaineth that they that have wives be as though they had them not." This is no counsel for the social neglect of obvious duties in family relations. It applies to wives as well as to husbands. It subordinates the most intimate and the most exacting of all earthly relations to the service of Christ and preparation for eternity. It may be and it is true that in many if not most cases, "he that is married careth for the things of the world, how he may please his wife," and "she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband." But, happily, it is also true that marrying in the Lord, husbands and wives dwell together as heirs of the grace of life, and walking hand in hand with the Lord Himself, all the more safely and happily walk heavenward—not sorry that "the fashion of this world passeth away."

The same Apostle, who wrote to the Corinthian Church in keeping with their surroundings and times, as just noted, in writing to the Ephesians a few years later, used the relation of husbands and wives—as Old Testament writers had done long before—to illustrate the intimacy and tenderness, the love and mutual confidence, between the Lord and His individual disciples, and also between Him and the whole multitude of believers in heaven and on earth, who together are the bride, the Lamb's wife.

3. "They that weep as though they wept not." This world has been called a vale of tears. When we think of sin, and disappointments, and estrangements, and toil, and weariness, and sickness, and death, what wonder! The tears of Jesus on more than one occasion warrant our tears on similar occasions. But God puts our tears in His bottle. He does not reproach us for weeping. As one whom his mother comforteth, so the Lord comforts us. For the departed who sleep in Jesus and are forever with Him, who would not return if they could, and could not if they would, we have no occasion to weep. They have passed on and away at the call of God. We need to take care that our tears because our pleasant homes are made desolate do not become selfish tears and unfit us for the work of life, for then we have no consolation. Oh, to be so intent on doing the will of Him who has saved our departed kindred and received them to Himself, and is saving us and drawing us heavenward by heaven's increasing attractions, so intent on doing and supporting all His holy work that we shall rejoice in the Lord at all times, even with joy unspeakable and full of glory! It is not beyond the possibility of true faith, even in the first years of its advent to our hearts, to bring us into such conscious and blessed relations to the Lord that we shall glory in tribulation, and find in the passing of the fashion of this world more powerful reasons for weeping as though we wept not, when our tears are most profuse.

4. "They that rejoice as though they rejoiced not." Does this perplex any one after what has just been said about rejoicing in the Lord at all times? The perplexity ceases the moment you understand that the joy referred to is that which comes from mere worldly sources: the joy of earthly prosperity, of increasing wealth, of pleasurable sensations. Let such joy be to you as though you had it not, because the joy of the Lord fills all the higher places of your nature, while you look and long for His coming, and sing in the gladness of your heart every day.

5. "And they that buy as though they possessed not." Buying under human laws rightly puts you in possession of the things bought, as you stand related to your fellows under the same law; but as you are related to Jesus, and the money with which you made your purchase was His, and you

acted as His steward in the money transaction, if there was a profit in the purchase you have a larger stewardship, a wider opportunity for serving your Lord and your fellow men, and a grander opportunity to give your account with joy and not with grief. Oh, how much we have to learn of the blessedness of being partners of the King of the ages in establishing the kingdom of the ages by means of consecrated treasure, as well as by the truth of the Gospel and the prayer of faith! The Lord Himself makes us teachable, and seals upon our hearts His own words: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

6. "And they that use the world as not abusing it;" *i.e.*, not using it against something in behalf of which they should use it, as their own souls, the welfare of others, and above all, the will of Him who entrusts them with it. "God gives us richly all things to enjoy." It is His very nature to give. Do you not sometimes find yourselves filled with wonder in remembrance of what He has given you in the past, is giving every hour and moment, of material good and social benefits, crowning all with life eternal through Jesus Christ?

I look at some tint of color on a tree of the woods, or the leaves upon or in a flower of the garden, and a thrill of pleasure stirs my whole nature. Take a wider view of the earth and the heavens, and you can neither repress nor describe your emotions. Jesus Christ Himself looks upon the same earth and heavens. He found parables in them for those of His time and for us. We are brought very close to Him by a lily, a raven, a sparrow, a child.

Human beings who love and serve Him bring us nearer, because they are our brethren in Him. If they do not love and serve Him they bring us near, because He pities them and would have us with them. If they never heard of Him, and therefore cannot even think of Him, they bring us near, because He commissions us to make disciples of them by giving them the Gospel, and praying that the spirit of truth may show them their need of it.

Dear friends, can you see the logic of the text in connection with the six particulars just noticed? I will not repeat them. Read them for yourselves, and see if you cannot find a new incentive for regarding them with sacred interest, because "the fashion of this world passeth away."

'Tis but a little while
And He shall come again,
Who died that we might live, who lives
That we with Him may reign.

LOSING AND FINDING OF LIFE.

By Rev. Geo. Frazier Miller, [Protestant Episcopal], New Berne, N. C.

He that findeth his life, shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for My sake, shall find it.—Matt. x. 39.

Jesus had called together His chosen twelve to send them into the various cities of Israel. He gave them many directions as to how they should behave themselves; and in counseling them in the right pursuit of their own future and ultimate happiness and victory over the things of this world, He tells them this secret of finding life.

A special characteristic of one who is truly a follower of our divine Lord and Master is unselfishness.

A natural prompting of the human heart is the continual close guarding of one's own interests—and that to the exclusion or disregard of those things which pertain to the welfare of another.

We are taught that self-preservation is the first law of nature, and yet, while that is a true law, it is fundamentally opposed to the religion of Christ that one should content himself with thinking of his own, and cherishing, at the same time, no thought touching the well-being of his fellow men.

The religion of Christ is one of revolution; His coming meant the change of life and modes of thinking from what the world had previously known.

It is positively contrary to the will of God that we should confine the influences, powers, and deeds of our life to that narrow, limited sphere of being which is known to each person as "myself." He has not arisen to any true or lofty idea of life who has not endeavored to raise himself out of the narrow sphere of self. He who does not recognize the claim binding upon him of being instrumental in establishing what is good in or for the benefit of his neighbor, has not yet acquainted himself with a correct conception of his mission in this life. The soul of man, to fulfil its appointed task, must rise from that sphere to which it would be apt to hold itself, unless guided by the light of God, and reach far beyond itself and live for those who, like itself, are capable of happiness or misery.

Now, we are told directly by our Lord that what we conceive to be the most natural course in the establishment of our own well-being is vitally opposed to the true and only sure way to that end. In other words, we are not altogether safe in following the instincts of our being, and we are never safe in following them when the Revelation of our God declares their opposite. Thus, if the words of our Lord had not intervened, our own unenlightened philosophy would have led us to the conclusion that he that findeth his life shall save it.

And why, it may be asked, is that not a fair and proper deduction?

The answer is this: The life is here spoken of as life at two distinct periods, and under different conditions. It is then reduced to two distinct lives: the life natural, which is first, and the life spiritual, which is second; as we have been told: "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual." And again we are told: "For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary, the one to the other." Now both the carnal and the spiritual life of man have receptive faculties. Each is fully capable of growth on its own lines and according to its own nature, and because both are properties of the same being and are contrary each to the other, the nurture of the one means the dwarfing of the other—the destruction of the one is a necessary implication from the strengthening of the other. Hence, he who seeks his present life, he whose heart and mind are bent upon the things of this life, he who lives in the carnal and for the things that are carnal, is cultivating that nature which is receptive of that which is ephemeral, of that which endures but for a night. His power for seizing the things that are not of God is developed; his capacity for apprehending the world and the flesh continues to increase. While this faculty is fed, its opposite, the faculty which is receptive of spiritual powers and influences, is neglected, is starved; and it finally becomes incapacitated for the reception of the things which its own proper nature calls for.

This truth is exemplified on all sides. We see men often who give themselves up so unreservedly to the things of the flesh that their spiritual faculties at length seem to become fearfully blunted; they appear to have no qualification for appreciating the beautiful, the noble, the grand in character.

But what is the outcome of all this? We reply—basing our reply upon the argument of St. Paul in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians—that the things of this life are passing away, and when they shall have passed away, then they whose faculties are capable of grasping only those things shall indeed have all their faculties intact, but shall not possess the things upon which those faculties are able to feed.

Things are made to be in correlation with other things in this world. The power of sight without the object of vision would be of no benefit to the soul. The capacity of smell, where there is an absence of odor, might as well be dispensed with as retained.

And the capacity for eating may be ever so great, but if there be a lack of food, the whole body must weaken and die.

So it shall be in the day of our Lord, when the tables shall turn: "He that findeth his life shall lose it." He who teaches his eye to lust after the things of the flesh; he who allows himself to be led by every appetite and inordinate affection; he who disregards the well-being of others and puts self and the things of self always before his eyes to long after them, shall have the passion for reaching after those things when that which is spiritual shall appear—but then the things of the flesh shall have passed away and nothing shall be left which he will be capable of apprehending.

The spiritual shall then come into power, but the faculties, which, according to the nature of their being, are receptive of the spiritual, shall, because of the cultivation of the carnal side, lose their power of reception. Then the truth of the Lord's words shall be discovered to the soul: "He that findeth his life shall lose it."

The next consideration to which we come is this: "And he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it."

This losing of life is just the contrary of the finding of life, which we have been discussing. He that loseth the present, lesser, natural life, shall in God's own time find that greater, spiritual life.

We are called upon by St. Paul to continually mortify our members which are upon the earth; *i.e.*, those that work to the pleasure of the flesh. We are to mortify these, because the things with which they have correspondence shall not endure; and by the death of these members we feed, we firmly establish our spiritual faculties, or those receptive powers of our being which are capable of grasping those enduring virtues which will transform our being into the likeness of our Lord.

Hence, by losing our life is meant the laying aside of those things which the appetites crave. But let us notice right here that God never charges us to avoid the things that are everlasting, but only those whose endurance is for a season.

We are called upon specially to deny ourselves those things and states in life which seem to be to many the only sources of happiness.

When we read the Book of Ecclesiastes we hear the preacher repeatedly referring to what are commonly known as life's grandeurs as vanity.

And why is anything vanity?

It is because it is not the source of what it is claimed to be: it is because what is thought to be its natural and necessary issue is never begotten thereof; or if, perchance, it do appear, its appearance is for a season only, then vanishes and carries its benefits with it. If, then, we would find our lives, we must lose them; our selfish aims, our personal pleasures, the fleshy cravings, must all be subdued that the spirit may be edified. We are not called upon, however, to banish from our minds and hearts whatever tends to bring us pleasure; but whenever our pleasure or happiness necessitates the unhappiness or discomfort of others, then are we charged to forego that pleasure, if by foregoing we bestow comfort upon him who otherwise would have to endure pain. This is what is meant by seeking not one's own, but the things of another.

If, then, we would find our life, we must lose it; we must now, in the day when the things of the flesh seem to demand attention, subject them to the things of the spirit. While we are in the flesh, we must live in the spirit.

Though we are not called upon to live as does the miser, we are to live as does the prudent man, who foregoes present desires for future needs.

And again: We are to lose our life for the sake of our Lord and Master.

There may be and may have been many whose lives were in themselves so fraught with acts of self-denial as to demand the homage of all men. And

while it is to be hoped that none were prompted by baser motives, yet it is possible that pharisaic love of display was the secret of it all.

So we see in all our works of self-losing a *certain* motive, and none other must be the ruling principle.

The thought of our fellow men, the production of their happiness, the establishment of their well-being, the finding of their life—and all for the sake of Christ—should be the motive operating upon and within our own lives. If we lose our life for human praise, or for other considerations whatsoever, saving for the sake of Christ our Lord, there is no assurance that our life shall be found.

Then, to live the true life men must liberate themselves from the narrow bounds of self and come in touch with that great circle of humanity in the spirit of sympathy and all that is tender, sweet, and true, so as to identify themselves with everything which is in the likeness of their own spirit, and bring themselves to feel that the needs of others are their own, and that in order to satisfy their needs they must first satisfy those of others.

The altruistic spirit, shown in our Lord's life when He emptied Himself of all His glory and became man for the bestowal of life upon fallen man, must be the spirit which is to characterize His followers. How beautiful is the life lived for another's sake! How repulsive that which has no heart for anything which is in any way separable from itself!

And when one spends and gives his life to be spent in behalf of others because of the love he bears toward his divine Master, thrice beautiful is he!

"Is life worth living?" asks the cynic sage.
That hangs upon the question, what is life?
To breathe, to eat, and sleep, or vainly strive
With nature's laws a hopeless war to wage,
And reap unrest and pain from youth to age—
This is not life, but death. He only lives
Who from the heart's full fountain freely gives,
And takes as freely, love's large heritage.
Who saves his life shall lose it; and the prize,
If gained, is not worth having. He who dies
For God and truth and lost humanity,
Scorning delights to live laborious days,
Shall win not wealth nor place nor human praise,
But life, indeed, and immortality.

CHRIST'S RECOGNITION OF LITTLE DEEDS.

BY PROF. W. R. A. PALMER, D.D., CLAFLIN UNIVERSITY, ORANGEBURG, S. C.

She hath done what she could.—Mark xiv. 8.

LEST there be some who have been backward and bashful in Christ's service, because they could not do something great, let us have your attention at this service to the anointing of Jesus at the supper in Bethany. Its central thought—Christ's recognition of little deeds—which is our subject, is love, joy, and peace to the humble workers in the Master's vineyard; to those who cannot, like veteran sailors, ride upon the billowy ocean and laugh at storms, but can help them launch their great ships upon the deep sea. Unable to speak like angels or preach like Paul, they can tell the love of Jesus to all with whom they come in contact. Not wealthy enough to give silver and gold, God accepts such as they have: gives them glorious opportunities and recognizes their contributions, however varied and humble, to the conquest of the world for King Emmanuel.

Because the people allowed Him, our Lord and Master was in touch and sympathy with them, visiting, eating, and lodging at their homes. On this occasion, at the town of Bethany, in the house of Simon, once a leper, but now healed, with Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead, and His disciples as fellow guests, Jesus ate His last supper as man's guest. While eating and conversing, Mary, the beloved sister of Martha and Lazarus, entered, with an alabaster box of spikenard—very costly ointment—and she broke the box, poured the contents on His head, anointed His feet, and wiped them with her hair.

The whole house was filled with the odor of the ointment. His disciples became indignant, saying: "Why was this waste of the ointment made?" "For," said Judas, "it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence and given to the poor." The evangelist says Judas did not care for the poor, but was a thief, and had the bag and bore what was put therein.

In the midst of their murmuring criticism and indignation, Jesus spoke on behalf of this woman and her deed, saying, "Let her alone; why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good work on Me; for ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good, but Me ye have not always; she hath done what she could; she is come aforehand to anoint My body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of, for a memorial of her."

The deed was little; it took Mary less time to do it than it did the disciples to find fault with it, but it was backed up by a great spirit, making it exemplary for all ages and people. It was so appreciated by our Lord that He defended it, silencing the fault-finding disciples. That one is a Christian is no argument that he will not complain. Would that it were so! His history is that of human nature regenerated by God's power and in His service. Does any one deny that murmuring is a special peculiarity of some of Christ's followers? This class of people was among the children of Israel, the disciples, the early Christian Church, and is in the Church to-day.

The disciples only seemingly found fault with the woman; they really found fault with Christ for not resenting her deed. They whipped Christ over the woman's shoulders. They dared not call His judgment in question, but turned the full blast of their criticism against the woman. Whosoever finds fault with the Gospel preacher because a message pure and unadulterated coming through his lips from the King of kings and Lord of lords does not suit his fancy, whips God over the preacher's shoulders.

This woman was charged by these disciples with extravagance in the question, "Why was this waste?" Will any one say that anything is too precious or costly to give to God? The law is, "Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the first fruits of all thine increase." Too many give God what they do not need and can easily spare. The ointment's price was a year's earning in Palestine. By this fact the beauty of the character and novelty of the deed are intensified, as like Abel, bringing a sacrifice to Jehovah, the firstlings of the flock and the fat thereof, she obtained the favor of Christ. What a blessing it is that fault-finding disciples are no barrier to the Almighty's smiles! What a comfort to know that oftentimes our definition of wastefulness is God's definition of true love! What a joy to be taught that the servant's condemnation is the Master's approbation!

As a subterfuge for their fault-finding, those disciples said: "It might have been sold and the money given to the poor." Mark! It was not the money from the sale of their own goods they wanted the poor to have, but that from the sale of this woman's ointment. A little while after, Judas sold his Lord and Master for thirty pieces of silver, and he was the very one who suggested the increase of the collection for the poor. Subsequent historical facts warrant us in asserting that Judas Iscariot was the only poor man whom Judas Iscariot intended to be benefited by the money. Even in this day men become exceedingly charitable when they are in positions to decide as to the wisest distribution of another's money.

Jesus answered this subterfuge by saying: "The poor ye have with you always, but Me ye have not. This demonstration of love for Me is only occasional; the care of the poor should be habitual." What He did was just

like Him: put her in the circle of His anointed; placed the laurel of His approbation upon her head; made her one of His little ones; stationed her behind Him while He received her stripes and fought her battle; said to the indignant guests, with fire leaping from His eyes, and gestures that showed how strongly moved was His inmost soul, "Let her alone. Criticize Me; become indignant at Me; find fault with Me; let her alone. This deed of genuine love has linked us together. I hold her in such close, tender, and affectionate relation that if you touch her you touch the apple of My eye; I am her defender. Let her alone." Beyond this, Jesus showed His recognition of the woman's deed by commending instead of condemning it, as His disciples did. It was not the first time they ventured to dictate to Him. They did it in the case of the woman whose daughter was grievously vexed with a devil, and when pious mothers brought their children that He might bless them. In the former case, regardless of the feelings of His disciples, He commended the woman for her faith and healed her daughter; in the latter He encouraged the mothers, was displeased with His disciples, and blessed the little ones. She hath done what she could. As far as she understands, and as much as she can do she has done. Into this act she has thrown her whole being and exhausted herself. Though it may seem simple, it is one great effort on her part. She has used up her resources; no surplus power remains. None before or after could ever do more. No angel in glory can surpass her, for none can do more than his best. This she has done. It cost her days of sacrifice and self-denial and labor to procure this ointment. She has treated me as a royal guest by pouring oil upon My head and wiping My feet with her hair, the glory of woman. Unselfishness, hospitality, humility, and love are all united in this deed.

Mary's was a love that did not come too late. Too often we wait until our friends die before we show our love; then we are ready to say or do anything in their behalf. Too often we give flowers when dead, but thorns when living. Too often we give love when dead, but hatred when living. But Mary did her good deed for Christ's sake while He was alive, and Jesus declared she had come and anointed Him for the burying. Soon He would leave Bethany, be betrayed, arrested, tried, condemned, crucified, and buried; but this act of Mary would perfume the tomb. No matter what Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus did, no matter what the faithful women intended to do on Easter morn, Mary surpassed all and anointed her Master for the grave. The thought itself is sweet. Its fragrance perfumes the whole world.

These little deeds of kindness to our neighbors and their children are like Mary's ointment. Have you anything to give a brother? Give it now. If you love a friend, show it now. Don't keep all the sweetness you can put into other people's lives hermetically sealed until death, and then break the cruse over the corpse. It will but waste its sweetness. Help the weak now. Seek the wandering now. Comfort the sorrowing now. Care for the sick now. Give to the poor now. Feed the young lambs now—and Jesus will commend you now, saying, "You have done what you could."

Finally, Jesus showed His appreciation of this little deed by honoring the doer. He immortalizes Mary and her deed apart from all other persons and deeds. He did not say that His ministers shall speak especially of Peter, James, or John, or even of His own mother, Mary; but He did say to His disciples: "Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached, this shall be mentioned as a memorial of her." Nearly two thousand years have passed away. The scepter of power has gone from nation to nation and from people to people. Sages, philosophers, poets, orators, warriors, and historians have

played their part in life's drama. Many are forgotten, but this woman and her deed live. She is enshrined in the hearts of men, embalmed in their thought. She and her deed are placed side by side with the Lord's Supper. He who said, "Do this in remembrance of Me," said "Speak this in remembrance of her."

It is hard to separate our deeds from our lives, but they must be determined by the spirit. Character is our immortal part, a monument which will not totter before wind and storm; neither can it be destroyed by fire or water, nor be decayed by time. Forever will it endure, standing the test when the world is on fire, receiving the choicest plaudits of the great Judge. When it ceases to inhabit time it will claim eternity for its permanent abode, and as long as God reigns and heaven lasts good character will be praised, honored, and exalted. Thank God, character cannot be monopolized. The poor can have it as well as the rich, and when it cannot be found among the high and mighty it often resides in the peasant's cottage.

I think that when we grasp the idea that the aim of the Gospel and all Christian institutions is to develop the right kind of character, we shall be stimulated to a more diligent cultivation of the same. Little deeds, smiles, welcome handshakes, bring out character more clearly than great ones. Our Saviour's life was made up of little deeds, little words, little prayers, little sympathies; so with His parables: the shepherd seeking the one sheep, the woman searching for the one piece of silver, the little leaven working in the midst of the meal, the joy in heaven over the one sinner that repenteth, the beautiful benediction pronounced over the little faith no larger than the mustard-seed, the blessing pronounced over the five loaves and two fishes, the careful gathering of the fragments. His whole ministry, from stable to mansion, is made up of little deeds: talking with one woman of Samaria at Jacob's well, telling one man of the necessity of regeneration, shedding a tear at the grave of Lazarus, teaching a little band of followers how to pray, preaching the Gospel one Sunday afternoon to two disciples on the road to Emmaus, making a fire, broiling fish that His disciples might have a breakfast after toiling all night long, and commanding His disciples to preach of the woman who anointed His head and wiped His feet.

May it not be that some of us do not get more real happiness out of our Christian lives because we are neglecting the little services within our reach? This woman was not able to furnish the supper, yet she took advantage of the opportunity offered by the supper to render a very signal service. So we, too, may feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, do something. "As we have, therefore, opportunities, let us do good unto all men, especially unto those who are of the household of faith."

Remember all of us do not express our love alike, nor do we serve in the same way. Simon furnished the supper, Lazarus and the disciples came as guests. Martha served, and Mary expressed her love by anointing our Lord as He sat at meat. We do amiss if we give up because we cannot serve just as others do. God's service does not obscure our personality, but our peculiar tendencies have full play. Some serve best in one way, some in another. All of us show our love in our own personal, individual way, for God made us to differ.

Service given, our reward is certain and sure. God takes notice of us all, and many will be satisfied to find in heaven many a one poor and feeble here high on the throne there, having a crown begemmed with a myriad stars. The world rewards the generals, forgetting the privates who went to the front risking their lives in defense of their country's flag. The leaders are famed, the led forgotten. But God knows the spirit of us all, and as He

commended the poor widow who cast in two mites over and above the rich men who cast into the treasury of their abundance, so, at the final disposition of rewards, many an orator, philosopher, general, statesman, and scholar will not be so high in glory as some humble Christians who served Him, like this woman, to the best of their ability—who did what they could.

IS JESUS THE CHRIST?

CHRISTMAS SERMON BY REV. ROLLIN R. MARQUIS [PRESBYTERIAN], SEDALIA, MO.

Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.—Luke ii. 11.

THE whole world is to-day celebrating this fact, recorded in the words of our text, announced by the angel of the Lord to the Jewish shepherds. There is no positive, reliable testimony that this is the real anniversary. There is the strongest evidence by which any historic event is attested that the historic event celebrated by this anniversary was a real fact. The only question of uncertainty is whether this is the exact date or not. No one can prove that it is; still less can any one prove that it is not. Arguments are easily found, based on circumstantial evidence and indirect testimony, which make it certain that this is very near the date, and highly probable that to-morrow is the exact date of the Saviour's birth. And because this is the best proof we can get from the most reliable data at hand, the whole Christian world is coming, more and more, to accept this conclusion and to recognize the wisdom of identifying a certain observance of this day with the remembrance of Him who gave Himself for us.

And yet it is worthy of note that the more general this custom has become the farther away are we getting from the true idea in its observance. The Fourth of July, instead of being a day to recall worthy deeds and incite patriotism, has come to be a day of drunken revelry and offensive noise. So Christmas Day is fast losing the features that give it real significance, and becoming identified with customs, some of which are dangerous, others a perpetual burden. It seems at least incongruous for the *liquor saloons* to celebrate the anniversary of the Saviour's birth by giving free lunches that day to snare men's souls. Let us as Christian people accept the growing tendency to utilize this anniversary, but let us be careful to conform to the ideas it embodies in the manner and matter of our observance. In harmony with this custom, it seems fitting this morning to make some inquiry into the fact and meaning of His birth.

"Unto you is born this day a Saviour." I have spoken of this as a fact. I hope we may get the full significance of that word, and realize the importance of the statement. A fact is a thing done. The word comes from the Latin verb, *facio*, to do. It differs from a reality in that the latter simply testifies to the being of a thing, without any reference to the way in which it came to be. A fact is a reality that came to be by means of plan, purpose, activity. It did not just happen, or grow out of certain conditions, or come in the ordinary course of events without any special productive agency. It is a thing done, and implies energy, power, intelligence and purpose on the part of the agent or doer. The birth of Jesus Christ *is* a reality, but it is *more than this*, it is a *fact*—a fact, the plan, purpose, and doing of which are explained and attested in every detail by divine revelation and human witnesses.

The bearing and importance of this distinction you will gather when you reflect that the popular tendency, the skeptical cant of to-day, is in the direction of ignoring the *testimony* for Christianity, both human and divine. On the one hand God's word is discredited as a perfect revelation, and only such

portions as human ratiocination accepts are taken with divine authority as the guide of life. On the other, the human witness of saintly Christians is treated as the well-meaning but mistaken ideas of credulous, weak-minded, ignorant, or unscientific people. Doubt is extolled as the only scientific standpoint; the only refuge for men of strong brain and giant intellect. And this species of cant is, unhappily, not confined to the world outside of the Church; it is being accepted largely by the world in the Church. *Cant*, I say, and say it advisedly; for I am far within the limits of truth when I say that the words cant and bigotry and hypocrisy and unscientific and credulity, which skeptics have delighted in flinging at the Church, are more appropriate, more fitting, more true of themselves than they ever have been of the Church, much as there have been conditions in the Church which justified them. There is nowhere more cant, stock phrases, senseless platitudes, and pious twaddle than in the literature and harangues of the various grades of skeptics in and out of the Church. And, as I have said, the tendency of this cant is to ignore the basis of *fact* underlying Christianity and treat it as a theory or hypothesis or philosophy or remedial agent, to be compared with other theories and reformatories; the one which seems the best suited to the case to be adopted. This was the practical result of the famous Parliament of Religions, whatever its projectors and defenders meant it to be. The one great foundation fact of Christianity was ignored, and this left out of the question, the parliament simply assumed the function of a comparison of the various isms of the world, with reference to their claims to popular favor, and fitness for certain humanitarian ends. To reduce Christianity to such a test is simply to throw away the proofs on which it rests and dismiss the greatest mission it is intended to fill. We need have no fear for the results of such a comparison fairly conducted. It can want no better proof than a comparison of its fruits with that of any other system, in unprejudiced minds. There is nothing in this world more scientific, more rational, than Christianity. Yet with all this, it is not a subject for the application of the scientific method or rationalistic tests. It is not to be summoned to the bar of reason, or weighed by scientific experiments. It rests on a historic basis. It comes within the realm of fact and is to rest upon evidence. It is either based on an event, a historic well-attested fact, or it is a gigantic fraud—immoral because of its stupendous false assumptions. It asks only to be judged by the testimony offered in evidence. The whole scheme turns upon the question of a historic Christ. The central links in the chain of evidence are His birth, life, miracles, death, and resurrection. If any one of these can be broken, the scheme fails. We have spoken of the birth of Christ as a fact. Is it, or is it not? Was there 1890 years ago a real Christ? Not simply a boy called Jesus, somewhere in Galilee, but a living Saviour, with human form and action but divine purpose and nature? Let us study this question this morning; for this, rather than any scientific experiments or comparative estimates of religions, must determine the authority of Christianity in life and conduct. For our purpose this morning imagine yourself a detective commissioned to go with me and ferret out a mystery concerning one Jesus and get all the facts in the case. We go first to Nazareth. As we enter the city we notice an unusually bright little fellow at play among His companions. He seems such a fine, manly fellow, with such beauty of face and physique, that we watch Him. Without assuming any dictatorial air, we notice that His playmates defer to Him, look to Him to direct and plan their sports. In fact, like many a boy to-day, he is a leader among His playmates. "Who is that bright lad yonder?" you inquire of a

passerby. "Oh! that is Jesus, the son of Joseph and Mary," is the reply. We have only imagined ourselves detectives, but this is a real scene which we might have looked upon had we lived then. We thank the stranger, and inquire where Joseph lives. Getting the direction, we pass on up the street to a plain little house and call upon a modest Jewish matron. We make known our business, and ask her for some statements concerning His birth. She tells us He was not born here; that they were away on a trip to pay their taxes, and at a little town called Bethlehem, Jesus was born. You glean many other facts from her which gives you a clue for further investigation. You are about to take your leave, when she remarks: "The most wonderful story about the Boy was told me by an angel, before I was married. Gabriel came to me one day and said, 'Hail, thou that art highly favored; the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women . . . for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt . . . bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end.' And when I questioned him he replied that God would be the father of my Boy. That Boy is the one you saw playing out there. Isn't it strange, wonderful? Moreover, when I went up into the hill country of Judea to visit my cousin Elizabeth, she met me with the exclamation: 'Blessed art thou among women . . . whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?' I don't understand it at all; but Jesus is a wonderful Boy. Joseph is down at the carpenter-shop on the next street. You had better see him." So we pass on down to the shop and state our business. "Yes," he remarks as he lays aside his plane, "these things that Mary has told you are true. There is a great future before that Boy." "Is He your child, Joseph?" you ask. "No. He is God's child. Yes, an angel came to me when I was puzzled to know what my duty was, and said to me: 'Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is begotten is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins.' And I remember that Isaiah said, 'Behold, a virgin shall . . . bear a Son, and His name shall be called Emmanuel, God with us.'" "This must be the Boy to whom Isaiah referred?" "Yes, that little fellow you saw is Jesus. He was born ten years ago to-morrow, in Bethlehem, where we had gone to be taxed according to Cæsar's decree." "Are there any others who know the circumstances of His birth?" I ask. "Yes," he replies. "There was a whole crowd of people there, some of them our neighbors going down to be taxed. There were some shepherds also, and some strangers from the East, who took special interest in the event."

We bid good-by to Joseph, take another look at the Boy as we pass out of the city, and pass from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of evidence. We find the hotel proprietor and learn from him that all he knows about the matter is that his house was so full he had to turn a great many people away, and he heard that among these was a family to whom was born a Son, about whom there was a great deal of excitement and many wonderful stories. The stable, he tells us, is that stone building over by the large stone mansion, where the Prince of the House of Judah lives. We pass over to the stable and find a clean, nicely-kept barn, such as the wealthy of to-day have, only ruder in its architecture, but cleanlier than many hovels of the poor are to-day. The Phrygian slave at work there asks us if we have come to see where Jesus was born. He points us to the manger where this family found a resting-place.

"But how did it come that they slept there?" you ask. "Why," he replies, "there were such crowds here at that time that the hotels and many private houses were crowded full, and my master opened up all the rooms he had in the mansion to accommodate them, and yet there were such crowds that had no place to sleep, and my master has such a big, kind heart, and this place he always kept clean, so he told me to spread nice, fresh hay all over the floor and let them come in here, as many as could find room. For several nights the barn was just crowded. And one night a Boy was born and they made so much fuss over Him, and so many have come to see the place, that I have put up this board to mark the place where He was born. But here comes my master, the Prince." We salute him and state the object of our visit. "Yes," he says, 'this is the place where Jesus was born. His parents were Joseph and Mary. I learned afterward that Joseph was a distant relative of mine. They live up at Nazareth, and came here to be enrolled for taxation." "But you say Joseph was His father. How about these statements Joseph and Mary make about visits from angels, etc.?" I ask. "Well," he replies, "there was a great deal of talk about that, and there were some shepherds who live over on yonder hill who claim to have seen and heard wonderful things. And some strangers from the East, who, by the way, came back yesterday to revisit the scene, told us of strange prophecies, and many of us thought maybe He was the Messiah we are expecting. But the circumstances forbid the idea. Besides, ten years have passed since then, and we have given up that explanation. These people were filled with some strange illusion."

We thank him and reply: "There seems no doubt that Jesus was born here, but that is of no importance to us; there is plenty evidence of that. What we want to know is about those statements concerning the origin and nature of the Boy." "Well," he replies, "I don't take any stock in those things. You had better go and see these strangers and my neighbors, the shepherds. But first, let me tell you about what Herod did. When the wise men from the East came and inquired, 'Where is He that is born King of the Jews?' . . . Herod . . . was troubled and asked of the chief priests and scribes . . . where Christ should be born. When they told him here in Bethlehem, he sent the wise men here. And when they failed to report to him he was afraid their saying was true, and was very mad. And so, in order to put away a possible rival, he sent men down here with orders to slay all the children in Bethlehem under two years old, the time when the wise men first saw the star which led them here. That was a sad, cruel day in Bethlehem. In every family, nearly, one child was killed; my own little boy among them. Over at the receipt of customs you will see a copy of the official warrant and a list of the children that were killed on account of it. But Jesus they did not get, because His parents had taken Him home; and as soon as they heard what Herod had done here, they took Him to Egypt and stayed there until Herod died. You will find a record of these facts in the archives of the king's office in Jerusalem."

Again thanking the prince, we leave him and go over to the shepherds' tent. They are out in the open plain about a mile from town, just as they were ten years ago, preparing for their night vigil to protect the sheep. You ask if they are the men who first saw Jesus when He was born. They reply in the affirmative. "Tell us all about it?" you ask. "Well, it was just ten years ago last night," one of them replies, "we were out here with our flock, and Phares and Mordecai, who have died since, were with us. Along in the night there was a wonderful light all over the sky, and an angel came down through the brightness. And when

we were so frightened we did not know what to make of it, he spoke to us thus: 'Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger,' and while we were looking up at him, the air became filled with angels, and as soon as he had finished speaking they burst forth with a beautiful anthem, the words of which were, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.' So we left our sheep here and ran into Bethlehem, and went around from house to house. But the only place we found a newborn child was in the stable of the Prince of Judah, where was a babe they called Jesus. They say He lives up at Nazareth with Joseph and Mary, His mother."

We leave them and go back to the hotel. We inquire for the strangers from the East. "What do you know about a Boy named Jesus who was born here some years ago?" I ask one of them. He replies: "Some eleven years ago there appeared to us in the East a new star very bright it was and peculiar in shape. We studied it, but could not make it fit in our classification of stars anywhere. While we were puzzling our brains over this new star a vision appeared to each of us, and an angel said: 'This is the star of the King of the Jews, which is come of the house of David, and all men shall worship Him, and He shall rule over all the world.' So, when we had compared our visions and found them all alike, we started out for Jerusalem to find Him. King Herod had not heard anything about it, but he had his scribes look in their sacred books, and they found it was prophesied there that such a King should be born in Bethlehem. When we left the palace, to our surprise, we saw the same star again which we had seen in the East, and it went before us till we came to Bethlehem. There it stood, directly over the stable where Jesus was born. We went in, found Him, worshiped Him, and gave offerings to Him. That was just ten years ago. Yesterday we returned to worship Him and offer our gifts again, but they tell us He is up at Nazareth now." We tell them that we saw the Lad yesterday at Nazareth, and after gaining more corroborative evidence about the birth of Jesus from other citizens of Bethlehem, we pass on in our quest of evidence to Jerusalem. Here we go directly to the palace. We find the record of the visit of the wise men. Note the date—just one day before the birth of Jesus. We read the decree for the slaying of Bethlehem's children, and the report of the officers who executed the king's command. We see the report of the officer sent to investigate the rumor that Jesus escaped and was at Nazareth, in which he affirms that it is true and that His parents have fled to Egypt for safety. We then go over to the court of the Roman governor. We read there the decree of taxation which called the people of Bethlehem, and find that it was carried into effect just ten years before, when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.

Next we go over to the temple. Here we find from the records of the priest's office that ten years ago, just eight days later than this, Mary and Joseph came with a child, named Jesus in the circumcision record, and that Mary offered the usual sacrifice of ransom for a first-born child, the particular sacrifice required of parents in poor or moderate circumstances. Seeing the particular record we have called for, the attending priest asks if we know anything about that Boy. We reply, "We saw Him yesterday, and we want to find out if He is the Christ." "Well, I don't know," the scribe replies, "but when they brought Him up here ten years ago, when I made this record, there was a good old prophet, called Simeon, who had for years been wait-

ing around the temple expecting to see the promised Messiah before he died. And as soon as the babe Jesus was brought in here Simeon took Him up in his arms and blessed God, and said: 'Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people. A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people, Israel.' And just as he had finished speaking, a good old mother in Israel, the Prophetess Anna, who was over one hundred years old, came in, and seeing Jesus, she thanked the Lord that she had seen the Babe, and told all who were here that this was the one to whom they had been looking for the redemption of Israel." And so we come back from our mission as detectives to make our report to you. We tell you that these things that I have related are the facts we have discovered concerning Jesus, and they determine with undoubted testimony two things: That Jesus, son of Mary, was born in a manger at Bethlehem, 1898 years ago, and that this same Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, which was promised to the world as a Saviour. The identity is clearly proved. We have read nothing into the history which is essential to our case. The evidence is so full, so complete, so direct, that it could not be impeached as testimony in any court of law. No human court would hesitate upon this proof of identity to award to Jesus, son of Mary, any property the title to which was vested in the Messiah of Old Testament prophecy, or the Christ of New Testament history. The central link in our Gospel plan is unbroken. We have a historic Christ on which to found our Christian theology. The Christ we worship is a *reality*. The events of his human existence are *facts*, or, at least, His birth is a fact, the only one we have tried to investigate this morning. Let us rest our faith here. Let us not be drawn aside by the cool assumptions of sneering infidels, the absurd claims of deluded votaries of other faiths, or the uncalled-for concessions of misguided or doubting Christians. It makes no difference to us how much good there may be found in Mohammedanism; how much spirit-ecstasy may be furnished by Buddhism; how much intellectual intoxication may be had from theosophy, nor how much likeness to Christianity is found in the Brahma Somaj. It is not whether there is less or more in this or that. The subject is one not to be settled by comparisons, or averages, or adaptation to popular favor. These are useful considerations for certain purposes, but they cannot settle for us the question of our relation to Christ. It is not, what think ye of Christ? How does He compare with Confucius, or Mohammed, or Buddha, or Joseph Smith? It is, what think ye of Christ? Whose son is He? Was Christ born as His disciples claim Him to be? Is Jesus the Babe of Bethlehem, Christ the Messiah? Have we a divine origin, a divine foundation, a divine authority for Christianity? And this proved, can these other isms furnish equal claims for consideration? Can they show divine authority and source also? With the latter we need not concern ourselves. It is theirs to furnish the evidence. The burden of proof lies with them. Our duty is simply to show that we have in Jesus Christ a divine source for our Gospel, a divine foundation of hope. With this we rest our case. And we submit to you that we have established, by undoubted proof, the fact announced in our text: "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." And to-day, as we approach the probable anniversary of His birth, let us join with the angels in singing the grand chorus, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

DOUBTS, like griefs, are often outgrown by experience, when reasoning cannot demonstrate them away.

CHRISTMAS JOY.

BY DR. HAROLD STEIN [LUTHERAN], BISHOP OF FUENEN, DENMARK.

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed, etc.—Luke ii. 1-14.

THE Christmas season is a time of joy and rejoicing, and this with the best of reason and right. Yet is all Christmas gladness genuine and based upon an intelligent conception of the true cause of this great joy? Unfortunately not, and even for the Christian it is proper and right that he reflect on the reasons why his heart should go out in the highest of happiness at this season, and what reasons Christians have for wishing each other a happy Christmas. These we find given in abundance in the regular Gospel lesson for this great festival, to which your attention will be invited. Let us consider the theme of a *Joyous Christmas.*

1. "Be not afraid; for behold! I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for there is born unto you this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." These are the words which the angel of the Lord sang in the presence of the shepherds in the field. Let us ask what fear it was which was removed in that eventful night, and what was the joy that was brought to take its place. The answer to the first question is the fear caused by sin; and the answer to the second is that reconciliation with God and atonement for sin took its place among men.

God created man in His own image, and without sin did Adam come forth from the hands of his Maker. But being tempted, man fell, and sin passed through to the entire race as an inheritance; so that every one who is born in the flesh is by nature a child of wrath. The human family gradually forgot the true God; the Gentile religions in various shapes and forms came into existence; the creature was worshiped in place of the Creator; sin and its horrors cast its blight upon the mind, soul, and body of God's noblest creature, and although God selected the people of Abraham and saved this people to become His own peculiar nation, yet this people and race were also under the curse of sin; for notwithstanding the revelation of the true God and His Word given them, they yet departed from the Lord, as says Isaiah, the prophet, lxv. 2: "I have spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that is not good." Therefore, too, a spirit of fear lay heavily both upon the Gentile world, who wandered after the wishes of their own hearts, and also upon the Jews, who felt the great contrast between that which the law demanded and that which they were able to do. For this reason the leader-worshiper brought his bloody sacrifice to the shrine of his God, to reconcile the offended divinity; and for this reason, also, even a man after God's own heart, as was David, again and again petitioned the merciful God to pardon his sins and manifold transgressions.

But in the midst of this night of fear which rested upon the whole earth, the all-merciful God caused the stars of prophetic promise to send their light; for in the heart of the Gentile was aroused a desire, a deeply-seated holy anticipation of a time of peace and new life which was to come over the earth, the longing for a divine man who was to come and redeem the world. In Israel, also, again and again the voice of the prophet resounds in clarion clearness concerning the child that was to be born, the son that was to be given, the star that was to come forth out of Jacob, the shoot out of the tribe of Judah, of Bethlehem Ephratah, which was little among the thousands in Judah, but from which should come the ruler in Israel, whose beginnings were from all eternity. And when their longings and promises had reached their arrested stage of development; when the pious among the gentiles, such

as the wise men from the East, were looking for the star that was to announce the birth of this Son of the King, and when the "silent ones" in Israel, such as Simeon and Anna, were working daily for the fulfilment of the promises—then had come the fulness of time which had been prepared by God for the salvation of man and for which He had also prepared man. Then it was that God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son, so that all who believed in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Then it was that the Son of God so loved the world that He gave up His majesty on high and took upon Himself the form of man in order to bear our stripes and endure our punishments, to reconcile us with God and make us His own heritage. Then it was that the angels in heaven rejoiced—they who had long desired to understand this mysterious secret plan of God, by which He would save mankind, for then they rejoiced in proclaiming the good news that this day a Saviour had been born in the city of David. Then, too, was great joy among the children of men, when the shepherds in the field, the wise men from the East, and the silent, hopeful, true Israelites took the child up in their arms and praised God that they had seen the salvation He had sent.

Centuries have passed by since the birth of the Christ-child. Thrones have crumbled into ruins. Augustus, the mighty emperor, has long since become dust and ashes, and his mighty empire is no more. Herod has rotted in his grave, and his murderous sword has lost its keen edge. But the angelic hymn is reechoed in all nations and climes; the shepherd band has become a congregation including all peoples, tribes, and tongues; the star of Bethlehem has become a sun which has dispelled the darkness of unfaith and become a new day for the children of men groping in spiritual darkness and helplessness; and even if at times an Augustus spirit of gentile thought and the cruel sentiments of Herod seem to be gaining the upper hand, and the hatred of Christ and His work and Gospel seems to be on the increase, yet the manger and the cross are for countless millions the sign of salvation and of highest happiness; and that which was foolishness to the Greeks and an offense to the Jews has become a power unto salvation for all those who believe.

My dear children, to-day this sign has put in its appearance among us also, the very sign of which the angel speaks: "And this is a sign unto you; ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." The Christmas Gospel lesson concerning the Christ-child, the Son of God, lying in swaddling clothes in a manger, is to-day preached and proclaimed in countless tongues in the icy North and the torrid South, and brings untold joy and bliss to millions and millions of souls. May this great festival not leave us cold or dead. May the Christ-child, first of all, remind us of our sins, but still more emphatically, also, of this: that in Him we have salvation from sin; and if we feel this and are assured of this, that in the name of Jesus Christ we have redemption and life, we have an intelligent and genuine cause for rejoicing on Christmas Day.

II. "Be not afraid; for behold! I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." This, the song of the angels to the shepherds in the field. If we again ask, What fear was taken from us in that wonderful night and what joy was brought to us in turn? we must answer, On the one hand, the fear caused by cares and sufferings; and, on the other hand, the quiet joy of faith.

It was not the will of God from the beginning that the earth should be filled with cares and concern and worryings, but rather was it destined that man should live in communion with his God and should rest content in His peace. But sin enkindled the wrath of God, and the holy, righteous God

permitted sin to work out its dire destiny; permitted the cares, evils, and sufferings which are the natural and necessary outcome of sin to come over the children of men. In Adam's presence, already, He cursed the earth on account of man's transgressions, and for the same reason He foretold to Eve what in her case the dire results of her wrong-doing would be; and only too soon did the harvest of sin begin. Already our first parents were compelled to endure the untold woe of having their own flesh and blood slain by a brother's hand. Oh, how misery and suffering have weighed down the world! How did the children of Israel suffer and endure under the burden of transgressions! Jacob laments to his children that they would bring down his gray hair with sorrow to the grave, and Job (xl. 31,) says: "Therefore my harp turned to mourning, and my pipe into the voice of them that weep."

But then came the fulness of time; and when the star of Bethlehem shone forth, the night of worry and fear became day. For this Christ-child that was born in Bethlehem has brought to us the true interpretation of sorrow and suffering by teaching us that we have a Father in heaven, whose ways are indeed not our ways, and whose thoughts may not be our thoughts, but whose ways are always the ways of salvation and of the welfare of His children, and who doeth all things well. And this Christ-child, who was born at Christmas, has made clear to us not only the true significance of sorrow and suffering, namely, by showing us the depth of our Father's love, but He Himself is become for us also a model, in so far as He, although tempted, yet was without sin and without guile. He knew the fortunes of poverty, for as a child He had been wrapped in swaddling clothes and had been lying in a manger, and when a man He knew not where to lay His head. He had felt the keenness of bitter sorrow, for He was misunderstood by the world, was hated by his enemies, was despised and betrayed by His friends. He knew what bodily sufferings were in their acutest form, for He was scourged and crowned with thorns, and hung upon the cross for six long hours enduring a most painful and horrible death. And yet He was gentle, reviled not when He was reviled, but loved His enemies, prayed for them, and submitted Himself to His Father's will, and at the bitter end prayed that not His but His Father's will might be done. This Christ-child born at Christmas has done even more than this. Not only has He shown us the high purposes in God's providence of suffering and sorrow, not only is He a model for us all, but He has also given us the power to follow in His footsteps, for He has sent us His Holy Spirit, enabling us to believe in Him, love Him and live and labor for Him and His glorious cause. And this power, this Comforter, has brought us peace, namely, the peace of the kingdom of God on earth, the peace that comes from the certainty of knowing that we have a God reconciled to us and the sure hope of eternal life through grace and mercy.

My dear Christian hearers, in the multiplicity of circumstances and surroundings of such a congregation there are, without doubt, in a thousand forms, griefs, sufferings, and woes. But let us remember that Jesus is near and that He is the Comforter of those who put their trust in Him. It is still true what Jesus said to the sister of Lazarus (John xi. 40): "If thou believest, thou shouldst see the glory of God." If you believe concerning yourself that you are a poor sinner, then you will begin to ask if your accusations against God's providence in the griefs of this life are not without cause and reason, and that many of your seeming sorrows are self-caused or the product of your imagination, and that for your real sorrows God and His Word do not bring you this true comfort and hope, and if you have learned to believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of the living God, then in truth will you see the glory of

God even in the midst of sorrow and griefs, for everywhere you will see the fatherly hand of God; you will not fret for the things of this earth, knowing that all these things shall be added to those who seek first the kingdom of God; and that He who clothes the lilies of the field and provides for the birds in the air will certainly see to the wants of those who fear Him. Thus faith in the Christ-child of Bethlehem brings peace and contentment to the soul that, without the comfort of this faith, is full of doubts and anxieties.

III. "Be not afraid; for behold! I bring you good tidings of great joy; for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." If we ask for a third time what fear was taken from mankind on that wonderful night, and what great joy took its place, we must answer, on the one hand, that it was the fear of death, and on the other hand, the hope of eternal life was proclaimed to the entire world.

God had originally not intended that sin should reign over the world; but painlessly and without sorrow, at a ripe old age, it had been destined man should be removed from the earth, as was done in the case of Enoch and Elias, to show the world that from the beginning there was to be, for the pious, escape from death. But sin came, and with sin came death, as Paul declares (Rom. v. 12): "As through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for all have sinned." How heavy was the hand of death on the gentile peoples. The heathen was afraid of the night which covered the souls of the departed in the lower world, where sat the grim shadows of the dead; and even in Israel how gloomily do the prophets and seers speak of the departed. Although King David expresses his hope (Ps. xvi. 10): "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine holy one to see corruption," yet even Job laments (Job x. 21): "I go where I shall not return; even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death; a land of thick darkness, as darkness itself; a land of the shadows of death without any order, and where the light is darkness."

And then came the fulness of time, and the star of Bethlehem shone forth, and the night of death disappeared before the day of life and light. For the Christ-child born at Christmas is not only the master of the cross, who bows His head and dies, but He is also the conqueror over death and hell; and when He arose again on Easter morn, He brought with Him life and the conquest over the great adversary. The Christmas star that glittered over the manger is a precursor of the Easter sun which arose out of the open grave. And this Jesus now sits at the right hand of the Father and assures all of those who believe that He is the resurrection and the life, and that even should we die, yet shall we live through Him (John xi. 25, xiv. 2). For this reason, one and all, the old who are approaching near to their graves, the sick who are in the presence of death, and indeed all, old and young, see in the Christ of Bethlehem the life-giver of eternal happiness, and faith in Him as such will not be put to shame. My dear Christian friends, is it your desire to rejoice truly and heartily on this great festival day? If so, let your joy be based upon the grounds that have been elaborated. The Gospel of the little child lying in the manger at Bethlehem is the good news of salvation in time and in eternity. In Him is light, and life, and joy without end; without Him there is death, and darkness, and endless woe. The Word having become flesh, we have the Christmas joy, if we believe that we are the children of our God and the heirs of eternal life. May such Christmas joy be ours. Amen.

"Scripture must be interpreted by Scripture." So men say, and then they go about their business, and leave it to Scripture to interpret itself.

STRIKING THOUGHTS FROM RECENT SERMONS.

Now, society has a way of scaling crime and sins that it is pretty difficult to find any warrant for in the Holy Word; and a great deal of it comes from the difficulty which men experience in keeping distinct things which are essentially different, and from confusing things which are essentially distinct. One reason why we regard certain crimes as more wicked than others is because the State punishes them more severely; but that is no safe criterion of their wickedness, inasmuch as what the State punishes a crime for is not its sinfulness, but its harmfulness to society, and it grades its punishments according to the degree of that harmfulness. That is why it punishes forgery and counterfeiting, for instance, with more extreme penalties than it does petty larceny. The criminality of a crime is according to the degree in which that crime is liable to injure society. The sinfulnss of a sin is according to the degree in which that sin is an expression of the sinner's indifference or antagonism to the will of God. So that the acts which will be most likely to land a man in jail are not necessarily the acts which will be most likely to land him in hell.

Another unwarranted class of estimates comes also from the fact that we put our weight of estimate upon the sins that we commit and a totally different weight of estimate upon the sins that we do not commit, but that others commit. If a man is a thief, he will always have an indulgent side, not only for his own thievery, but for the thievery of other thieves. If he is an adulterer, he will be disposed to have the sin of adultery handled with cavalierly consideration.

You can very often reach a pretty accurate conclusion as to a man's life and habits by observing the laxity or strenuousness of his feelings and opinions touching any matter of sin that may chance to come up for discussion or treatment. And if his sentiments and judgments are lax, it is not necessarily because he wants to shelter himself, but because he has been so habituated to some certain sin that the corresponding set of moral sensibilities has become dulled and deadened. We feel keenly the wickedness of sins that it is neither our habit nor our disposition to commit. Our rectitude is concentrated at particular points along the ethical rectilinear. Our morality is bunched, and the bunches are separated by long and numerous intervals of indifference and self-allowance. Considerable of the same is also due to education. The home makes itself very powerfully felt in this way: we never recover from the impressions that in this respect were made upon us by parental precept and influence. Opinions and tendencies win a set in the days of our childhood that is not likely to be neutralized and overcome by influences that operate upon us later.

There are likewise drifts of sentiment current in society that tell upon individual judgments with the power of an almost irresistible tyranny. One flagrant instance of that I will only suggest by reminding you of what you know so well that there are certain offenses which if committed by one sex are tolerated, but which if committed by the other sex mean social ostracism. That particular matter is one which, when you have availed of your best philosophy in order to its explanation, still leaves you confessing that the distinction has its ground not in the will of God, but in masculine caprice; in the contemptible meanness of the male sex, which, in spite of all its boasted chivalry, thinks more of its own lusts than it does of feminine character, and unfortunately succeeds in constraining women to discriminate between a fallen brother and a fallen sister very much according to base man's own arbitrary criterion.—*Parkhurst.* (Matt. xxi. 31.)

NOT only in the morning hour of prayer, but day by day, do not say to God so often, "Help me," or "Bless me," which is a kind of indefinite cry, better than nothing; but say to Him specifically: "I take Thee in this hour of crisis for my wisdom," or "in this moment of weakness for my strength," and appropriate Him and reckon that God is what you claim Him to be, and then dare to go out and act and live, not feeling anything, but reckoning that what you have claimed is yours. That is the way to rest on God's nature for harvests. Do you want sweetness? Raise a crop of it on God. Do you want satisfaction to your heart? Raise a crop of love on God's nature. God is your estate. Use Him, cultivate Him, take from His fulness grace for grace, and live; and the world has yet to learn how much the human soul can make out of God when it begins to say: "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and my cup. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage."—*Meyer.* (Psalm xvi. 5.)

IT is as plain as the world of sense can be to the human mind that there is an unseen world of spirit in which we now move, live, and have our being; that there is another universe from that which the eye sees or the hand can feel. The world of thought is now the world. Not primarily by hunger and thirst, by cold and heat, are men moved; but by ideas and ideals. The martyr goes to the stake rather than disobey the voice of conscience. The patriot seeks death a thousand times for love of home and fatherland. The poet pours out his life in song that he may give voice to the harmonies that are caught by his inner ear, and tell the thoughts that sweep over his soul like the perfume-laden breeze of night. The artist throws upon the canvas those revelations of truth and beauty that he has caught from the highest spheres. The scientist, the scholar, pours out his life in ceaseless toil to find some new truth with which to bless and enrich the world. The prophet and the seer climb to the mountain's summit and feast their souls on the vision of a land of promise whose pleasures never pall, whose beauties never fade. This world of thought and spirit is, after all, the real world, and no apology is necessary for our attitude toward it. The man who tries to regulate his life by Christ's life, who in simple faith and earnest prayer to the great Father of spirits seeks to attain in his own life something of that divine purity and goodness which is open to us in the life of the Son of Man, need make no apology to the scientist.

But we go further still in our claims for this higher life, this world of spirit. In this new region to which man has attained it is clear that a new light, that of revelation, has broken. Nature has at last spoken in terms that can be heard and understood. God has revealed himself as a father to his children. After a long struggle upward, man reaches a point where the needle of his nature dips the other way. His eyes no longer seek the earth from which he sprung. In the heavens above, which seem to have grown wonderfully nearer, he sees his Father's face and hears his loving voice. After ages of silence God at last speaks. Revelation has come, a new light dawns; in Thy light we see light. In song of poet, in dream of seer, in ecstatic vision of priest and prophet, in the quiet meditations of the human soul,

God reveals himself; above all, in the life and person of Jesus Christ, whose life explains the meaning and purpose of all life. Fed by that life, the life of man has expanded as never before would have been possible. The ethical ideals of the world are uplifted; men grow diviner. Earth has less discord and more music in it. The higher type of life appears, a new heaven is seen, and a new earth begins to be wrought out here below. Justice is honored and worshiped; cruelty begins to d'sappear; the keenness of the old warfare is blunted; the struggle for self gives place in some measure to the struggle for others. Sympathy and love prove stronger than force and violence. A new law of survival prevails. The weakest becomes the strongest, the meek begin to inherit the earth. Those diviner qualities which the world has despised so long begin to prevail. Purity, gentleness, meekness, faith, hope, and love are now the anchors to man's soul. Mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. As we contemplate this wonderful change that has come over humanity, the far-reaching truth of Christ's words begin to dawn on us, and we realize something of what he meant when he said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." The commentary on these words is history, the proof of their truth is civilization.—*Kirkland.* (John x. 10).

THEMES AND TEXTS OF RECENT SERMONS.

1. God the Deliverer. "Now, if ye be ready, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made, well; but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace: and who is the God that shall deliver you out of my hands?"—Dan. iii. 15. Prof. J. W. McGarvey, Louisville, Ky.
2. How to Use God. "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and my cup. Thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage."—Psalm xvi. 5. Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A., London.
3. The Uniqueness of the Purpose of the Life of Christ. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."—John x. 10. Chancellor J. H. Kirkland, Nashville, Tenn.
4. Christ: the only Master of His People. "Be not ye called rabbi; for one is your Teacher, and all ye are brethren. . . . Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, even the Christ."—Matt. xxiii. 8-10. John Clifford, D.D., London.
5. Divine Power in Human Foolishness. "For the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God."—1 Cor. i. 18. Rev. R. E. Steele, Carrolton, La.
6. The Commission of Compulsion. "Then saith he to his servants: The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye, therefore, into the highways, and as many as ye shall find bid to the marriage," etc.—Matt. xxii. 8-11. T. H. McCallie, D.D., Cleveland, Tenn.
7. When Silence is a Crime. "There is . . . a time to speak."—Eccl. iii. 7. Lyman Abbott, D.D., Brooklyn, N. Y.
8. Pharisees of Society. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you."—Matt. xxi. 31. Charles H. Parkhurst, D.D., New York City.
9. Spiritual Communion. "And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones; and when she was come to Solomon she communed with him of all that was in her heart."—1 Kings x. 2. Rev. W. H. Wycough, Dallas, Tex.
10. The Convert's Duty to Sinners. "And after these things He went forth and saw a publican named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He said unto him, Follow Me. And he left all, rose up, and followed Him. And Levi made Him a great feast in his own house; and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them."—Luke v. 27-29. Canon H. Scott Holland, London.
11. An Exclusive Message. "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."—I Cor. ii. 2. C. M. Heard, D.D., Duluth, Minn.
12. Innovations Plus Inconsistencies. "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."—Cor. xiv. 34-35. Rev. E. V. Spicer, Louisville, Ky.
13. The Test Question. "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is He?"—Matt. xxii. 42. Bishop Cyrus D. Foss, D.D., LL.D., Duluth, Minn.

Suggestive Themes for Pulpit Treatment.

1. The Coincident Life and Death of the Christian. ("I have been crucified with Christ, yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20.)
2. Accursed for Redemption. ("Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us."—Gal. iii. 13.)
3. Consecration: Its Source and Fulfilment. ("And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child, with Mary, His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."—Matt. ii. 11.)
4. Good Cheer for Fainting Souls and Failing Eyes. ("My soul fainteth for Thy salvation; but I hope in Thy word. Mine eyes fail for Thy word, saying: When wilt Thou comfort me?"—Psalm cxix. 81-82.)
5. The Perfect Adjustments of the Spiritual Organism. ("The head, even Christ, from whom all the body fitly framed together and knit through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several

part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love." —Eph. iv. 15-16.)

CHRISTMAS THEMES.

6. The Invisible Made Visible. ("Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature."—Col. i. 15.)
7. The Infant Agitator. ("When Herod, the king, heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." —Matt. ii. 3.)
8. The Testimony of Nature to Christ. ("The star which they saw in the east went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was."—Matt. ii. 9.)
9. The Adjustments of Providence in the Birth of Christ. ("And so it was that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born Son."—Luke ii. 6-7.)
10. Adoration through Vision. ("And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."—Luke ii. 20.)
11. An Unrecognized Creator. ("He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not."—John. i. 10.)
12. The Light that Brings Healing. ("But unto you that fear My name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."—Mal. iv. 2.)
13. The Happening of the Unexpected. ("Behold, I will send a messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in: Behold He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts."—Mal. iii. 1.)
14. The Prosperity of the Messiah's Reign. ("Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."—Jer. xxiii. 5.)

LIGHT ON SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS FROM RECENT SCIENCE AND HISTORY.

BY REV. GEO. V. REICHEL, A.M., BROCKPORT, N. Y., MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE.

"WHO HATH DIVIDED A WATERCOURSE FOR THE OVERFLOWING OF WATERS" (Job xxxviii. 25). — This question of Scripture has found one answer, at least, in the recent engineering achievements at Niagara Falls.

Here one of the finest situations in the world for developing an enormous amount of power has at last been seized upon after years of delay, with the result that great power-consuming centers, like Buffalo and Rochester, are about to enjoy an almost inexhaustible supply.

Owing to various difficulties, the Cataract Construction Company was compelled to build its great power-house about one and a half miles above the American Fall, necessitating the digging of a canal of very considerable proportions. The building of the required penstocks, turbines, with their wheels, cross-sections, and manifold hydraulic apparatus, is of too technical a character for present purposes, but it may be said that the whole undertaking was of such an unusual character that the engineers having the vast work in charge have had many novel as well as difficult questions to meet.

Some idea of the magnitude of the proportions of the parts used in construction may be conveyed by the fact that the engineers were required to limit the size of the base-plates only by the inability of the railways to transport them from the foundries to the Falls, although cars were specially constructed for this purpose. Among other interesting features which will be noted by the visitor at the power-house is the traveling crane, a ponderous contrivance for carrying heavy machinery weighing as high as fifty tons. By its aid, new machinery, however ponderous, can be easily placed in position and broken parts lifted away with only a few moments' delay, operations which would be otherwise exceedingly laborious.

When the work of placing the penstocks, wheel-cases, and turbines was under way, eye-witnesses say that the sight was most impressive. The great wheel-pit, of such depth that its bottom could not be seen except with the aid

of electric lamps, the movement of great pieces of machinery by the simple manipulation of a switch, the rapid operations of the great crane, the riveting of the immense sections, the coolness and deliberation of the engineers, furnished a scene never to be forgotten.

The practical result of all this colossal work will be that power can be delivered in Buffalo at a cost much below that of steam. The electric generators, operating at 5,000 horse-power each, will be able to transmit 25,000 volts to the northern limits of Buffalo at a very low drop of pressure. Then, before long, the projectors hope to convey energy to the Erie Canal, thus making possible the propulsion of canal boats by electricity. What the remote future will require and possess no one is able to predict. The present astonishing realities are only a foreshadowing of things once inconceivable.

"THE FEAR OF YOU AND THE DREAD OF YOU SHALL BE UPON EVERY BEAST OF THE EARTH, AND UPON EVERY FOWL OF THE AIR, UPON ALL THAT MOVETH UPON THE EARTH, AND UPON ALL THE FISHES OF THE SEA; INTO YOUR HAND ARE THEY DELIVERED. EVERY MOVING THING THAT LIVETH SHALL BE MEAT FOR YOU; EVEN AS THE GREEN HERB HAVE I GIVEN YOU ALL THINGS" (Gen. ix. 6).

In reading, recently, a leading article on the care of animals, we were surprised to discover this misquotation of a very familiar passage from the latter part of the first chapter of Genesis. At first we thought this the result of ignorance, or carelessness, but further examination showed that the author's design could not have been satisfactorily projected except the Scripture were misquoted intentionally. That the author is an eminent scientist adds an additional disgrace to such an action.

He attempts to prove on the basis of this misquoted passage that God deliberately authorized Adam, and through him all mankind, to maltreat every animal which He had created; a statement which not only cannot be foisted into, nor wrenched from, the actual words of God as recorded in Genesis, but is false upon its very face.

Quoting the passage as it stands, the author says: "This terrible mandate is not mitigated by any intimation of the merciful manner in which the human autocrat should treat the creatures thus subjected to his will. On the contrary, the only thing that he is positively commanded to do with reference to them is to eat them. They are to be regarded by him simply as food, having no more rights and privileges, deserving no more consideration as means of sating his appetite, than a grain of corn or a little blade of grass. In the subsequent annals of the world we have ample commentaries on this primitive code, written in the blood of helpless, innocent and confiding creatures, which are incapable of recording their sufferings. Indeed, ever since Abel's firstlings of the flock were more acceptable than Cain's bloodless offerings of the fruits of the fields, priests have performed the functions of butchers, converting sacred shrines into shambles in their endeavors to pander to the gross appetites of cruel and carniverous gods. Cain's offering was rejected, says Dr. Kitto, because 'he declined to enter the sacrificial institution.' In other words, he would not shed the blood of beasts to gratify the Lord—a refusal which we cannot but regard as exceedingly commendable in Adam's first-born."

Further on, this eccentric writer makes bold to say: "George Herbert, in his book entitled a 'Priest to the Temple,' lays down rules and precepts for the guidance of the clergymen in all relations of life, even to the minutest circumstances and remotest contingencies incident to parochial care. But this tender-hearted man does not deem it necessary for the parson to take the slightest interest in animals, and does not utter a word of counsel as to the manner in which his parishioners should be taught their duties toward the creatures so wholly dependent upon them.

Indeed, no treatise on pastoral theology ever touches such a subject, nor is it ever made the theme of a discourse from the pulpit, or of systematic instruction in the Sunday-school."

It would be easy to refute this nonsensical position upon the very basis which the author himself assumes, by simply quoting accurately the passage he misemploys. But this is not our purpose. His utterance needs no refutation; its extreme folly is self-evident. We quote it at this length to illustrate the fact that there are men of prominence unprincipled enough to justify the words of Scripture only after they have perverted them to suit their own views and ends. Such men are, in reality, scorners of the truth, "scorners seeking wisdom, but who find it not." The strongest utterances we ever listened to, inculcating lessons of kindness to dumb beasts, fell from the lips of our Sunday-school teachers; and not once, but many times, have we heard the pulpit ring with Scriptural denunciations against him who was not merciful to his dumb beast.

It is growing to be decidedly a worn-out argument for the unbelieving among us that every ill to which flesh is heir and every wrong among men are directly traceable to some lack upon the part of religious teachers. It is a refuge for the sinner that cannot endure. The simple, anxious, every-day faithfulness of the average preacher of righteousness in proclaiming the truth is the unbeliever's condemnation.

"... THINGS WHICH GROW OUT OF THE DUST OF THE EARTH" (Job xiv. 19).—Few persons realize the important part which the dust plays in nature's phenomena.

First of all, it is the dust which makes the sky appear blue, Dr. Leonard tells us; and that even light itself in a purely gaseous atmosphere would be invisible did not the dust-particle catch it and reflect it in every direction.

The finer the dust is the bluer does the sky appear. Tourists hardly imagine that the fine, clear blue of the Italian sky, and that seen over all Western Europe, is accounted for by this singular fact, that the dust in that part of the world is finer than elsewhere; yet it is really so.

But the most important function of dust is discharged in its assistance to rain. Vapors floating in our atmosphere cannot condense, except upon the surface of some immediate substance, and dust is the only substance in the atmosphere which affords this opportunity. And an eminent scientist therefore affirms with certainty "that all the water which the sun causes to evaporate on the surface of the sea and on the land is condensed again on dust, and that no raindrop falls unless it contains a particle of dust as its primary nucleus."

It becomes, also, true, upon the basis of the fact just given, that steam would always be invisible to us were it not that upon escape to the outer air it at once is caught up by floating dust, and so is condensed. Many simple, interesting experiments can be readily made to prove this.

Thus, without dust we would have no fog, no clouds, no rain, no snow, no showers.

The importance of dust in meteorology is becoming universally recognized, and scientists, in order to make their calculations accurately, have found it necessary to count—literally count—the dust particles given in a certain quantity of air. We read, therefore, that the dust of London, for example, numbers a quarter-million particles to the cubic centimeter. About the same is reported as true of Paris, although at the top of the Eiffel Tower it measures but half that. At the summit of high mountain ranges it is correspondingly less than lower down. Hence we are told that "in the relatively pure air of mountain tops the breath is not condensed into a visible cloud even in cold weather." That man has become able to count the dust-particles in the air at all points is the more remarkable when

we recall the utterance of Jehovah to Abram, in Gen. xiii. 16, "And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth. So that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered."

"WHO CAN STAND BEFORE HIS COLD?" (Psa. cxlvii. 17.)—The extreme cold of the arctic regions is the most important obstacle which the searcher for the north pole is compelled to overcome. And yet the record of his endurance is remarkable. Thus we read that "in 1819-20, Parry wintered on Melville Island, in latitude 74° 26'. The cold was at all times severe, especially in the month of February, when the thermometer fell to − 55° F., and for fifteen hours was not above − 54° F. The expedition was absent a year and a half, and out of two ships' crews only one man died—of a disease in no way referable to the hardships of the voyage. Between 1853 and 1855, Dr. Kane passed two winters in Smith's Sound, in latitude 78½°, and he records the mean temperature of the three summer months as + 33° F., and of the nine winter months as + 16.8° F. Yet the record bears another side. Among the things said to have been experienced by arctic explorers, three may be mentioned: 1. That men issuing suddenly from their shelter into a temperature of − 60° F. fell senseless. 2. That a man rushing out bareheaded to extinguish a fire when the thermometer stood a little below − 50° F., had his fingers immediately frozen. 3. That when it was extremely cold, it was almost impossible to make the wood burn.

HELPS AND HINTS, TEXTUAL AND TOPICAL.

By ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D.

Marginal Commentary: Notes on Genesis.

GEN. xv. 8. *And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?* It is possible to ask a sign, because faith is lacking and in a spirit of unbelief. But Abram believed God, and the sign he asked was not meant to displace, but to confirm faith. Perhaps, like Peter, he doubted the reality of what he saw, and thought it might be a mere vision (Acts xii. 9). Comp. Judges vi. 17; 2 Kings xx. 8; Luke i. 34, etc.

9-18. Now follows a very remarkable and a somewhat mysterious parable in action, to which we think full space should be given. It is God's sign granted to Abram.

Let us note the following particulars:

1. There are five animals used for a sacrificial purpose: A heifer, a she-goat and a ram, each of three years, a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.

2. The first three are divided in the midst, and piece laid over against piece; but the birds he did not divide.

3. Fowls, *i.e.*, birds of prey, swoop down on the carcasses and are driven away by Abram.

4. At sunset Abram falls into a profound sleep, and a "horror, a great darkness," comes upon him, during which time God gives him an outline of Israelitish history.

(*a*) His seed are to be strangers in a land not theirs and to be in bondage and affliction for four centuries.

(*b*) Then judgment is to be visited on their taskmasters and a great deliverance is to be wrought—an exodus, with great spoil.

(*c*) Abram is to die and be buried at a good old age.

(*d*) In the fourth generation his seed are to come again (into Canaan), etc.

(*e*) During the darkness succeeding sunset a smoking furnace is seen, and a lamp (or flame, or tongue) of fire passes between the pieces of the divided carcasses.

(*f*) And the Lord made (*cut*) a covenant with Abram concerning his seed, with a still further expansion of details, as to the boundaries of the possession, etc.

Note, as to the animals, that the age of three years marks the maturity of life—neither too young to have attained full size and vigor nor too old to have retained them. The animals were tame animals, which Abram could easily take from his herds and flocks; and they were the very animals subsequently identified with sacrifice.

There was a slaying of the victims and the shedding of blood.

The dividing of the victims, etc., was in accordance with ancient custom. Sacrificed victims were cut in twain and covenanting parties passed between the pieces, as though to invoke similar destruction upon themselves if they were unfaithful, or to signify union by covenant between divided parties. This seems a specially important part of the ceremony. *Carath berith* means to *cut a covenant*. Abram probably passed between the pieces as he drove away the ravenous birds, and the manifestation of Jehovah was found in the flame of fire that passed between.

The birds were not divided, as was afterward the provision of the Levitical code (Lev. i. 17).

Obviously, there must be typical teaching here; and as we have no key given us in the Word save the most indirect suggestion, all we can do is to seek some probable interpretation.

1. We are struck with a singular correspondence in the five victims to the *five marked periods of national and Christian history:*

The heifer calf may well stand for the Egyptian period of bondage, when they became so familiar with the sacred image of Apis.

The she-goat may well represent the desert pilgrimage amid countries where goats made their abode.

The ram may represent Palestine and the occupation period.

The turtledove, the period of the apostolic Church and the Spirit's descent.

The pigeon, the subsequent period of missions, the promulgation of the faith. The pigeon loves flight as the dove loves a cote; one is a bird of wing, the other of rest.

It confirms this possible law of interpretation that the last two undivided animals may represent periods of comparative *unity* and *stability*.

The birds of prey naturally may represent the hostile powers which would devour and destroy, but are kept away by perpetual vigilance. Comp. the ten hostile tribes named in verses 19-21. Vultures and other rapacious and carniverous animals naturally suggest the enemies of Israel and the subsequent foes of the Church—temporal and spiritual enemies, who could, as Knobel has suggested, keep the soul from union with God through the bloody sacrifice of Calvary.

Notwithstanding the confessedly obscure character of this parable in action, one cannot evade the impression that as it is so connected with the covenant concerning the Abrahamic seed it is designed not only as a ratification, but as an illustration of God's dealings. The most careful students have reached this conclusion, though with no little variation in details of explanation. For instance, Calvin takes the individual specimens of the collective sacrificial animals to designate all Israel, in all its parts, as one sacrifice. Theodoret thought the three years meant three generations of sojourn in Egyptian bondage, etc.

After much study, we think the following the most natural and probable view of the significance of this strange transaction:

1. It undoubtedly refers to a ratification of covenant. This is made sure by Jeremiah xxxiv. 18-19, which plainly refers to this—referring to men who made a covenant before God—"when they cut the calf in twain and passed between the parts thereof."

2. It indicates God's personal part in

the forming and guarding of covenant relation. The smoking furnace and moving flames that passed between the pieces, unquestionably represent the divine presence. (This is better translated "a furnace of smoke and a lamp of fire," where the correspondence with the pillar of cloud and fire is more complete.)

3. If the victims are symbolic of the periods of history from Egyptian bondage on to the end of the age, the pictorial parable is very complete. Here is hinted the constant presence and interposition of God in the whole history of believers. He was with them when Egyptian taskmasters oppressed them, during the wanderings in the desert, all through the checkered experience of Canaan, and through the new dispensation of the Holy Spirit and the proclamation of the kingdom. He had promised that in Abram's seed all families of the earth shall be blessed, and He thus sacredly guards His covenant; and at no time is His presence more sure than when in times of discouragement and despair a horror of great darkness falls upon his people—when, after long efforts of faithful ones to beat back the foes of His kingdom, their own strength utterly fails and faints, as did Abram's after the long struggle of a whole day with vultures.

This chapter is mainly interesting, however, because of its clear teaching as to *saving faith*, and about this all else revolves.

1. Faith rests upon the Word of the Lord. A definite promise of Jehovah comes to the believing soul. There must be something to believe.

2. Faith is saying amen to that word, and so holding it fast, staying one's self upon it. It implies a *confidence* which leads to *committal*—a forsaking of one's own wisdom, philosophy, or strength, and a simple reliance on God's word.

3. Faith is connected vitally with righteousness by a law of divine imputation. It implies no merit, and is not itself righteousness, but is so reckoned as a matter of grace.

4. Faith has its confirming signs. The stars are spoken into being out of nothing, and so faith believes in God's power to create and to raise from the dead. The stars shine behind clouds, and so faith knows the Word of God to be true, whatever be the obscuring medium which hides Him and his purpose. The stars are seen only in the night, and in the hour of deepest darkness the promises are most clearly apprehended. The covenant is made sure by sacrifice, and God's own presence in the cloud and fire moves amid all the confusion and chaos of human conflict and disaster.

5. Faith leads to obedience. Imputed righteousness is the open door to imparted righteousness. The believing soul becomes the following and conforming saint.

And so we have here the first clear picture of a believer, appropriating promises, stayed upon them, enjoying an imputed righteousness, receiving confirming signs established by covenant, and led into obedience. Appropriation ends in assimilation.

The first lesson on faith is the last. Nothing essential is added to it up to the close of the Revelation.

On the point of faith's committal to God, Russell Sturgis has told a very beautiful story in illustration. A party of visitors at the national mint were told by a workman in the smelting-works that if the hand be dipped in water the ladle of molten metal might pour its contents over the palm without burning it. A gentleman and his wife heard the statement. "Perhaps you would like to try it?" said the workman. The gentleman said, shrinking back, "No, thank you. I prefer to accept your word for it!" Then turning to the lady, he said: "Perhaps, madam, you would make the experiment." "Certainly," she replied; and suiting the action to the word, she bared her arm and thrust her hand into a bucket of water, and calmly held it out while the metal was poured over it. Turning to the man, the workman quietly said:

"You, sir, it may be, *believed;* but your wife *trusted.*"

How long shall we be in learning that in all true faith there is this element of entrustment—venture, *committal?*

"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have *committed* unto Him."

CHAPTER XVI. This is a curious stage in Abram's life. He had been assured of seed, but not by Sarai; and she accepted an expedient, common in the East, which reminds us of man's methods and worldly expediency.

Abram fell into the snare, as it undoubtedly was, by reason of unbelief; for he was too impatient to wait for further revelation and for God's own time and way to fulfil His word. And so, like all imperfections of faith, or rather triumphs of unbelief, this brought only disappointment, disaster, and curse. Abram's domestic troubles began at this point, and the unhappy results still last and will to the end. *He took matters into his own hands.* There lay the sin and blunder.

This appears to be the first departure among the "sons of God" from the primitive principle of monogamy, an example followed by his descendants and perpetuating its evils to the remotest generation. As Egypt was his first snare, so an Egyptian is his second. He goes once more to Egypt for help: in the first place, for relief from famine in Canaan, now for relief from Sarai's barrenness; first to obtain bread, now to obtain seed—to beget children. By the customs of the East, the offspring of the handmaid would be esteemed the children of the mistress who had given her handmaid to the husband as a wife. Trace the immediate consequence—Ishmael was born; the remotest consequences are yet to come.

2. *It may be that I may obtain children by her.* Literally: "I may be *built up* by her."

It is a curious instance of the conceptions that inhere in speech that the expression is so common in Scripture —*build a house, i.e.*, household or family (1 Kings xi. 38). House and household or family are interchangeable, and the same language is applied to both. Every child born, every accession by marriage, birth, or estate is regarded as addition of new material in the upbuilding of the family, like stones in the structure of a dwelling. It is suggested that the Hebrew word *Ben* (a son) is from Banah—to build.

3. Abram was now eighty-five, and Sarai ten years younger, and all hope of natural offspring by her seems to be abandoned. Accordingly, impatient of delay at the fulfilment of divine promise, like thousands of God's children after them, they undertake their own way of securing the desired result. But it was not God's way, and brought only trouble, disappointment, and disaster.

4. As the Hebrew women to this day regard barrenness as a reproach and even a curse, and fertility in offspring a matter of pride and congratulation, the very success of this plan was its defeat. Hagar no sooner found herself with child than she despised Sarai, and, in turn, Sarai envied her. Hagar doubtless thought she could supplant her mistress in Abram's eyes by bearing him the offspring that Sarai failed to bear. And so polygamy wrought its measureless harm, and a new progeny of evils came even in advance of the desired son.

5. *My wrong be upon thee.* Sarai now appeals to Abram. She charges on him the responsibility for the bitterness growing up in the home. The thought is plain. Sarai was still the princess and Hagar but the maid, and she called on Abram as her lord to avenge the taunts of a handmaid who made her own fertility the double reproach on Sarai's barrenness.

6. And so, by a most inevitable process, hatred and strife grew up, and Sarai *dealt so hardly* with Hagar that she fled into the wilderness.

7. There the angel of the Lord finds her (probably, as Gesenius thinks, on

the way back to Egypt), and sends her back to submit herself to Sarai.

11. The unborn child is named by the angel *Ishmael, i.e.*, "*God heareth;*" and he adds, "because Jehovah hath heard." Note the two names of God here used: El and Jehovah; the general and the special covenant names.

12. Ishmael's character is foretold, and the following rendering is proposed: "A wild ass, a man whose hand is against every other man." The wild ass is the type of human beings that are impatient of restraint; and the restless wandering and lawless violence of the Bedouin Arabs are very closely portrayed in this prophecy.

He shall dwell in the presence of his brethren is taken by some to mean to be east of them, *i.e.*, before them, as nearer the sunrise. Others understand by it, living ever near to others; keeping, as it were, in front of them perpetually as a menace.

But the beauty of this narrative lies mainly in the next two verses.

The effect of the meeting with the angel of the Lord was to produce upon Hagar's mind the impression of the *presence of God*: "*Thou, God, seest me.*" Compare Hagar's second flight (xxi. 14).

This conception of *the Seeing One* dominates this passage more than the accepted version brings out. "Thou art a God of seeing, for have I also seen here after seeing (God)?" And so the well was called "the well of Him that liveth and seeth me, or the well of the Living Seer." May it not be that Hagar felt herself abandoned of both God and man, and that this was a grateful recognition by her simple mind of the fact that when she thought herself utterly forsaken the living God saw her and regarded her? And may not the *well* hint a similar interposition in her intense thirst, as afterward when she fled with Ishmael (xxi. 15-19)?

At every point, even in the fragmentary history, we meet vital lessons, and typical characters and events. Paul tells us, in Galatians, that this narrative is "an allegory." Behind the history lies a deeper meaning. Hagar and Ishmael represent Sinai, with its legal bondage; Sarah and Isaac, Jerusalem, which is above, with its freedom; Ishmael, those born after the flesh; Isaac, those born after the Spirit; and their mutual antagonism is thus set forth.

How pertinent the lesson! Even believers are too impatient to wait God's time and way. They constantly resort to Egypt and the Egyptians for what the Lord seems to withhold in blessing, and every such false step is of the flesh and breeds a progeny of evils.

Barren Churches, to which no spiritual offspring are granted, instead of looking to the Holy Spirit for new grace in supplication and the secret of a holy maternity, resort to the flesh, seek to create attractions which are worldly and carnal—music, and art, and secular charms— to draw in the multitude; or the standard is lowered so that carnal souls may more easily conform to it. And so the Church gets offspring, but they are Ishmaelites—wandering Arabs, that threaten its prosperity and even its existence.

THE PRAYER-MEETING SERVICE.

By Wayland Hoyt, D D.

Dec. 2-8. Losing the Memory of It.—Isa. xxxviii. 15.

The Revised Version has it: "I shall go softly all my years, because of the bitterness of my soul."

The marginal reading of the Revised Version is: "I shall go in solemn procession all my years because of the bitterness of my soul. That *because of* means—since I hold in memory the bitterness of my soul."

So that we may state the significance

of our Scripture thus: I will walk henceforth in solemn, subdued, reverent way, remembering always and thankfully the bitterness out of which my soul has been delivered.

There, in the court of the palace, stood a sundial. It was formed of a kind of pyramid of steps, and on the top of these stood straight and upright a short obelisk or pillar. The morning sun would fling the shadow of this obelisk right down the pyramid's western side, blackening the lowest stair. Then, as the sun climbed the heavens, the shadow of the obelisk would creep up stair after stair, until at noon there would be no shadow. When the sun passed the zenith, on the other side the pyramid of stairs the shadow would descend until it touched the last one as the sunset, and so the hours of the day were measured.

A sad scene just now enacting in the palace, in the central court of which the dial stood. He had not been a king, like too many of his predecessors. He had wielded his scepter in the behalf of righteousness, and the prosperity of God's approval had been brightening round him and his kingdom.

But there were many dangers threatening—Assyrian invasions, Egyptian complications, Babylonian intrigues; and the stability of the state seemed bound together with the continued life and health of the good king.

Besides, the good king was in the very meridian of his years—only about thirty-nine.

Besides, as yet no male heir to his throne had been born to him, and the prosperity of the kingdom hung upon an undisturbed succession.

But the good king was just now sorely sick with a kind of boil or carbuncle, and he had just received the most solemn message which can come to a man. This is the news Isaiah had been divinely commanded to bring the good but stricken king: "Thus saith the Lord: Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live."

And then, having finished his sad duty, the prophet had left the sick king with such portentous message darkening over him. Death was a much sadder matter in those old days than it is now for a Christian. There had been as yet very little revelation of what comes after death even to the man who trusted God. There was no fourteenth chapter of John; there had been no resurrection.

To die, and to die in the prime of his years, and to die with no heir! It was thus the good King Hezekiah felt about it as the news fell on him, as he set his thoughts just then to music afterwards (see Rev. Ver., Is. xxxviii. 10-13).

And as the king thought about it all and the surges of disappointment whelmed him, he "wept with a great weeping."

But the resource of prayer was still his. So the sick king turns his face to the wall and prays (Rev. Ver., Is. xxxviii. 3).

All this has taken place more rapidly than the telling of it, and the Prophet Isaiah has not got much beyond the dial in the palace court when he receives from God another message for Hezekiah of another sort (Rev. Ver., 2 Kings xx. 4-7). And the sign of it all was to be the retreating shadow on the dial (2 Kings xx. 8-11). And after the gracious means indicated had wrought its healing service (2 Kings xx. 7)—it is worth indicating to the so-called Christian Science people that God ordered and Hezekiah used means—Hezekiah sings his gratitude and his henceforth reverent purpose of remembering the bitterness through which he had passed and from which he had been relieved (Rev. Ver., Is. xxxviii. 16-20). And the culmination of it all is our Scripture, "I shall go in solemn procession all my years, remembering the bitterness of my soul."

That scene, enacting there in that palace so long ago that we only catch dim glimpses of it through the thickening mists of nearly 3,000 years, is yet not a scene so unmodern, after all, in many of its features.

Think *you* a little of the memory of it: muffled steps, hushed voices, shaded windows, quiet only slightly broken by the stealthy and measured movement of the nurse—doctor coming several times a day—anxious look upon his face; earnest inquiry as to the effect of this remedy or that; consultation of physicians. And the one about whom all this tender care and anxiety circulates is *yourself*. You did not want to die. You prayed, you promised; and then the tides of your vigor, which had been ebbing so, began to turn. And you said, as you once more found life, that henceforth your life should be devoted to God's service and solemn thoughtfulness to Him.

Or it was your child who was delivered, and you vowed service and thoughtfulness?

Or were you a young man in hard circumstances? You prayed for a better chance. God gave it to you and you vowed service and thankfulness.

But now read Is. (Rev. Ver.), chap. ix. See Hezekiah forgetting God, after all. Is that so distant? Is not that the commonest of experiences—that of *losing the memory of it?*

This last month in the year is a good time to think over such things as these—God's deliverances; our promises of service and thankfulness. And it is a good time to ask ourselves whether we are not following in the footsteps of Hezekiah and losing the memory of such momentous things.

Death worketh,
Let me work, too;
Death undoeth,
Let me do.
Busy as death, my work I ply,
Till I rest in the rest of eternity.

Time worketh,
Let me work, too;
Time undoeth,
Let me do.
Busy as time, my work I ply,
Till I rest in the rest of eternity.

Sin worketh,
Let me work, too;
Sin undoeth,
Let me do.
Busy as sin, my work I ply,
Till I rest in the rest of eternity.

DEC. 9-15. THE SECRET OF IT.—John ii. 7.

It seems to me the secret for life our Scripture discloses is: *Blessing proportioned to obedience.* If they had poured into the water-pots but one inch of water, I think there would have been found in them but an inch of wine; if but six inches of water, there would have been but six inches of wine. But they filled the water-pots with water to the brim, and the vessels brimming with water soon brimmed with wine. Perfectly obey and you get the crown and fulness of blessing. Blessing is proportioned to obedience.

(*a*) Blessing is proportioned to obedience in the realm of nature. Says Bacon, "Nature is conquered by obeying her." Perfectly obey and you get the power of nature working for you. All great inventions are conditioned thus, *e.g.*, steam, electricity. Men get the blessing wrapped up in these by perfectly obeying the laws presiding over them.

(*b*) Blessing is proportioned to obedience in the *realm mental.* Sir Arthur Helps has well said: "What! dull, when you do not know what gives its loveliness of form to the lily, its depth of color to the violet, its fragrance to the rose; when you do not know in what consists the venom of the adder any more than you can imitate the glad movements of the dove? What! dull, when earth, air, and water are all alike mysteries to you, and when as you stretch out your hand you do not touch anything the properties of which you have mastered; while all the time nature is inviting you to talk earnestly with her, to understand her, to subdue her, and to be blessed by her? Go away, man; learn something, do something, understand something, and let me hear no more of your dulness."

"Time, indeed, is a sacred gift, and each day is a little life."

The young man or woman who will pay the price of knowing, who will fill the vessel of a thoughtful attention to the brim, shall discover the blessing

and delight of knowing and at the same time shall steadily increase the ability of knowing.

(*c*) Blessing is proportioned to obedience in the realm *spiritual*. Here are some most valuable suggestions I once came on:

"A physician found a patient shut up in a damp, chilly room. He said to him: 'No wonder that you are sick in such a place. You don't need medicine, but fresh air, sunshine, and exercise.' He took that hypochondriac out of doors. He made him walk and ride about. Soon he was well again, and the doctor left him. But in a little while he was sent for. His morbid and perverse patient was lying in the close, damp chamber as before, shivering and moaning. 'Oh, doctor,' he cried, 'that sure cure of yours has failed, and I am just as bad as ever!' 'Did you keep yourself in the sunshine?' 'No, I thought that I had taken enough of it, not only to make me well, but to keep me so, and then I came back to bed again.'

"Just like this imaginary invalid are many (alas! how many!) of the patients of the Great Physician. They read of His wondrous love; they believe in it; they rejoice in it. It kindles in their souls a hope that is full of glory. But, having 'tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come,' they return to the weak and beggarly elements of the world. Hence they lose that blessed hope. They become cold and sad, and then they wonder why God does not 'keep them in perfect peace.' Alas! they forget that God cannot make evil good and good evil. He has created an atmosphere of love. He offers it freely to all who will live in it. But if we fail to do so—if we shut ourselves up in the caves or cellars of selfishness, refusing to enjoy what God has provided for sustaining the new life—can we wonder that we are weak and sickly?

"But how shall we keep ourselves in the love of God? By study, by meditation, by Christian communion, and, above all, by prayer. We don't read the Bible enough; we don't think enough about what we read in it; we don't talk enough with each other about our heavenly Father, our Elder Brother, and our celestial home; we don't work enough for Christ to keep our hearts in a glow; we don't commune enough with God. Our reading, thinking, toiling, talking, and praying will not create the atmosphere that our spirits need, but they will keep us in it. They will enable us to climb up out of the dampness and the gloom of unbelief. They will help us to ascend the mount of faith. On it we will find the land of Beulah, from which we can see the walls and gates, and almost hear the songs of the golden city."

Yes, blessing is proportioned to obedience. As much water, so much wine.

DEC. 16–22. CONCERNING A SAINT.—Acts xii. 11.

Paul writes to the Corinthians: "Unto the Church of God, which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be *saints*." A saint is not a perfect person. A saint is one separated to Jesus Christ and growing into likeness to Christ.

In this light it has seemed to me that Peter's experience in prison is a kind of type and illustration of the experience of a saint.

Consider, first, *the saint's doom*. Peter in prison illustrates it. The saint's doom is tribulation. There are various prisons into which saints get now. But this tribulation the saint must suffer is—

(*a*) Not a sign of the Divine disfavor.

(*b*) Is for purification.

(*c*) Is for fellowship with Christ. "In my extremity I discovered new paths to God."

(*d*) Is for help of others. How Peter's example in the prison has helped others variously imprisoned.

Consider, second, the saint's *treasure*. Peter slept. He had inward peace, his Lord's presence. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. Yet none

in the busy crowds among whom they move in the noisy street know what is passing in their hearts. An American citizen in a foreign city, seeing the meteor flag of his native land floating at the masthead of a ship, is inwardly moved by the associations it revives to patriotic feelings, to emotions of love, to fond anticipations of his return to the joys and repose of his fireside. But of his secret thoughts the people about him know nothing. To them the flag of his country is but as one flag among many others. They meddle not with the secret joys it kindles within his swelling breast. It is even so with the secret of the Lord in a good man's breast. He walks the street like other men. Yet while their thoughts are of things visible and earthly, his are of God and things unseen. He sees God in everything about him. God is communing with him, feasting him on holy thought, quickening his spiritual aspirations, comforting him with assurances of his sonship, and with visions of his incorruptible inheritance. Happy, therefore, and safe, also, is he who possesses the secret of the Lord's presence.

Consider, third, the saint's *resource*—prayer. They prayed for Peter in Mary's house, and surely Peter prayed for himself also. Prayer was his resource and theirs. Here is something from Luther concerning the resource and power of prayer worth heeding:

"For I know, as often as I have earnestly prayed, when it has been real earnest with me, I have indeed been richly heard, and have obtained more than I have prayed for. God has for a time delayed, but nevertheless the help has come. Ah, how truly grand a thing is the honest prayer of a true Christian! How mighty it is with God, that a poor human creature can so speak with the high Majesty in heaven, and not dread Him, but know that God is kindly smiling on him for Jesus Christ's sake, His dear Son, our Lord and Saviour! To this end the heart and conscience must not look back, must not doubt or fear on account of unworthiness."

Consider, fourth, the saint's *deliverance*. Peter was disimprisoned by angels, and miraculously! Yes. But how often from their various prisons of tribulation do God's saints now find even marvelous deliverance?

Consider, fifth, the saint's *duty*—to do somewhat. Peter had to. He must bind on his sandals, etc. I think here saints too often fail. Amid their prisons of tribulation they fail to do the duty next them, the thing they can. Are you a saint, though under the doom of tribulation, yet having the peace of the Lord's presence, and using the resource of prayer, and *binding on your sandals?* If you are, I am sure you shall sooner or later come to deliverance and, like Peter, you shall gratefully exclaim: "The Lord hath delivered me."

DEC. 23–29.—GOD WITH US.—Matt. i. 23.

One day, years ago, the people living near Niagara Falls were startled by the cry: "Man in Niagara! Man in Niagara!"

So they all ran, thronging the suspension bridge and crowding the cliffs hard by.

"Where is he? Where is he?" each asked of each, because at first they could not see him. "Poor fellow," they said; "he's gone!"

Then some one cried out: "See; see, yonder—he is hanging on a rock!" pointing as he spoke to a low, water-washed rock about sixty yards below the great falls on the American side.

Then the question went through all the murmuring crowd: "Can we save him? Can we save him?"

They got a long rope ladder. They hoped they might be able to let it down somewhere in the poor man's neighborhood from one of the overhanging cliffs. They threw the ladder over, but there were some bushes growing out of a crevice down part way in the rocks, and as the rope ladder fell it got tangled in the bushes, and they could not loosen it.

Then they asked this other question: "Who will go down and clear the rope ladder and try to save that man?" It was a terrible question to ask, for it was a terrible thing to do. The man who should dare do it must do so at the greatest risk of his own life.

At last a brave young man stepped forward and said, "I'll go." Carefully he climbed down the rope ladder to the bushes. There he waited for some time seeking to get the ladder clear. With difficulty, he got it clear, and then the rope ladder fell down near to where that imperiled man was clinging for his life to that wet, low rock.

Then this man who had descended from the cliff began himself to go down farther. It was a frightful thing to do. The rope ladder swung and swayed, and below him were the dashing, boiling waters. One loose grasp, one misstep, and nothing in God's world could save him. But he went slowly and steadily down and down.

At last he reached the rock where the drenched, buffeted, weakening man was clinging. Holding with one hand firmly to the swaying ladder and putting one foot as firmly as he could upon the low rocks the waters were dashing over, with the other hand he took hold of the poor fellow, and, saying words of courage to him, got him to take hold of the rope ladder and try to climb up it to the cliffs above.

This brave helper could not carry the poor man up. To attempt that would be altogether beyond his own strength. Nor could he tie the poor fellow to the rope ladder, and let him be dragged up, for so he would be dashed to death against the projecting rocks above, as the rope ladder would sway, now this way and now that.

So this man who had somehow fallen into the wild waters, with nearly all his strength gone through his terrible clinging to that low rock against the awful force of the invading water, took hold of the rope ladder and began to climb. After he had gone up perhaps a hundred feet, he had to stop to rest. Those up there on the cliffs were in great fear lest his small strength should give way entirely and he fall again into the raging waters. "Hold on!" they shouted to him. "Hold on!" But their voices could not be distinctly heard amid the thunder of the mighty falls.

Then the man climbed up another hundred feet, and stopped again to rest. Those on the cliff grew more hopeful now. And the brave helper at the bottom stood there, getting what foothold he might and steadying the ladder.

Then, again, the man began to climb, painfully, laboriously, his strength, which had been tasked so terribly, almost failing him.

Then, at last, he was in reach of the top, and some strong arms, reaching over, seized him and lifted him into safety, amid the tears, and shouts, and eager joy of the multitude.

And the brave helper who had gone down for him and at so great a risk climbed safely to the summit too.

I think the story is a good one for the Christmas time, because it tells, though in the dimmest and in the poorest way, what our Lord Jesus has done for every one of us.

He was the One who came down from heaven to us, amid all the storm and danger and death of our sad sins.

HE CAME DOWN TO US. He did not stand, like the people on the cliffs, away off in the far heavens shouting to us to climb up. He was like the brave helper in the story: from the far heavens He Himself came down to us, and all our risk and pain and sorrow and death He took upon Himself.

He is a great deal better to us, too, than was this brave helper, good as he was to the poor man clinging for his life to the wet, treacherous rock. Our Lord Jesus does not simply bring the ladder of escape to us, but He gives us His own strength that we may have strength to climb. Nay, He does more than that, for really we have no strength. If we will only let Him,

with a deep trust, like the shepherd in the parable of the lost sheep, He lays us on His own shoulders and carries us up.

So our Lord Jesus is the one who comes to us; and if we will have it so, there is not one of us who may not be saved because He came.

And the Christmas time is the time when we think of the fact and of the way of His coming to us.

Consider, first, *the reality of the Incarnation*. Jesus Christ is actually God with us. As another has most truly said, and thoughtfully: "Everything of the Christian religion depends on the truth of the story of Bethlehem. If He who was there born was not really God, then the religion He set up is but *human* religion, and our hopes of a manhood perfected in a God-man are quenched. If He who was there born was not really man, but only phantom flesh, the religion He set up is a *deceitful* religion, leaving to us, it may be, nothing but a phantom God. I say, then, that Christianity from center to circumference is balanced on the solitary pivot of the nativity. Revelation, Mediation, Passion, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension, Parousia, all revolve round Bethlehem's manger."

Consider, second, *how sacred a thing is childhood*. God entered into our human nature as a child; and what higher work than the training of this childhood, dignified thus by the fact that our Lord and Saviour was once a little child! Daniel Webster once said: "If we work upon marble, it will perish. If we work upon brass, time will efface it. If we rear temples, they will crumble into dust. If we work upon immortal minds, if we imbue them with principles, with the just fear of God and love for our fellow men, we engrave on these tablets something which will brighten for eternity."

Consider, third, since God is thus with us, how certain it is that our Lord Jesus *can enter into the most real and close sympathy with every one of us*.

Consider, fourth, how the Babe in the manger, who is yet God with us, teaches us that *the true life is that of forgetfulness of self*. He, thinking not His equality with God a thing to be grasped at, emptied Himself.

DEC. 30–31. — ALMOST: ALTOGETHER. — Acts xxvi. 28–29.

Almost: altogether — These words seem to express states of mind very close to each other. It looks as though, with the least difficulty, the step from "almost" into "altogether" might be made. Indeed, the first is a step, even the latest step, into the last. Indeed, in order to get into the mood "altogether," one must first be in the state of mind "almost."

And yet—and yet——

Here we are upon the high, flat tablelands of Arizona; wastes of landscape around; wastes of sky above. We march along, and we come to a steep chasm yawning on the surface of the earth. Yet it does not yawn widely. It seems as though you could almost step across. But look down into the awful and gloomy cleavage. See, as far down as your sight can go the chasm sinks—3,000, 5,000, 7,000 feet toward the earth's heart. What is the chasm? It is the channel of one of the tributaries of the Colorado River. The water steadily flowing through the soft yet somewhat firm soil has been using its chisel against the earth until now it has gouged out and gouged down the abysmal gap.

And here you stand on this side, and just yonder is the other side, and between is the tremendous rift. A cleft as deep and dark, especially in religion, often sets its unbridged *edges between "almost" and "altogether."*

Get sight of the scene these two words culled from the Scripture here bring before our vision. He has lately been appointed Roman procurator of the country—this man Festus. He is a fair, well-meaning man, as men go at this time—a man in desire of doing justice quite above the usual run of Roman procurators. But his prede-

cessor in the procuratorship, Felix, a very low, mean man, whose palm was steadily itching for bribes, has left for Festus to dispose of a very perplexing case. There has been lying here, in the Fortress of Cæsarea, for two years, a prisoner whose case has thrown this Festus into great perplexity.

There is an intensely bitter feeling on the part of the Jews against this prisoner. They accuse him of all sorts of seditious things. They demand his life. Festus has done his best to find out the real facts about him. He has been down to Jerusalem to make special inquiry. As far as he can tell, he is quite sure the bitter Jews cannot make out their case. The prisoner has done nothing worthy of death. Yet should he release him, or—what the Jews specially desire—send him down to Jerusalem for further trial, Festus is certain the Jews would foully murder the prisoner.

And just now the case has become further complicated, for this prisoner, though a Jew, is also a Roman citizen, and he has fallen back on the inalienable right of a Roman citizen and has appealed his case to Cæsar, the emperor, at Rome. This appeal has put the case beyond the jurisdiction of Festus, and made it necessary that the prisoner be sent to Rome to stand before the emperor himself. But now this further perplexity remains with Festus: He must send to the emperor, together with the prisoner, a statement of the facts in the case. And since the case seems to involve rather points of Jewish law than of Roman law, Festus finds it a very difficult matter to make out such a statement as shall convey to the emperor clear intelligence.

But, just now, the last of the Herods, King Agrippa II., a man who by Roman sufferance bears a kind of shadowy rule in another part of the country of Palestine, together with his sister, Bernice, has come to Cæsarea to pay his respects to Festus. As they talk together, the case of this prisoner comes up; and Agrippa expresses the desire himself to see and hear this prisoner, for he is a renowned one.

Festus immediately seizes the chance. It will be a pleasant thing for Agrippa. Agrippa is a Jew and is familiar with the Jewish law, and thus Festus may perhaps get some better clue to the intricacies of the case, and be able to send to the emperor a clearer exposition of it.

Well, a day is set. It is a court occasion. All the splendor that belongs to such a time, in gilded chairs of state, in scarlet robes, in crowns, in numerous retinue, shines out. Festus and Agrippa and Bernice take their places on their lifted and gilded seats. All the proper officers, gleaming in armor and insignia, are grouped around them. And then the prisoner is brought in—poor, worn, shackled, pale with sickness and long confinement. Then Festus opens the proceedings thus (Acts xxv. 24-27):

The speech of Paul. Festus' insinuation that Paul is mad. The Apostle's reply. The address to Agrippa. Agrippa's answer. Paul's reply. And the chasm between "almost" and "altogether" yawns between them.

Think of the two sides of this chasm, which so frequently in religion sets its profound rift between "almost" and "altogether."

First, of the side "almost."

(*a*) Some men stand on this "almost" side of becoming Christians, though they are *intellectually convinced* of Christian truth. Yet they let some quibble hinder them.

(*b*) Some men stand on this "almost" side of becoming Christians because they have yielded all but *one* known sin.

(*c*) Some men stand on the "almost" side of becoming Christians because they discern yonder, on the "altogether" side, some duty which will be demanded of them, like that of the public confession of Christ.

(*d*) Some men stand on the "almost" side of becoming Christians because, standing there on that "almost" side, they demand, but of course cannot get,

the *feeling* which belongs to the "altogether" side.

(*e*) Some men stand on the "almost" side of becoming Christians because they think there is plenty of time before them in which to pass from the "almost" to the "altogether" side.

(*f*) Some men stand on this "almost" side because they will not give the matter serious thought. But refusal of thought concerning things does not change the fact of things.

Second, the "altogether" side. Paul's conversation is illustrative. This side is the side of whole-souled surrender to Jesus Christ.

"Almost" is useless until it passes into "altogether."

A few years since the steamer *Oregon* was wrecked just outside the port of New York. She almost reached her harbor, but she did not reach her harbor. The year is finished. Where stand you, on the side of "almost" or "altogether"?

Prayer-Meeting Topics for 1895.

JAN. 1-5.
Large Thoughts of God for the New Year. Eph. iii. 20-21.

JAN. 6-12.
The Unseen Friend. Rom. i. 3.

JAN. 13-19.
Burdens. Gal. vi. 5; Gal. vi. 2; Ps. cv. 22.

JAN. 20-26.
A Foe. Rev. iii. 5.

JAN. 27-31, Feb. 1, 2.
That by Which to Interpret Life. Is. xxxiii. 17.

FEB. 3-9.
The Second Miracle. John iv. 54.

FEB. 10-16.
Sympathy. Heb. iv. 15.

FEB. 17-23.
Hope. Ps. lxxi. 14.

FEB. 24-28, March 1, 2.
Iron Shoes for Rough Roads. Deut. xxxiv. 25.

MARCH 3-9.
The Cure for Troubled Thoughts. Ps. xciv. 19.

MARCH 10-16.
Our Resource. Luke xi. 22.

MARCH 17-23.
The Deity of Jesus Christ. John xx. 28

MARCH 24-30.
Nevertheless. Luke v. 5.

MARCH 31, April 1-6.
Heed to one's self. 1 Tim. xiv. 6.

APRIL 1-6.
Crossing the Bridge Before You Come to It. Matt. vi. 34.

APRIL 7-13.
Amid the Olive-Trees. Mark xiv. 32.

APRIL 14-20.
And Came to the Sepulcher. John xx. 3.

APRIL 21-27.
Our Lord's Resurrection an Incentive to Duty. Phil. iii. 10.

APRIL 28-30, May 1-4.
Hints of the Beyond. Mark ix. 2.

MAY 5-11.
Duties to Others. Rom. xiv. 7.

MAY 12-18.
Service in Hard Places. Rom. i. 7.

MAY 19-25.
Despondency. 1 Kings xix. 4.

MAY 26-31.
Deliverance. John i. 29.

JUNE 2-8.
The Greatest Sight. John xii. 21.

JUNE 9-15.
The Real Self. Matt. xvi. 26.

JUNE 16-22.
Baffling Trouble. John xiv. 1, 2.

JUNE 23-29.
Not Far From, Yet Not Within. Mark xii. 34.

JULY 1-6.
Failure Through Self; Victory Through God. Ex. ii. 14; Ex. iii. 10.

JULY 7-13.
When It Seems Dark. John xvi. 17.

JULY 14-20.
The Empty Heart. Matt. xii. 44.

JULY 21-27.
The Permanence of the Divine Plan. John vii. 30.

JULY 29-31, Aug. 1-3.
Barriers Overcome. Luke v. 9.

AUG. 4-10.
When Times Are Hard. Ex. v. 23.

AUG. 11-17.
What Is Worth the While? Luke xiii. 24.

AUG. 18-24.
What Shall I Do With Myself? John vi. 68

AUG. 26-31.
A Bad Saving of Time. 1 Sam. xiv. 24.

SEPT. 1-7.
The Christ We Need. Mark v. 43.

SEPT. 6-14.
Duties to God. Luke xvii. 17, 18.

SEPT. 15-21.
Not Weary in Well-Doing. Gal. vi. 9.

SEPT. 22-28.
The Apostle and High Priest of Our Profession. Heb. iii. 1.

SEPT. 29-30, Oct. 1-5.
The Right Time for Things. Acts xxviii. 15.

OCT. 6-12.
The Need of a Right-Doing. 1 Cor. x. 31.

OCT. 13-19.
Brass for Gold. 1 Kings xiv. 27.

OCT. 20-26.
Filled With the Spirit. Matt. iii. 11; Eph. v. 18.

OCT. 27-31, Nov. 1, 2.
Contrary Winds. Mark vi. 48.

NOV. 3-9.
Upward. Dan. i. 19, 20.

NOV. 10-16.
Divine Rescues. Ps. xxv. 15.

NOV. 17-23.
Concerning Prayer. Ps. lxxxvi. 7.

NOV. 24-30.
A False Thought of God and a True. Luke xv. 3-6.

DEC. 1-7.
The Great Necessity. 2 Cor. v. 17; John iii. 7.

DEC. 8-14.
To the Uttermost. Heb. vii. 25.

DEC. 15-21.
The Need for Life of a Right Ending. Luke xxiii. 33.

DEC. 22-28.
Lying in a Manger. Luke ii. 12.

DEC. 29-31.
For the Last Days of the Old Year. John xxvii. 7.

EXEGETICAL AND EXPOSITORY SECTION.

Isaiah vii. 14.

BY REV. DAVID M. SWEETS, MORGANFIELD, KY.

(Revised Version)—*Therefore Jehovah Himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

PERHAPS more perplexity has been produced among commentators by this passage than by any other in the whole range of Old Testament prophecy. The most cursory examination will show that great difficulties exist in regard to this interpretation. But this fact only serves to increase our interest in it.

The chief difficulties of the passage may be stated as follows: Does the prophecy refer to some event which was soon to occur, or does it refer exclusively to some event in the distant future? If it refers to some event which was soon to occur, what event was it? Who was the child intended, and who the virgin who should bring forth the child?

The incidents in the life of Ahaz which called forth this wonderful prophecy are stated in the first thirteen verses of this chapter. Briefly they are these: Ephraim and Syria are confederate against Judah. Ahaz, Judah's king, refuses to ask a sign from Jehovah that the confederacy shall be broken. Thereupon the prophet declares to Ahaz—representing the royal house—the house of David: "Therefore Jehovah Himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." The first step toward the unraveling of the prophet's meaning is to determine the exact significance of the words. What, then, is the meaning of the word אות, which is translated "sign"? Delitzsch defines the word as "a thing, event, or act, which may serve to guarantee the divine certainty of some other thing, event, or act." It does not of necessity denote a miracle. For example, in Ex. xvii. 11, circumcision is said to be a "sign," or token. The context, together with the nature of the thing, event or act must decide whether the אות is a miracle or not. In this place it is evidently implied that the assurance contained in the אות would be such as Jehovah alone could give. We must try to divest our minds of all preconceived prejudice against the direct, literal, historical interpretation of the passage. Looking back, as we do, through such a flood of light thrown upon its Messianic meaning, we are apt to read into the narrative things which Ahaz and his contemporaries would not have understood it to mean. We think at once of the grand and final fulfilment of this prophecy in Christ as the Son born of a virgin, and are apt to think that the assurance given to Ahaz consisted in a similar miraculous birth. But such is not necessarily the case. All that is necessary to constitute a "sign" to Ahaz is that some assurance shall be given which Jehovah alone can give. And we claim that the certain prediction of future events is the prerogative of Jehovah alone. The application of this principle will be brought out later in our discussion as to what child is meant.

Having arrived at the meaning of אות, we turn now to the word עַלְמָה, translated virgin, and shall try to find its exact meaning. The derivation of it from עָלַם, to hide, to conceal, is now generally abandoned. Its most probable derivation is from עָלַם, to grow, to be strong, and hence the word means one who has come to a mature or marriageable age. Hengstenberg contends that it means one in an unmarried state; Gesenius holds that it means simply being of marriageable age, the age of puberty. However this may be, it seems most natural to take the word in this place as meaning one who was

then unmarried and who could be called a virgin.

But we must guard against the exegetical error of supposing that the word here used implies that the person spoken of must be a virgin at the time when the child is born. All that is said is that she who is now a virgin shall bear a son.

Having fixed the meaning of these disputed words, let us now proceed to consider the interpretation of the prophecy itself. The opinions which have generally prevailed with regard to it are three:

I. That it has no reference to any Messianic fulfilment, but refers exclusively to some event in the time of the prophet.

II. That it has exclusive and immediate reference to the Messiah, thus excluding any reference to any event which was then to occur. On this view, the future birth of the Messiah from a virgin is made the sign to Ahaz that Jerusalem shall be safe from a threatened invasion.

III. That the prophet is speaking of the birth of a child which would soon take place of some one who was then a virgin; but that the prophecy has also a higher fulfilment in Christ.

This last view we regard as the only tenable one, and the proof of it will be the refutation of the other two.

The following reasons are presented to show that the prophecy refers to some event which was soon to occur:

1. The context demands it. If there was no allusion in the New Testament to the prophecy, and we should contemplate the narrative here in its surrounding circumstances, we should naturally feel that the prophet must mean this. If the seventh and eighth chapters, connected as they are, were all that we had, we should be compelled to admit a reference to something in the prophet's time. The record in chap. viii. 1–4 following in such close connection seems to be intended as a public assurance of the fulfilment of what is here predicted respecting the deliverance of the land from the threatened invasion. The prediction was that she who is a virgin shall bear a son (the sex of the child is indicated with certainty). Now Jehovah alone can foreknow this, and He pronounces the birth of this child as the sign which shall be given (*comp.* the birth of Isaac). The purpose of the choosing of witnesses (Isa. viii. 2) is that the prediction may be duly testified to as genuine. So the fulfilment will constitute a proof that Jehovah possesses the power of shaping future events as is pleasing to His will. The prophet is directed to take a great tablet and make a record concerning a son that is to be born. He calls, in attestation of the transaction, public witnesses, men of well-known character, and men who are friendly to the king and therefore not to be unduly influenced by friendship for the prophet (Isa. viii. 2). He approaches the prophetess, and expressly states (Isa. viii. 4) that before the child has "knowledge to say, my father and my mother,"—*i. e.*, be able to discern between good and evil—"the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the King of Assyria." This seems to be so evidently connected with the prophecy under consideration that it forms an unanswerable argument for a reference to something in the time of Isaiah.

What is the meaning of this transaction and why is it recorded here if there is no connection between it and the prophecy? All admit that the ninth chapter contains an undoubted reference to this prophecy (ix. 7). Why then this break in the connection of the thought? Why insert this reference to the prophet's family relations, if it has no connection with the prophecy?

2. In the second place, the reference to something in Isaiah's time is proven by this fact: The thing to be given to Ahaz was a sign or token that a present danger would be averted. An invasion was threatened. The march of the allied armies of Syria and Samaria had commenced. Jerusalem was in danger,

and it was to assure the king that the nation had nothing to fear from this invasion that the sign was given. How could the fact that the Messiah would come seven hundred years later prove this?

For the reasons given, there seems to be an undoubted reference to something in the prophet's time.

Let us now look at the reasons for believing that it contains also a reference to the Messiah.

1. The first argument we present is derived from the passage in chap. ix. 7. There is an undoubted connection between that passage and the one under consideration, as almost all critical scholars admit. And it seems that nothing short of a Messianic reference will explain the words. Some have asserted that the undoubted and exclusive reference to Messiah in this verse (ix. 7) excludes any local reference in the prophecy in chap. vii. 14. But so far from this being the case, we believe it is an instance of what Bacon calls the "springing, germinant fulfilment of prophecy." And we believe that it can be proved that all prophecies take their start from historical facts. Isaiah here (ix. 7) drops the historical drapery and rises to a mightier and more majestic strain.

The careful, critical student of Isaiah will find this thing common in his writings, viz.: That he commences with a prophecy having reference to some remarkable delivery which was soon to occur, and terminates it by a statement of events connected with a higher deliverance under the Messiah. His mind becomes absorbed; the primary object is forgotten in the contemplation of the more remote and glorious event.

2. The second and crowning argument is taken from the language of the inspired writer Matthew (i. 22–23): "Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying: Behold! a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us." Here, then, is indisputable proof of its Messianic reference.

We believe that the reasons presented have established the fact that the prophecy has a local reference and at the same time a Messianic reference. In pursuing the proof, no doubt the position taken in this paper with regard to the identity of the mother and child referred to in Isaiah's time has been seen. But we propose now to present some of the various views that have been held, and try to see which has the fewest objections against it.

1. Some have supposed that the wife of Ahaz was meant by the "virgin," and that his son, Hezekiah, was the child meant. There is an insuperable difficulty against this view. Ahaz's reign extended over sixteen years (according to 2 Kings xvii. 2), and Hezekiah was twenty-five years old when he succeeded Ahaz (see 2 Kings xviii. 2). Consequently, at this time Hezekiah could not have been less than nine years old. It has been supposed that Ahaz had a second wife, and that the son was hers. This is a mere supposition supported by nothing in the narrative, while it makes chap. viii. 1–4 have no connection with what precedes or follows.

2. Others have supposed that some virgin who was then present before Ahaz was designated, and they make the meaning this: "As surely as this virgin shall conceive and bear a son, so surely shall the land be forsaken of its kings." This is too vague for the definite language used, and gives no explanation of the incident in chap. viii. about Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

3. Another opinion is that the virgin was not an actual but an ideal virgin. Michaelis thus presents this view: "By the time when one who is yet a virgin can bring forth (*i. e.*, in nine months) all will be happily changed and the present impending danger so completely passed away that if you were to name the child you would call

him Immanuel." Surely this would not be a sign or pledge of anything to Ahaz. Besides, it was not a birth possible, but an actual birth, which was spoken of.

4. But the view which is most in keeping with the entire context and which presents the fewest difficulties is that the prophet's own son is intended. This view does require the supposition that Isaiah married a second wife, who at the time of this prophecy was still a virgin and whom he subsequently married. But there is no improbability in the supposition that the mother of his son, Shear Jashub, was deceased, and that Isaiah was about again to be married. This is the only supposition which this view demands. Such an occurrence was surely not uncommon. All other explanations require more suppositions, and suppositions more unnatural than this. Our supposition does no violence to the narrative, and certainly falls in best with all the facts. We would then identify Immanuel (as Ahaz and his contemporaries would understand the name to be applied) with Maher-shalal-hash-baz. With this view harmonizes what the prophet says in chap. viii. 18: "Behold, I and the children whom Jehovah hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from Jehovah of hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion." It is no objection to this view that another name than "Immanuel" was given to the child. It was a common thing to give two names to children, especially when one name was symbolic, as Immanuel was. Jesus Christ was never called Immanuel as a proper name, though almost all scholars agree that the prophecy referred to Him in some sense. To find the exact meaning and application of the name "Immanuel" would be an interesting study, but the limits of this paper forbid any discussion of it.

SOCIOLOGY AND COMPARATIVE RELIGION.

Papers in Social Science and Comparative Religion.

By Rev. B. F. Kidder, Ph.D.

VI.—Ancient Paganism in Modern Italy.

Baptized Paganism is not Christianity.

The temples of the gods are in ruins, and the penates no longer preside over the destinies of the Roman household; yet paganism at Rome is not purely a thing of the past. Whoever examines with any degree of carefulness the tenets and practices of the Roman Catholic Church will have little difficulty in recognizing their true character. Most of them are like the obelisks which have been set up in different squares of the Eternal City, and surmounted by the cross. They are decorated as Christian, but their substance is no less pagan than when they stood for Isis and Osiris along the banks of the Nile.

I shall not, in this brief paper, presume to treat exhaustively the question of paganism in the Romish Church; but I desire to call attention to certain points which are of special importance, not only in the study of comparative religion, but also as materially affecting the social problem.

It is well known that the paganism of ancient Rome was very elastic. The gods of other lands were continually being admitted into the Roman pantheon. The offer was even seriously made to recognize Jehovah as Jupiter and Christ as Apollo.

Alexander Severus went so far as to set up the image of Christ in his private chapel beside those of Orpheus and Apollonius.

Such compromise on the part of consistent Christianity was, of course, impossible. But that which was impos-

sible in spirit and reality was nominally accomplished when the empire came over in a body to Christianity, and many of the old ideas and practices were smuggled into the new religious ceremony under Christian names.

1. The claim of the popes to temporal and spiritual power sprang from this root. The idea did not bear very much fruit till the middle of the eighth century, when Pepin made large grants to the Church, but it had existed long before. And it was pagan, and only pagan. Christ said plainly: "My kingdom is not of this world"; and He sent forth his disciples to subdue the world, not by authority, but by the power of His Gospel. It was the pagan emperor who made himself at once ruler of the state and pontifex maximus, and the pope, at least so far as these ideas are concerned, is his successor.

2. The pagan emperor was not only pontifex maximus during his life, but at death he was sainted and placed in the pantheon as one suitable to receive the prayers of the people and act as intercessor with the gods.

Beside the Forum at Rome is an ancient temple on which appears this inscription: "*Divo Aurelio Maximo Antonino, it Divæ Faustinæ.*" The temple was built by Aurelius Maximus and dedicated to his faithless wife, whom he deified. When he died they deified him also, and placed his name beside hers. The temple is now used as a Christian church, but it is pagan still, for within it prayers are offered, not now (perhaps) to Saint Faustina, but to Saint Mary. Mary was undoubtedly a better woman than Faustina; but, like all other saints, whether Christian or pagan, she was only human.

The only person recorded in the New Testament who ever attempted anything like saint worship was John, and he was immediately rebuked for it. In the twenty-second chapter of Revelation, he says: "And I, John, saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then saith he to me, See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren, the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this Book; worship God."

The whole system of saint worship, from that of the Virgin down through the long line of those who, from time to time, have been voted into the Romish pantheon, is essentially pagan ancestor worship, baptized, it is true, as Christian, but pagan still, and in the intellectual and spiritual and moral level of the ancestor worship which prevailed not only in ancient Rome, but in Egypt and nearly all of the countries of the East.

Saint worship in the Roman Catholic Church exists under a great variety of forms. Like its pagan ancestor, its influence prevails not only in the churches, but also in the fields and by the firesides. Practically everything has its Madonna. There are Madonnas of diseases and Madonnas of the seasons. The Madonna of harvest is the pagan Ceres, while the patron saints of the household are the ancient penates, each baptized with a Christian name.

Not only every family, but also every village, has its patron saint. His honors and vicissitudes, as well as those of the people who believe in him, are well illustrated by an incident which occurred last year in Palermo, Sicily. There was a great lack of rain. The patron saint of the place was appealed to; but he was as unsympathetic as Baal on Mt. Carmel. They took his image into the field, that he might see for himself that the cabbages were suffering from lack of water. Still he paid no heed. And the people, in their impatience and anger, left his image in the field over night. Then they hit upon a new idea, and decided to play the saint's number in the lottery. As it happened, his number won that day, and the people went wild over it, and said: "Our saint refused to send us

rain, but he has sent us a rain of money."

3. Inseparably connected with saint or ancestor worship is image worship. Pagan Rome was full of images made to represent deified men and women and other divinities, before which sacrifices were made and prayers offered. Roman Catholic Rome is no less full of images, made to represent its saints, to which offerings are brought and prayers are offered.

Among the great multitude of these images two are particularly noteworthy. The first is the bronze image of St. Peter, in the church which bears his name. The toes of the right foot are nearly worn away by the kisses of worshipers. Surely this type of religion did not come from Christianity, whose Old Testament decreed: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them;" and whose New Testament reiterated this law, and declared, through the lips of the Divine Master, "The true worshipers shall worship the Father (not the Virgin, not saints, nor their images, but the Father), in spirit and in truth" (John iv. 23).

The second most conspicuous example of image worship at Rome may be seen in the Church of St. Agostino. This image represents the Virgin and Child. It is heavily loaded with gold and jewels, while other votive offerings almost literally cover the neighboring wall of the church. The toes of one of the feet of this image are likewise nearly worn away by the lips of worshipers.

I stood for a long time within the Church and watched the people at their devotions. A great multitude came and went. They bowed in prayer, then kissed the foot of the image; then dipped their fingers in the sacred oil of the lamp which was burning near by, and anointed the head, or the throat, or some other part of the body, presumably that part which was afflicted. Beside the image were many crutches which had been left by those who, on different occasions, had fancied themselves healed by the Virgin.

It may be questioned whether pagan Rome, in its palmiest days, ever witnessed anything more purely idolatrous than this.

4. Paganism had its priesthood, through which alone sacrifices were offered to the gods.

Although from a different standpoint, Judaism also had its priesthood. And in fulfilling the types of the older economy, Christ, according to the teachings of Christianity, offered Himself once for all as the perfect sacrifice for sin, and became the great High Priest for every soul, and all men, without respect of persons, are bidden to "enter into the holiest, by the new and living way"; but Romanism, true to its pagan instincts, continues to offer sacrifice (in the mass), *not only for the living, but also for the dead.* And this pagan idea of priestly intercession runs through the whole Romish economy. It appears not only in the mass, but likewise in the confessional, and in many other forms. As illustrating the degradation to which it naturally and easily descends, we may refer to the practice of some of the Italian monks, who pretend to use their acquaintance and influence with the Almighty to ascertain the numbers which are to be successful in the lottery; and, for a price, they impart this information to the ignorant and superstitious and wretched people who have received their religious training from the Church of Rome. Does not this "outherod Herod"? Would not even the oracle at Delphi blush for shame at such impiety and fraud?

5. Paganism has its penances, its purifyings of the spirit, through the degradation of the flesh. The Hindu devotee stands on the brow of a hill, or in the niche of a temple, till his flesh fairly dries on his bones.

Christianity knows no such way of

peace with God. In the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah it is written: "Is it such a fast that I have chosen a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?" And in the first chapter of his First Epistle, John writes: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Christianity teaches repentance; paganism teaches penance. Christianity declares that "a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise"; Paganism says that the degradation of the body is the way of exaltation for the soul. Christianity declares: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved"; Paganism crawls on its hands and knees in the dust to secure divine favor.

I stood at the foot of the "Scala Santa," over which Christ is supposed to have once passed when the stairs were in Pilate's palace at Jerusalem. The marble steps are now covered with wood to prevent them from being completely worn away. No one may pass over them except on his hands and knees. The worshipers crawled slowly up the stair, touching their foreheads to each step as they passed. There was something unutterably pathetic in the scene. Among the last words of Christ to Peter were these. "Lovest thou me? Feed my sheep; feed my lambs." But I found the flock that day, not in "green pastures," nor by "living waters," but on the barren heath of paganism. And Rome everywhere leads her flock in such a pasture and points the way to heaven over such a stair.

The great monk of Germany once started to make this pilgrimage, but half-way up the stairs he heard a voice within saying: "The just shall live by faith." Would it be very far from correct to say that in obeying that voice he ceased to be a pagan and became, in the only real, true sense, a Christian?

These doctrines and practices are far from covering all the phases of paganism in the Romish Church. The doctrines of purgatory and transubstantiation, the use of incense and holy water, and even the halo that is placed around the heads of Christ and Mary, are all borrowed from paganism.

In the country districts of Italy, wine or water is seldom drunk till a little has first been thrown upon the ground. This is the survival of the ancient libation to the gods, although few of the people now realize its origin or significance.

Most of the festivals of the Romish Church are hardly less pagan to-day than when they were celebrated under a different name two thousand years ago. At the festival of St. John's Eve, which occurred this year, at Rome, on June 24, about a hundred thousand people gathered in St. John's Square, in front of the cathedral, feasted, drank, rang bells to frighten away the witches and evil spirits, and committed the grossest extravagances and immoralities. This is called a great Christian festival by the Romish Church; but ancient Rome used to call it a "bacchanal," or something worse. There are scholars who believe that the festivities of St. John's, or Midsummer's Eve, had a phallic origin. Certain it is that this most degrading form of paganism prevailed in the Roman Catholic Church, not only in Italy, but in other Roman Catholic countries, until late in the eighteenth century, when its obscene symbols were destroyed by the reformers. Unfortunately the proof, or even the adequate statement of this phase of paganism in the Romish Church, is not fit for the public print. Any student who may wish to investigate the subject will be interested in a work on the "Worship of Priapus,"

by Richard Payne Knight, Esq., privately printed in London in 1865. It can probably be found in the large libraries, but can be consulted only by special permission of the librarian.

The Rome of to-day, like the Rome of two thousand years ago, is sending out her legions into all the earth, ambitious to bring the world to her feet. Her standards represent not only military conquest, but religious, moral, and social conditions. Neither her claims nor her conquests can be a matter of indifference.

1. Would political and religious liberty be increased or diminished if the supremacy of the Romish Church were established? If "the only safe way to judge of the future is by the past," there can be but one answer to this question. The concentration of power in the hands of an individual is diametrically opposed to individual liberty and equality. It is usually known as *absolutism*, and in the past it has stood for narrowness, bigotry, oppression, tyranny. And that type of absolutism represented by the papacy is, above all others, the most intolerable, for it assumes the right to dominate, not only in secular matters, but also in the realm of conscience.

2. Can a man be a consistent papist and at the same time a good citizen of any country which does not acknowledge the claims of the pope? This may be considered an unpardonable insult to Roman Catholics. It is certainly not intended as such. No one could be more willing than the author of this paper to acknowledge that there are multitudes in the Church of Rome who have proved themselves earnest patriots in the different lands where their lot has been cast; but their conduct, however worthy, is no answer to our question. "No man can serve two masters." If a man is a consistent Romanist, he has sworn implicit obedience to a potentate who claims not only spiritual but also temporal sovereignty. When this same man takes the oath of a citizen in any country which does not acknowledge the papal claim, it is perfectly plain that he must do one of two things, either abrogate his oath of allegiance to the pope, that is, cease to be a papist, or take his oath to the state with mental reservations which are dishonest, treasonable. A state made up of such citizens might, indeed, stand for a long time; but its foundation would be the crust of a volcano, its constitution a farce, and its whole administration a mere annex of the Vatican.

3. The moral and spiritual situation is, logically, much the same as the political. Can a man be a consistent papist and an intelligent and loyal child of God at the same time? If any honest soul feels aggrieved at this question, let him direct his indignation against those conditions which compel us, in the interest of truth, to ask it. I would cast no reflection upon the sincerity of those within the Church of Rome (and there are unquestionably many) who love God and are striving to live a life in all respects consistent with goodness. But their position is this: They have bound their conscience to unquestioning allegiance to a man, while God has said: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

The adherents of Rome are made to believe that this man is God's vicegerent upon earth. And this, to speak plainly, is the trick of the whole delusion—a delusion which, alas! has not, in the majority of cases, been broken even when the popes have uttered decrees which are plainly contrary to the law of Christ.

4. The greatest practical evil that results from Romish paganism is perhaps its direct fruit in the mental and moral life. The Church of Rome enjoins obedience to many beautiful and precious precepts, including the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. She holds to the great central teachings of universal Christendom—the fatherhood of God, the divinity of Christ, and the divine operations of the Holy Spirit. But it is all hidden

away amid the interminable rubbish of human tradition and superstition, and the approach to God and to the gate of heaven is made to lie through pagan types and ceremonies.

Intellectual activity is stifled because freedom of thought is denied. Moral and spiritual growth is stunted because the ideal before the mind is not the perfect Christ, but some man or woman whose sainthood once hung upon the precarious thread of a vote. Character has for its foundation, not eternal truth, but a formal ceremony; and for its inspiration, not the approval of God, but the word of a priest. The devotee who is led to believe that he may go to a priest for absolution from sin is taught to regulate his conduct, not by the eternal law of right, but by the judgment of a man.

Paganism at Rome is not yet a thing of the past, but changes have been taking place which are full of significance. Since the armies of Victor Emmanuel entered Rome in 1870, the pope has been relieved of the last vestige of the responsibility of temporal affairs, at least in Italy, and the people also have been greatly relieved. Men have breathed a freer air. Intellectual activity has revived and education has been wonderfully advanced. In this less than a quarter of a century illiteracy throughout Italy has decreased from about 70 per cent. of the entire population to only about 40 per cent.

The religious freedom granted by the state is likewise bearing its beneficent fruit. Different Protestant services are now held, without molestation, under the shadow of St. Peter's, a thing which was impossible twenty-five years ago; and one Church (the Methodist Episcopal) has laid the foundation of a splendid theological school and publication-house in the very heart of the city.

These conditions and influences have begun to react to some degree upon the Church of Rome, and a marked improvement is taking place in the mental and moral tone of a considerable proportion of the priests.

Perhaps the most significant of all the changes which have taken place thus far is indicated by the question which is being asked by an increasing number of earnest men in the Romish Church, not only at Rome, but also in many other parts of the world: "*If we may have political freedom—a thing already assured—why not religious liberty as well?*"

If we read the signs of the time aright, the day is coming—it may not be near, but it is far nearer than some suppose—when the papal policy will be modified in a remarkable way, or rapidly decreasing numbers will bow at Romish altars.

The greatest danger is that the stronger minds, in breaking away from the Church which has bound them to pagan superstitions, will go (as many have already gone) to the opposite extreme of utter infidelity. But, as the pendulum swings to and fro, God's hour will come when *men shall know the truth and the truth shall make them free.*

MISCELLANEOUS SECTION.

The Economy of Attention; or, the Philosophy of Rhetoric in a Nutshell.

BY REV. R. H. HOWARD, PH.D., NEWTON LOWER FALLS, MASS.

IT is Herbert Spencer, I believe, who, in his matchless essay on "Style," published many years ago, points out the fact that, in the single idea of what he very happily calls economizing attention, we have suggested the whole philosophy of style.

As a man may be a fair practical mechanic with very little knowledge of the laws of forces, so one may be a fair

reasoner, doubtless, though ignorant of formal logic, or a forcible and even eloquent writer, though innocent of the usual school-drill in syntax. Good composition, it may be admitted, is far less dependent on acquaintance with its laws than upon practice, natural aptitude, and taste. A clear head, a quick imagination, and a sensitive ear, as Mr. Spencer so well says, will, in any case, go far toward rendering all rhetorical precepts needless. And yet, while it is thus sufficiently evident that the daily hearing or reading well-framed sentences will have a tendency to lead us to use similar ones, and that hence the test school of high rhetorical culture is the reading of good writers and habitual conversation with cultivated talkers, it cannot be denied that at least some practical result—if in no other way, yet as facilitating criticism and revision—may be expected from a familiarity with the principles of style and with the precepts and axioms of rhetoric.

And at the very outset it would seem to be desirable, if possible, to discover some general underlying theory of expression—some fundamental principle from which all the rules of composition may be evolved, from which our current rhetorical maxims, now standing as isolated dogmas, may be adduced, and in the light of which a true philosophy of rhetoric, or style, may be unfolded. And may we not obtain a clue to just such a law or principle if, whenever addressing other minds, we consider the supreme importance of what Mr. Spencer has significantly called "economizing," to the utmost extent, the readers' or hearers' time and attention?

A reader or listener may be supposed to have at each moment but a limited amount of available mental power. A part of this power must be expended in recognizing and interpreting the symbols presented to him conveying a given thought. Meantime, whatever of mental energy is thus consumed, is evidently just so much subtracted from the power necessary in order to the fullest, most vivid realization of the thought conveyed. As in mechanics whatever of force is absorbed by the machine or consumed by friction is so much deducted from the result, so the more time and attention it takes to receive and understand each sentence of a writer the less time and attention, plainly, can be given to the contained idea, and the less vividly will that idea be conceived. As in a mechanical apparatus the simpler and the better arranged the parts the greater will be the power realized, so as regards language—that apparatus of symbols for the conveyance of thought—the simpler and better arranged its parts the greater, clearly, will be the effect produced.

We now reach this general principle: Other things equal, the force of all verbal forms is as great, inversely, as the time and mental effort they demand. Though the necessary instrument of it, it will not be difficult to perceive how language, after all, is to some extent a hindrance to thought, especially when we remember the comparative force with which simple ideas are often communicated by signs, pictures, or gestures. How much more expressive, for example, simply to point to the door than to say, "Leave the room!" A beck of the hand is better than "Come here!" What phrase can convey the idea of surprise so vividly as opening the eyes and raising the eyebrows? How much of its significance would be lost should we attempt to translate the French shrug into words? Indeed, the whole value of gesture on the part of the public speaker is to be measured by this same principle—economy of attention. This is its whole purpose and end. As a sort of running comment on the words uttered—illustrating by the images suggested, flashed on the mind, or hinted to the imagination, the sentiment verbally expressed—it renders unnecessary very much verbiage otherwise quite essential.

Coming to oral language, we find

that the strongest effects are produced by interjections—words condensing entire sentences into syllables. Next to these, those words which are suggestive of pictures—which appeal and afford the freest play to the imagination—will be found best to economize the recipient's attention. Hence the value of figures of speech. And of these, those which compel the best attention will be found the most effectual. Thus the metaphor, condensing, as it does, a picture into a single word, ranks all other rhetorical figures. Let it be granted that, as Whateley suggests, this superiority of the metaphor may be attributed in part to the fact that men are more gratified at catching the resemblance themselves than in having it pointed out to them, particularly in case the implied comparison is sufficiently obvious to flash, with something like startling suddenness, upon the mind. There is something very grateful in the start, in the quick yet effortless impulse, thus imparted to the imagination. Yet the great force of the metaphor is, doubtless, as already intimated, to be attributed to its brevity, and hence the marked economy it achieves of the reader's or hearer's attention. Did space permit, it would be interesting to notice also how attention is greatly economized and corresponding vivacity imparted to style by the condensing of relative clauses into phrases. Thus, instead of saying "the man *who was* called for," say "the man called for."

The successful writer and public speaker, therefore, will be one who aims constantly, by means of signs and symbols, by appropriate and significant gestures, by lucid statements and a perspicuous method, by striking illustrative imagery and extraordinary pictorial representation, by avoiding all unnecessary technical terms and scholastic terminology or abstract metaphysical nomenclature, and by a strict adherence to simple Saxon words and nervous, incisive, idiomatic forms of expression, to beguile the reader or hearer of all sense of fatigue—to economize his attention, so that, as nearly as possible, without conscious effort, he will read or listen to and receive what the speaker or writer may have to say. We sometimes hear people who have failed to command a hearing or to make themselves understood say, "We cannot afford to find tongue and brains too." This is precisely what we are to do. The man who will be listened to, or read, with fixed and delighted attention, is he who sufficiently mixes "brains" with his vocabulary to make himself clearly and easily understood. Prof. Dugald Stewart, the distinguished Scotch metaphysician, tells us that with far less labor than he had expended on his pages he could have easily revealed the obscurity of Kant, and so, because not understood, possibly have won an enviable reputation for profundity.

It is because of this manifestly prime necessity of economizing the reader's time and attention—of doing indeed as much as possible of his mental work for him—that the prime characteristic of a good style is perspicuity. Let there be such a choice of words, such a structure and management of sentences, such a plan and method of discourse, as to admit of the sense being apprehended with the least possible effort on the part of the recipient. Rhetorical figures should be used not for purposes of embellishment chiefly, but illustration. All meretricious ornament, especially that peculiar ornateness of diction calculated to invite special attention and to win admiration on its own account, is obviously to be discarded.

This same necessity of economizing to the utmost extent the reader's or hearer's attention supplies the public speaker—a preacher, for example—with his apology for hugging, as closely as he prudently may in the selection of his topics and in his modes of treatment and illustration, to the "times" and to the sensations of the hour. His motive, as a true artist, will not be to

create, but rather to take advantage of, a sensation to fix and enforce attention. It seems clear that, unless a public speaker manages in a measure thus to drop into the current or to catch the breeze of popular thought and sentiment — to keep somewhat in touch with or abreast of the so-called sensation of the day — the people will scarcely care, whatever its real value, to give special or thoughtful heed to his message.

PREACHERS EXCHANGING VIEWS.

Conference, Not Criticism—Not a Review Section—Not Discussion, but Experiences and Suggestions.

The Long Prayer.

WHILE in full sympathy with what has often been written upon this subject in criticism of those ministers who prolong the prayer before the sermon till worshipers are physically, if not spiritually, exhausted, I confess myself an offender. But my offense is one of which, at the time, I am altogether unconscious. So rapidly does the time pass when I am contemplating the glory and the grace of God and recounting the reasons for public gratitude, and considering the spiritual needs of my people and the destitution of the world of human souls, that, before I am aware, ten and even twelve minutes — perhaps more — have been spent in the prayer, and this though I have given time to the preparation of what I shall say, holding, as I do, that no minister should be less careful in approaching his God than in approaching his people.

Will some of my brethren who have known and overcome this difficulty, please tell me how they have been enabled to do so?

L. Y. S.

NEWARK, N. J.

Manliness in Preaching.

QUITE possibly, the reason why there are so few men, comparatively, in attendance upon the ministrations of not a few pulpits is because there is a marked lack of true manliness in the preaching, for it is a fact that there is a good deal of flaccid effeminacy in a very large number of pulpits in the land. In such pulpits the Gospel may be, to a considerable extent, preached, but it is not presented with that wholesome virility which should characterize the utterances of a "man sent from God" to represent the throne of heaven.

Manly men of the world, even though they try hard to remain unbelievers of the Gospel, in a practical sort of a way admire manliness in the pulpit. The manly preacher may and will tell such hearers some very straight truths — truths which wing their way with penetrating power to their hearts; but these hearers expect such preaching from such a preacher, and they respect him for it. This was true of Mr. Spurgeon and his hearers. It was true also of Bishop Brooks. These were preeminently manly preachers, and they drew a very large number of strong men to their ministry. When Bishop Brooks preached at midday in New York, it was noticeable that brainy, hard-headed business men and many others of mental ability, in very large numbers, heard him with eagerness. And Christ found no trouble in getting multitudes of men to hear Him preach. His was a manly ministry. The pulpit of to-day needs a man in it.

C. H. WETHERBE.

IN our analytic age we sever thought from life. When the synthetic era comes, we shall discover that all thought lives, and that life itself is but thought vitalized.

EDITORIAL SECTION.

LIVING ISSUES FOR PULPIT TREATMENT.

The Present Crisis and the Church's Opportunity.

BY REV. A. LEHMANN, MOOREFIELD, OHIO.

Behold, I have set before thee an open door.—Rev. iii. 8.

I. THAT we have come to what may be called a crisis in the industrial history of our country every one seems willing to admit. For years there has been a growing discontentment among the laboring classes, a widespreading dissatisfaction with prevailing conditions, expressing itself in the organization of new political parties, the formation of labor unions, the movement of so-called "commonweal" armies, labor strikes of growing frequency and threatening results.

Besides, there is throughout this country and through all Europe a growing spirit of anarchy—a protest against all existing law and order. Anarchy is the sworn enemy of every form of government, indeed of the whole present social system. It has shouldered the immense task of subverting all existing political institutions. The time was when sober-minded men only smiled at the mention of anarchy—gave it but a passing notice. It was looked on as a temporary craze. But that time has gone by.

This spirit of anarchy has forced itself to the front. By its murderous use of dagger and dynamite, it has compelled the civilized world to take notice of it. It has even in this country become a most dangerous enemy. Of course a vast difference must be made between this spirit and that other of mere discontentment which prevails among the industrial classes. The two have necessarily little or nothing in common, either as to origin or desire, save only the discontentment. Yet they overlap at points. Anarchy is taking advantage of the growing discontentment—hails the restless condition of society as fruitful soil into which to scatter the seeds of its pernicious doctrines. Labor unions and even new political parties are in danger of imbibing some of this spirit.

So much has this restless, discontented feeling throughout the social world grown that the "Social Unrest" has become a leading topic for pulpit and platform discussion. The press is full of it.

And what is most strange, almost without parallel in history, this discontentment has grown up in the midst of plenty. Never have the resources which God has stored for man's use been so accessible, machinery of all kinds, for high-grade and cheap production, so well perfected; never have the products of all kinds of industry been so abundant as just now—so that not a few resolve the whole difficulty into overproduction. We have almost come to that situation of the children of Israel in the wilderness when their trouble was not famine or pestilence, but their plenty. Their curse was their abundance.

Whatever may be its evil sources and possible evil results, no thoughtful person would feel prepared to pronounce this spirit of social discontent itself an unmixed evil, any more than he would the unrest of air or sea which may prelude the storm or the destructive wave. For it is the unrest of air and sea that renders both pure and habitable. The storm and the mighty ocean wave carry in them great possible destruction, but also great possible good. It is so in the social atmosphere, in this great sea of humanity. Agitation is the condition of higher life, of purity and progress. If all were content with present conditions and attainments, or indiffer-

ent to them, society would come to stagnation. Life in the ascending scale would be impossible. But it is here in the social as it is in the material. Agitation produces friction. Social friction creates social electricity; and when the social atmosphere becomes charged, nobody can tell just where the lightning is going to strike.

It is far better to have a moving atmosphere, with an occasional storm, even a tornado, if need be, than to have always a dead calm. But just when the storm will come, where the path of the tornado will lie, no one can tell. It is the unstable balancing between the forces of good and evil in society that renders the outlook uncertain. And this it is that constitutes a crisis. To such a condition in the political and industrial history of our country we seem to have come when no one can be quite sure whether the immediate outcome will be good or evil. That there are great possibilities of evil nobody will deny.

Suppose that capital should go on as it has in the past, organizing itself in great trusts, so as, by and by, to bring its tremendous power centralized in the fewest possible hands. Suppose that, at the same time, labor goes on as it has, organizing itself into unions, consolidating unions until the mighty laboring force of the land engaged in every kind of industry, with its millions of men of brawny muscle, is also completely centralized. These two great forces, capital and labor, instead of standing in friendly cooperation, become pitted against each other. Suppose that, in the case of some demand on either side, be it ever so local and trivial, the laboring force in the land is ordered out, union after union, as was in fact attempted in the recent Pullman strike, and all the industry of the whole country in every branch tied up, and all trade and commerce paralyzed as it was threatened. Suppose, in this juncture, as it did occur in Chicago, the bloodhounds of anarchy and of worthless humanity congregated in the great centers of wealth and population are let loose, with torch and dynamite, to go forth to murder and destroy—the whole saloon force behind to fire the heart of this demon. Suppose, too, as it did actually occur in an attempt on the part of the Government to protect life and property, governors of States and city officials side with the disturbers of peace—in the midst of such a conflict of civil authority, when the passions of men are aroused and the social atmosphere is everywhere charged with electric power, who can foretell the tremendous storm that might result, and how vast the destruction of life and property, to say nothing of the danger to existing, long-cherished institutions? Surely the time has come when a great Christian nation ought to lay aside all strife for party preeminence, and address itself soberly to look after the cause and to seek the remedy; for, however prosperous our past, we have no mortgage on the future. The only promise of a prosperous future is in a righteous present.

II. If we inquire after the source of the discontentment among us, the answer is not far off, so far as anarchy is concerned. Europe is mainly responsible for that. Anarchy is the legitimate child of unbelief and of oppressive civil government.

Atheism, pantheism, materialism, agnosticism, all the isms of unbelief in the Old World, have for centuries, in the name of philosophy and science, proclaimed that there is no personal, intelligent Creator and Governor of the world. From professor's chair and even from pulpit it has been persistently taught that there is nothing beyond matter and its forces—no God, no immortal soul, no moral responsibility, no hereafter to receive us and to gather up the results of the present life. This "gospel of dirt," as it has been lightly styled, has gone to fruit in dirt. It has brought forth its kind. Anarchy is the logical conclusion. For if it be even so, as unbelief would have it, then what foundation is there for govern-

ment of any kind—nay, what reason for self-restraint. If the animal nature be all that there is of us, then why not eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die? Is it any wonder that the materialism of the Old World has brought forth, under manifold political oppressions, such a progeny as this? But we are not, as it has been said of France, a nation of infidels. We have not given birth to anarchy on our own shores. We have permitted Europe to lay this unruly child as a foundling at our doors. While we have not brought forth anarchy as yet, we have given birth to a vast deal of discontentment throughout the whole land, furnishing the best of soil for anarchy to grow and flourish in. Whence this discontentment? Whatever other sources, the chief seems to be this: While not materialists in belief, we have become materalists in practice. While we have not preached the gospel of dirt in our political business and social affairs, we have lived it. We have exalted the material over the spiritual. In our eager pursuit after this world we have come as a nation to bow to mammon. We worship the god of wealth. We are this day laying immense treasures not only of gold and silver, but of precious human life, on the altar of Bacchus, whose shrines are in every city, town, and hamlet of our land. And so it comes, in the way of this kind of idolatry, worshiping the things that are seen, making gods of our bellies, that righteousness has departed largely from the counsels of the nation, from business, and from social life.

It is a notorious fact that truth and honesty, a righteous patriotism looking toward the public good, has been driven from our political party management and largely from our legislative halls. Such men as ex-Senator Ingalls are bold to acknowledge that the Golden Rule—the moral law—has no place in politics. In other words, righteousness has no claim on political parties, no demand to make that men acting professedly for the public good must heed. To such a pass it has really come in our American political life. The question is no longer—is it right, is it for the common good? but how will any measure demanded affect the next election? Will it minister to party dominance? It is in the line of such secularism as this, which rules righteousness out of public affairs, that the United States Government has itself become a notorious lawbreaker. Almost every State in the Union has on its statute-books laws regulating Sunday observance; and the United States Government overrides all Sunday laws in the land by her Sunday transmission of mails, compelling thousands in her employ to trample on the laws of God and of man.

It is in keeping with such secularism as this that the United States Government is to-day chief partner in the most nefarious business on the face of the earth and partaker in the crime.

Everybody concedes it. All the courts in the land, including the United States Supreme Court, have declared the liquor traffic to be a dangerous public enemy, which the State has the right to suppress, if it so choose. And yet the United States Government as administered by both dominant parties makes herself chief partner in this crime by granting the Government license in exchange for the principal share of the profits.

To cite the facts in the case: Yonder is a distillery. Upon every barrel of liquor that goes out from that ginshop the Government puts its revenue stamp, returning to its own treasury ninety cents for every gallon of liquor contained; that is to say, of the gross profit of the first sale, when liquor is worth $1.20 per gallon, the United States Government pockets 75 per cent., and the distiller 25 per cent., out of which he must meet cost of production. This is not all. That barrel of liquor is followed up by the United States Government to the retail dealer, and he is charged $25 United States license. This is not all. When the United

States Government has taken out its share of the profits, along comes the State Government for its share, charging the retail dealer from $200 to $1,000, as the case may be, license—State permission to sell. By this time one might suppose the business had been licensed to death; but not so, for next comes the municipal government, as was proven to be the case in the city of New York, levying thousands of dollars of blackmail on this traffic, for what? For the city government's license to sell against State restrictions. Here is a tremendous crime against which United States, State and municipal governments should protect the people, and yet all these governments live on it, and by their license encourage and protect it—protect the crime instead of the people. Were it a wonder if such unrighteousness as this, such partnership with crime, should call down on the nation the vengeance of Almighty God? If patriotism grows cold, if the people grow nervous and discontented, if crime flourishes under such an abuse of government power as this, it is no surprise.

Nor is it any surprise that, under such example as this, unrighteousness has largely taken possession of the business management of the country. Labor and capital ought to be friends. There is no good reason why they should not be friends, mutually enjoying the products of industry. But the fact is that they are to-day enemies. What is the explanation? Senator Sherman gave it, in a nutshell, in a recent utterance made at Washington, when he said that if each side in the labor trouble recognized the rights of the other and applied the Golden Rule, there would be no more disorder and strikes. Both capital and labor have ruled righteousness out of these combinations. Power, on either hand, is being wielded without conscience, without regard to mutual rights and interests. Here we have the chief source of the evil that threatens us. It is not the tariff, it is not the silver question, it is not trusts and labor unions as such, but it is the fact that a materializing, money-grasping spirit has driven righteousness from politics, from government, and from the business of the land. This is the open door through which much that is wrong among us has come in. It is the taproot of the discontentment among the people.

III. But what is the duty of the Church in such a crisis? Has she any special mission, any special opportunity?

There are those who affirm that the Church has nothing to do in public affairs; that her sole mission is to save souls; that the pulpit is not charged with the salvation of society—owes no debt to mankind in general. Preachers are curates only of souls, and are charged with the spiritual care of the individual—that it is, therefore, no part of a Gospel minister's duty to lift up the voice of righteousness against political and social wrongs. Whatever benefits accrue to society from the preaching of the Gospel must come indirectly through the salvation and reformation of the individual. Doubtless the care of souls is the first care of the Gospel ministry, but it is not the whole care. For did not the King of kings give commandment to preach His Gospel to every nation as well as to every creature? Is it not specifically promised that the nations of the earth shall become the nations of the Christ? Did not the Great Teacher instruct men to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as in heaven"? Did He not promise that the "meek should inherit the earth"?

And surely, in the grand consummation of His kingdom on earth, it will be found that society as well as the individual will be saved. The petitions, "Thy kingdom come," etc., will be answered. The meek will have their promised inheritance. But how is all this to be brought about if the Church is not charged with the interests of society as well as of the individual?

The pulpit has an important duty to

perform, bearing on the public welfare. It is charged with public morals as well as with the good behavior of the individual. The ancient prophets were the great reformers of their times. They were God's mouthpiece against public as well as against private sins.

If the Church, through her pulpit, is not in the forefront of every righteous cause, if she does not lead in every great moral reformation, she misses her calling, her God-given opportunity, and in so far loses her power for good. It is the business of the Church, through her pulpit, in such times as these to call attention to public wrongs, denounce public sins, and issue a loud call to repentance.

Of course everybody will admit that the Gospel minister, speaking from the pulpit, has nothing to do with tariffs, the silver question, labor unions, trusts, etc., contemplated from a purely business point of view. These are all topics for the political economist. The Gospel minister has to do solely with the great question of righteousness, which pushes its demands into every department of the public life. He is an educator of the public conscience.

There never was a grander opportunity than just now to hold up over against unbelief, whose logical conclusion is anarchy, the doctrine of a pure Christian theism: That God is, and that He is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek Him. That there is a moral as well as a physical order in His government, under which states, parties, trusts, labor unions, as well as individuals, are held responsible. That man's body tabernacles a soul made in the image of God—immortal, accountable, to live not on bread alone, but by every word proceeding from the mouth of God.

There never was a better time than now to hold up the Word of God as His infallible rule of faith and practice—not only for the individual, but for society—as containing the principles of righteousness, on which governments should be founded, political parties managed, trusts ministered, all business conducted, and society ordered.

It is a most opportune time to point out existing wrongs, call offenders to repentance, institute reforms, and insist on a return to righteousness in every department of social, business, and public life.

There never was a more promising time than the present crisis to hold up to the dissatisfied world the Gospel of Christ as the remedy for all ills, social as well as individual—for does not His Gospel give to society the Golden Rule, the royal law of love? Does it not lay on men the obligation to bear one another's burdens; to look not every man on his own but on another's good; to provide things honest in the sight of all men? Well may Senator Sherman affirm that, if men observed these Gospel injunctions, labor and capital would be better friends, and there would be no conflict between them.

It is a good time for the whole Church to push her work all along the line and build churches in waste places, found schools and colleges, hold revival meetings, and offer dissatisfied humanity the bread that satisfies and the riches that waste not, of which none but the Lord Himself has a monopoly.

It is a splendid time for the members of the Church, in the exercise of their right and duty as citizens, to vote as well as talk and pray against the evil. If this be done all along the line by all the Churches, there is not only hope but absolute certainty that politics would reform, government dissolve its partnership with iniquity, business return to honesty, labor and capital become friends, the saloon go down, and the nation become sober, prosperous, and contented.

THERE is vastly more in the Cross of Christ than an appeal to nobility, more in that sacrifice than a mere commandment for your power, for that cross is the throne of Jesus Christ.—*Gunsaulus.*

EDITORIAL NOTES.

State Constitutions and Gambling.

Our readers not conversant with the progress of affairs in the Empire State may have been indifferent to the work of the Constitutional Convention, which recently closed its work at Albany, and in their indifference may have failed to note one proposed amendment which is worthy of universal interest and approval. By a vote that was almost unanimous, it was resolved to submit to the people the following for their approval or disapproval at the ensuing election:

"Section 10 of Article I. of the Constitution is hereby amended so as to read as follows:

"Sec. 10. No law shall be passed abridging the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government or any department thereof; nor shall any divorce be granted otherwise than by due judicial proceedings; nor shall any lottery or the sale of lottery tickets, poolselling, bookmaking, or any other kind of gambling hereafter be authorized or allowed within this State, and the Legislature shall pass appropriate laws to prevent offenses against any of the provisions of this section."

The sweeping character of this amendment will be seen when it is noted that by it the Legislature is enjoined from enacting any law by which gambling is permitted in any form, whether lottery, policy, race-track, or other, and is also directed to provide for the enforcement of such laws as may be enacted or are already upon the statute-books prohibiting this evil, thus declared unconstitutional.

It is to us a reason for congratulation that this amendment, which has been approved by a majority of the people of New York State, will render impossible that inconsistency and immorality which have been characteristic of many Churches in their conduct of so-called "fairs," generally falsely named, and which have served to bring into disrepute the entire Church of Christ. There is no more reason why gambling should have a place in a Church than in a "hell." Certainly the association with a good end does not justify or sanctify it. It is iniquitous in itself and harmful in all its results It really serves no "good end." Whatever the proceeds from it may be in a financial way, they have upon them the stain of the blood of wounded souls, a stain that is inerasable. No profit could ever accrue from anything thus polluted.

We rejoice that the amendment has commended itself to the majority of the voters of the State of New York, and hope that other States may be encouraged by its example and experience to utter in equally forcible language their prohibition of an evil the natural products of which, as a contemporary truly says, "are embezzlement, penury, State prison, and suicide."

Tardy Recognition.

It is one occasion of satisfaction to The Homiletic Review that from the first it has stood by Dr. Parkhurst in his manful efforts to secure the purification of the political condition of the metropolis, and that now, in the hour of his triumph, it can, without inconsistency, extend to him its sincerest congratulations. When it is remembered with what rancor he was at first assailed by an unsympathetic pulpit and a truculent press, and how, through the fires of an adverse criticism, he patiently pursued his way until at last he has come to be gratefully recognized as the "model citizen" of the city for which he has done so much, it is a pleasing recollection that no word that has appeared in these pages needs to be recalled with regret. It has been with something of amusement and pity combined we have watched certain representative journals forsaking the position once occupied by them in relation to the work of Dr. Parkhurst and joining the ranks of those who have stood beside him from the first. Here, for example,

is the *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, whose sharp eyes are ever open to detect the derelictions or imperfections of ministers as its quill is to record them. Two years since—December 1, 1892—in an editorial on "The Business of Ministers," it made these statements:

"They—ministers—are at liberty, if they will, to go out of their pulpits in order to engage in spasmodic special reforms, to lead organized movements against this, that, or the other vice or folly. Of course the wise and consistent clergymen . . . hold aloof from such outside activities. The conclusion always justifies them in refraining. Take the case of Dr. Parkhurst, whose performances attracted much attention for a few days some time ago."

"The conclusion always justifies them in refraining;" "attention for a few days." And yet the day following the recent election this same journal, in an equally conspicuous editorial, gives expression to these eulogistic sentiments:

"Primarily, the result reflects the greatest honor and credit on Charles H. Parkhurst. He has been its flaming Evangel from the moment he began his great work until this stage of his uncompleted but oh! so splendidly vindicated labor. Tammany could not be attacked as a fortress of politics by political stormers. Politically, the fortress was simply impregnable. Politically, the stormers would not have been greatly superior to those attacked. The moral conscience of the metropolis had to be aroused, and Dr. Parkhurst aroused it by showing the relation between government and crime in New York. He had to show that in ways that were unmistakable."

A tardy but just recognition! A slow repentance is better than none. Dr. Parkhurst has been the one who has chased a thousand. He has put the armies of the aliens to flight.

Entrenched though they were behind fortifications as impregnable as an almost perfect organization could construct confident in their absolute security, defiant of the popular will as they were heedless of the divine, these sons of strangers, indifferent to all interests save their own, brought their wicked devices to pass, and sneeringly inquired, in the language of one of their old leaders, "What are you going to do about it?" And the general public, as stupidly inert and inefficient as Israel's army of old in the presence of the Philistine giant, listened to the defiance supinely and cravenly until he came whose name is upon all lips to-day, a man with sufficient faith in God and in the right to essay the combat alone. Inspired by this faith, supported by a clear consciousness of obligation to God, to Himself, to a Christian constituency, and to the public at large, Dr. Parkhurst never wavered from the time he first entered upon the fight. While others talked he struggled. While those who should have assisted assailed him, he assailed the enemy. "With no selfish object in view, he performed an amount of labor which would have seemed Herculean to the most untiring politician who worked for personal gain. He endured the ridicule and abuse of the vicious, the suspicion of the narrow-minded, the fault-finding of the timid, the criticism of the querulous, and the supercilious patronage of politicians. He endured it all and he overcame it all. He worked for no prize but the approval of his own conscience." The prize which he did not seek has come to him, however. The "stripling" has become a nation's hero. Making himself of no reputation, the honor which is above reputation has been won by him. A press that criticized now crowns. A pulpit that was apathetic or antagonistic now applauds. The public that ridiculed now rewards with a proposed monument in bronze. The Union League offers an honorary membership. No honor is regarded beyond his meed. It is the old, old story of the cross and the crown: the story that, however old, is always true.

Let lovers of that which is pure and true and good take courage. The right must prevail, and the only might that is needed to bring the right to its enthronement is that of him who is ready to stand with God. "All things are possible to him that believeth."

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