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"One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren."

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THE

Canadian Independent.

(NEW SERIES.)

VOLUME I. 1882.

THE TWENTY-EIGHTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION.

REV. J. BURTON, B.D., EDITOR.

TORONTO:

THE CONGREGATIONAL PUBLISHING COMPANY.

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, PRINTER.

THE CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

CONTENTS:

	PAGE.		PAGE.
Association Meetings.....	85, 117	Lull's Search	208
Central	84, 371	Literary Notes.....	30, 56, 87, 118, 152, 184, 213, 248, 275, 307, 338, 371
Eastern	3, 6	Little Bells	209
Minas Basin	117	Mary Wood.....	209
St. Francis.....	85, 117	" Peace-makers	361
Western.....	294	Lonely Cottage by the Sea Shore	12
Assurance	236	Mission Notes.....	18, 48, 113, 146, 173, 211, 242, 247, 272, 312, 333, 393
Being Filled with the Spirit	172	Modern Steam Ships, Speed of	300
Burning out a Wasp's Nest.....	6	Mohammedan Messiah.....	299
Carlyle, Thomas.....	31, 63, 94, 127, 159, 191, 222, 256, 280, 319, 352, 383	Moth and Rust.....	75
Children's Corner.....	10, 49, 76, 104, 234, 263, 328	More Than You Know	271
Christ, Resume of Life	18	News of Churches	21, 52, 82, 115, 148, 176, 213, 245, 273, 304, 335, 397
Christ in the Temple	106	Obituaries.....	
Clement of Alexandria and Ephraem Syrus as Hymn-ists.....	139	Mr. Bridges	55
Congregationalism—Dr. Dale.....	85, 150, 178, 248, 275	Mr. S. Clime	85
—W. W. Smith	376	Mrs. Learmont.....	180
College.....	181	Mr. A. Christie.....	180
Correspondence.....	182	Mr. E. Gemmell.....	180
College	278	Official Notices	178, 215, 248, 275, 306
Congregationalism in Massachusetts	308	One of Life's Incidents.....	204
Mr. Savage	309	Poetry.....	
Mr. W. F. Clarke.....	339	After Sunset.....	280
A Reply	342, 373	All Right.....	22
Mr. Colwell.....	372	Autumn Flowers.....	57
Mr. C. Duff.....	343, 374, 376	Church and World.....	50
Mr. T. Hale	181	Day unto Day.....	365
Missionary Collections.....	182	Evening Hymn	269
Chub.....	42	From Out the Shadows	339
Dr. Dod's Sermon on Malt.....	126	Kingdest Kings.....	300
Domestic Receipts	331	Longfellow.....	175
Daughter Worth Having, A.....	141	Last Hymn.....	318
Dream, My	46	Lay of the Times	303
Diamond Breastpin.....	1, 33, 65, 97, 129, 161, 193, 225, 257, 289, 321, 353	Marriage Hymn	126
Editorial Jottings	171	Mortgage Always With You.....	94
Esther's Opportunity	8	Over the River	94
Faith's Roll Call.....	37	Sending a Valentine.....	81
Abel	70	Simple Church	301
Enoch	133	Skeleton, Lines on a.....	208
Noah	167	Song of Night	80
Abraham	201	The Harvest is Past.....	173
Isaac	231	Wild Roses	112
Jacob	260	Practice vs. Preaching	144
Joseph.....	291	Pocahontas.....	363
Moses	325	Post Mortem Religion	80
Rahab.....	358	Pre-umpuous Faith	80
Judges.....	22	Prize Essay on Missions.....	377
Samuel.....	332	Restoring Solomon's Temple	57
David	81	Russia under Nicolas, A Tale.....	329
Faith Cure	264	Romances, Two, not tragic	237
Good Advice	7	Sermons.....	136, 194
Good Taste	142	Straight by the Cross	22
God Loves the Sinner	301	Slighted Scholar	78
Havergal, F. R.	22	Stewart's, A. T., Charity Failure	2, 0
Hard Times Conquered.....	297	Success.....	300
Henry's, Philip, Dedication	169	The Other Rule.....	43
Immortality, Egyptian Idea of.....	210	Three Scenes.....	111
Independency, Historical	158	Theatre, To Give or Not.....	210
Weakness of.....	250	Teachers and Workers.....	170
Irreverence.....	281, 311, 346, 379	Union Notes.....	
Ladies' H. N. Society	377	Ontario and Quebec.....	151, 194
Lesson Notes.....	24, 58, 89, 119, 153, 185, 216, 250, 281, 311, 346, 379	Nova Scotia and New Brunswick	245
Letter to Boarding-house Keepers.....	377	Mr. Alex. MacGregor's Address	265, 294
		Australia.....	149
		Wasted Life.....	205
		Work that Will Last	149
		Words of Cheer.....	170

THE CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

(NEW SERIES.)

Vol. I.]

TORONTO, JANUARY, 1882.

[No. 1.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

The year which has just closed is red-lettered in the annals of British Congregationalism. It has witnessed the Jubilee gathering of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, which in its enthusiasm and success has witnessed to the strength of our principles in the old land. The Jubilee Fund for wiping out church debts and increasing general efficiency is a new departure in the right direction, and the best wish we can utter for our New Year's greeting to our Canadian churches is, "Go thou and do likewise." In all departments business seems improving. This is a propitious time for us to hear the inspiring word, "Tell the children of Israel that they go forward." Will our churches take that as their New Year's motto, and in the name of the Lord set up their banners?

There may be expected from me, in assuming the Editorship of the "Monthly," some explanatory words. I have none to give. The responsibility has slipped upon me unsought, I shall endeavour to do my duty trusting in God and His truth, remembering the avowed principles of the Congregational Union of Canada, which I serve, and that no justification can be urged for the Editor of a religious and denominational paper seeking to make prominent his own personality rather than Christ and His cause. I have really no more to say, but wish my readers all, aged and vigorous, feeble and sad, young men, maidens and children, a truly happy and God-blessed New Year.

As these lines fall under the reader's eye, 1881 will be all but, if not entirely, passed away. Not, however, its history and its results. How, dear reader, does it leave you? Nearer the Father's house, where many mansions be? or still a prodigal, far from

home? Ponder well that inquiry, for we may each be nearer our account than we think.

Some notable names have passed into the shadowy lines of the never-to-be-recalled year. Among those memories we may yet linger. Thomas Carlyle has entered the Immensities whose mysteries he pondered. Here he could discover no better faith than that he learnt at his mother's knee. He knows now its purity and strength. Lord Beaconsfield, too, has gone where "Jingo" policy avails nought. Brilliant and marvellous was his career—from being the son of a *litterateur* to be the leader and master of Britain's proud and titled aristocracy. His life reads like a romance, and his personal influence seemed marvellous. The grave is too green yet for an impartial verdict upon his statesmanship. It may be questioned, however, whether without Disraeli's sharp wit Beaconsfield had ever been. Yet we cannot forget his chivalrous devotion to his only wife, and are constrained to feel that under the impassive exterior often genial fires were burning. Dean Stanley also has gone during the months of the year—a man claimed by the entire Christian Church; and yet what sectional Church can claim him as the champion of its creed? No man has done more by purity of life and culture to commend Broad Churchism to the sympathies of the many.

Nonconformists mourn the silence of Morley Panshon's eloquence, the loss of the practical common sense and philanthropic impetus of Sir Charles Reed, and the energy of Edward Miall, men that had faithfully served God by serving their day and generation ere they fell asleep. May some of the rear rank step in to the vacant places, and worthily fill them!

The year has witnessed two notable assassinations—the autocrat Czar of all the Russias, whose word was law to his millions, and the chief magistrate of the most democratic of nations—the President of the United States: the

one by conspiracy, deep-seated and dark; the other by a wild miscerant's hand. Earth's highest honours bring their dangers and their cares.

Turning to other themes, the Revised New Testament, which must mark an era in English-speaking communities, has been put forth, and is silently but effectually doing its work. The unprecedented interest aroused as it was issued has settled down into a calm acceptance of it as a valuable contribution to a correct knowledge of the Word of God. The Jubilee gathering of the Congregational Union of England and the Ecumenical Council of Methodism have brought the ends of the earth together, and contributed much to that catholicity of feeling towards which we trust Christianity is tending. May the incoming year reap abundantly resultant blessings!

Meantime we are reminded of some lines of Bonar:—

"It travels onward, this old world of ours,
Bending beneath the weight of years and hours;
Mark its grey hairs, and note its failing powers;
Vigilate!

"Like leaves from some unknown, mysterious tree
Above our reach, its moments silently
Are dropping from a far Eternity;
Vigilate!"

THE Free Church of Scotland, through its "Commission of Assembly," has committed itself to an active agitation for the dissolution of the present connection between Church and State in Scotland. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 125 to 20.

It is a matter of some doubt as to how far this movement will aid our Nonconformist brethren in England. The Free Church of Scotland, as a Church, is not opposed to Establishments, holding still in some vague form the duty of the civil magistrate to not only rule in the fear of God, but also to extend the Gospel message. The agitation, therefore, is avowedly not against Establishments, but against the establishment of a Church which is not the Church of the majority. As the *Scotsman* puts it, there does seem fear lest the Established Church should soon be again that of the majority, and a desire to anticipate that consummation, in other words, a race between parties rather than a struggle for principle.

We can readily understand the principle

that Established Churches are wrong, or at least so highly inexpedient as to be virtually unjust, which is the position of our English brethren, and can cordially sympathise with them in fighting for disestablishment on that line. We know the blessedness of a Free Church in a free State; we confess to a little haziness in understanding the position of Principal Rainey and his friends, who are struggling apparently for disestablishment chiefly because theirs is not the established denomination. However, the Free Church is fully committed to the question, and the importance of that fact is not readily overestimated. The discussion eventually will do honour to the principle.

COWPER sang "God made the country, man made the town;" and certainly city life, which so many place as the acme of their social aim, is not without its serious drawbacks when viewed in the light of God's eternity. The *North British Mail* had recently a remarkable article, in which it is asserted that the attendance at church in Glasgow is diminishing, and that betting and theatre-going are largely on the increase. It looks as though we were threatened with a new irruption of barbarism from within. We suspect this experience is shared in other cities, and it becomes the Churches to realize that not yet is the day passed when men are called to suffer for righteousness sake.

DR. THOMAS, of Chicago, an acknowledged Christian minister, has been excluded from the Methodist pulpit for unsound views. The case seems to have come to a sudden and rather unexpected end. It will be remembered that his trial for non-Methodist teaching had passed the earliest two stages, with the result of his being convicted by the Rock River Conference of unsoundness in regard to the doctrines of the atonement and the future punishment of those dying impenitent, and expelled from the Methodist ministry therefore; and that he had appealed for a revision of this judgment to the next higher court, called the Judicial Conference. That body has just met at Terra Haute, and, by the very decided vote of fifteen to four, has declined to entertain his appeal, on the ground that Dr. Thomas has been guilty of contempt

towards the Methodist discipline by so far disregarding his excision from the ministry as to continue to preach as if that exclusion were of no account and that he is not therefore entitled to take appeal. We scarcely see how any different decision could have been reached. If Dr. Thomas proposes to avail himself of Methodist privileges, he must be a Methodist. But he cannot be a Methodist while conspicuously trampling upon Methodism in its supreme functions. Albert Barnes was wiser in his generation. He never entered a pulpit while Presbyterian censure rested upon him. In connection with this circumstance, the following remarks by Mr. R. W. Dale, of Birmingham, in the *British Quarterly*, on doctrinal system imposed by subscriptions, may not be out of place: "Theological definitions are the product of the human intellect exercising its faculties on the contents of Holy Scripture and of the spiritual life of the Church. These definitions vary from age to age, even when the truths which they are intended to express remain the same, and it is impossible to review the history of Christendom without seeing that in different churches and in different centuries devout and saintly men have greatly differed in the measures of their knowledge of the mind of Christ. Provinces of truth which were the home of Christian thought in one century have been deserted in the next. Regions almost unknown in one age, except to adventurous travellers, have been occupied and settled by whole communities in another. There is no reason for us to suppose that we have completely mastered the whole territory of divine laws and facts accessible to the Church through Christ. There is no reason for us to suppose that our definitions of the truth which we have mastered are so perfect that they will be tolerable to Christian men a hundred years hence. We know Christ; His righteousness, power, and love have been revealed to us, but the accuracy of our intellectual account of Him is not guaranteed by the clearness of our spiritual vision, and the depth and fullness of our spiritual joy. The Church is not infallible, but, if loyal to Christ, its knowledge of Him will become richer and deeper from century to century; and it is the theory of Congregationalism that the Church should be left absolutely free to listen to Christ's teaching

and to accept it. With fresh discoveries of the divine thought, the mere scientific definitions of truths long known to the Church may require modification."

MR. SAMUEL MORLEY has, as many Englishmen have done, visited North America on the United States side, and virtually given the impressions formed there as impressions regarding America. True, our friends at present in the United States outnumber us ten to one; and knowing how to make the most of their real greatness and magnificent country, do bring a glamour over the eyes of our English brethren; notwithstanding which we do feel some little cause exists for the feeling that Mr. Morley might have made some acquaintance with our means, position and prospects, ere he returned to the fatherland, and done some justice to the aspiring colony.

BRITISH Nonconformists are making a great mistake politically in not more fully acquainting themselves with the position and capacities of Canada whilst still in loyal union with the old land; and religiously they are coming far short of privilege and responsibility in not extending a much deeper and intelligent sympathy to their sister and struggling churches here. Canada with its north-west is yet destined to become a national power, in the near future, and British Nonconformists may find themselves engaged already in more fruitless missions than spending means and mind upon the growing Dominion. Even England needs some more enlightenment on colonial matters.

THIS is the way Mr. Spurgeon takes off the Anglo-Israel theorists:—"The Irish are more Israelites than the English are. They are from Mesopotamia. You have only to read Meso-PAT-ania, and you have Pat. Was not Terah the father of Abraham? And is not the Irish song, 'The harp that once through Tara's hall?' How are the English proved to be identical with the ten tribes? Why, by leaving out the *I* in Isaac you have *Saac*—that is, the Saxons! This is a specimen of the precious nonsense that is being peddled about by interpreting pedlars. Thus have we endeavoured to hit flying folly by showing you that in this way you may prove anything."

PROFESSOR CHRISTLIEB, of Bonn, has been visiting Scotland. He records the gratifying fact that in Germany, where, a generation ago, there was a comparatively small percentage of evangelical preachers, about seventy per cent. of the pastors may now be said to be evangelical. There were many things in Germany which earnest men could not but deplore, such as the sad want of Sabbath observance, and the lack of anything like general attendance at public worship in such cities as Berlin. There is too great a tendency to see only the evils that exist, and a want of knowledge and appreciation of the hopeful indications that are to be met with, though not heard of, at hotels frequented by travellers, and to be known only by those who themselves mingle with the more earnest classes of the people.

In connection with this may be noted the case of Rev. O. B. Frothingham, of Jersey City, who for many years has been a leader in the "Free Religious Movement," even Unitarianism being too narrow for the liberty he desired. Mr. Frothingham is a man of unblemished reputation and acknowledged attainments. Two years ago he started on a European tour, and on returning declined to occupy a broad pulpit again, confessing meantime he can ascend no other. We quote a few of his confessions to a representative of a New York paper:—

"One fact began to loom up before my mental vision in a disquieting way—that the drift of free-thought teaching was unquestionably towards a dead materialism, which I have abhorred as deeply as any Evangelical clergyman I know."

"When I left New York for Europe, I believed and said that I might take up my work as pastor of an independent church when I got back. I may as well say now that I could not do it. I would not be able to teach as I did. * * * *"

"The creeds of to-day do not seem in my eyes to be so wholly groundless as they were then; and while I believe that the next hundred years will see great changes in them, I do not think they are destined to disappear. To sum up the whole matter, the work which I have been doing appears to *lead to nothing*, and may have been grounded upon mistaken premises; therefore, it is better to stop. But I do not want to give the impression that I

recant anything. I simply stop denying, and wait for more light."

We would not make too much of these extracts, but they are significant of the husk-like character of Agnosticism when the hungry soul would fain fill itself therewith. Moreover, the *frankness* of these utterances is instructive. Here is a man of undoubted ability, of broad culture, high position and attractive eloquence. Yet, after twenty years of earnest and determined labour, we meet the frank confession concerning all his teaching that it "*appears to lead to nothing*," and may have been grounded on mistaken premises!"

THE following, from the Boston *Congregationalist* (with a few verbal alterations), has some very simple but important and practical truths, indicating the line upon which the free churches may safely travel:—

No wise man can deny or ignore that there has been a great drift in the common theology of the churches. It could not be otherwise. Knowledge has advanced, Hebrew and Greek are better known than three hundred years ago, more codices have come to light, more ancient versions, while an enlarged acquaintance with the Greek and Latin fathers adds discrimination and value to their citations as evidence for the original text. Besides this, physical science has advanced, so that whatever sidelight shines upon spiritual truth from the natural world is more clear, exact and apposite than of old. Progress has been effected in psychology and ethics, giving better foundation for the subject as to what man really is in his springs of action and sources of responsibility; and in what sense and to what degree an infinitely just God must necessarily estimate him and exact service from him. All these things together combine to put us in possession of a truer understanding of the Divine nature; which nature must ever be the fundamental fact and starting-point in all our theology, whether looking Godward or manward.

In the face of these facts, to suppose that all the minute, exact and specific theological hypotheses, statements, and proof-texts which satisfied and edified our fathers of two or even of one hundred years ago, may and ought to as fully satisfy and edify us, is to assume

that their religious system was a special revelation of God, of which no evidence exists, which they never claimed; or to assume that the nature of true religion is such as to exempt it from the working of all ordinary laws governing the growth and development of mental and moral truth. Can any valid reason be given why we should conclude that the process of growth as applied to religious conceptions, which had been continuous up to a certain point, stopped? Why stop with Jonathan Edwards the younger, any more than with Grotius or Anselm? If Calvin were right in criticising the soteriology of Augustine, why may not Dr. Taylor have been right in criticising the soteriology of Calvin?

Surely the wise ground for the friends of Divine truth, even for those who are most attached to what they conceive to be the faith once delivered to the saints in its original integrity, is not to deny the possibility of progress in the interpretation of the ways of God to man, and to denounce as "heretics," and "unsound," all who seek a better voice to the real intent of Scripture by substituting formulae, more or less new, for those which have been for substance approved among the later generations of orthodox believers; but it is rather to apply to them and to their work that inspired test which will at once determine its value, and settle whether it be of God, or whether they speak from themselves. Grant that there are errors, and wild and wayward teachers. The same apostle who warned the people of God that "many false prophets are gone out into the world," and who charged them "believe not every spirit," was careful also to imply the fact that among the many false there would be some true, and in this view to command the saints to "prove the spirits, whether they are of God." When, then, one brother arises on this side, and another on that, to offer what he conceives to be an "improvement" in theology, the true course must be to meet him neither with suspicion nor inculpation, but to invite all such to measure themselves by that ancient rule "to the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." They have the right to speak. Others have equal right to hear and to judge. And "let all that ye do be done in love."

When new views are advanced, it is common

for the lovers of ancient ways to plead that there is danger, because there can be found no logical stopping-place this side of the grossest error. All stands on a sliding scale, and if the ancient orthodoxy of the Assembly's Catechism be departed from, and any concession whatever be made to this spirit of theological "improvement," their contention—at least their fear—is, that no sufficient reason can be given for making a stand again this side of absolute, if not unlimited, license. This forgets two things. It forgets, first, that the Assembly's Catechism, and the system of which it is the outgrowth and expression, was itself a theological novelty and "improvement," and, as such, was dreaded and deplored by the ultra-conservatives of the time; and it forgets that the standard of supreme appeal must always be the Word of God, illumined by His spirit, so that nothing can rightly claim our fealty which its truest interpretation supercedes, even though it may have been as life itself to the Church of Christ in its less enlightened experience.

To make the matter practical, here is orthodoxy surrounded on every hand by Unitarianism, Universalism and Nothingarianism, shading off into bare rationalism and naked infidelity; yet all parties claim to be "Evangelical" (sometimes those which seem the emptiest souls making the loudest claim). What can you do to save yourself if you move by a hair's breadth from the old mooring? We answer: You can test yourself and test them by that supreme authority whose judgment is always final. There is a point beyond which liberalism in Christianity cannot go, and claim its distinctive ground. That point we conceive to lie in the question of guilt and forgiveness. Is there such a thing as a sin which, as Paul says, is "*exceeding* sinful?" Does it require forgiveness? Is that forgiveness to be earned by man, or freely given by God? If the latter, is it granted because man asks it? by the stimulus of suffering? the allurements of good example? or is it the absolute gift of God for Christ's sake? These questions, honestly answered, settle the whole matter. He who holds and teaches that sin is merely mis-creation, mis-adjustment, misfortune—moral movement misplaced—and who, in consistence with that view, claims that a kind-hearted Father never can be "hard" upon his own offspring thus pitiably situated,

has no place in his theology for the incarnation, none for the cross and the great sacrifice. Such theology seems to us to have no place in the New Testament. The Evangelical doctrine is, that between the death on the cross and the forgiveness of human sin there is the relation of cause and effect. "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

There may be—there must be—tolerance of explanation as to these central and crucial evangelical facts; but it is of the essence of the Gospel, as Paul understood it, that "*through this man* is proclaimed unto you remission of sins, and *by Him* every one that believeth is justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses;" and that "ye that once were far off are made nigh *in the blood of Christ*," who came that "He might *reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby*;" so that "there is therefore now no condemnation to them *that are in Christ Jesus*."

We are ready to welcome as brothers in one Evangelical faith all men who hold, and love, and live by these fundamental truths, so long as in harmonizing and theorizing about them they impair not their essential vitality. We cannot fellowship those who disavow or ignore them.

THOMAS CARLYLE.*

The estimate formed of the sage of Chelsea has not been uniform; by many he has been placed in the first rank of influence and power among the writers and thinkers of the nineteenth century, whilst others believe his literary pretensions to have been vastly overstated, and that as a thinker and philosopher he possessed no such spiritual method as is likely to make his influence either precious or permanent. Certain is it, that had his literary executor, Mr. Froude, delayed till now the "Reminiscences," publishers had not reaped the harvest, nor the publication secured the readers which followed the early issue of the same. Most people are soon forgotten; it remains yet to be seen whether Thomas Carlyle

will be ere long virtually forgotten, bracketed with Jeffery and his coadjutors of the "Blue and Yellow," whose fate is to excite attention, wield an influence till the next number is on the table, and then to be bound for the library shelf, soon to be crowded into the dark corner, covered with dust and neglected.

Be that as it may, "No. 5 Cheyne Row" will for some time be a pilgrim shrine, and some knowledge of Thomas Carlyle a necessity to those who would not be ignorant of the forces and sentiments of the times in which they live. For our own part, we view Thomas Carlyle, not perhaps as a hero among his own heroes, but as one of the potent factors of the century in the regeneration towards which we believe society is tending—the impartor of a strong impulse to the moral activity of our day. We therefore gladly welcome such a biography as that of Mr. Wylie, which, with enthusiasm for its hero, never forgets that candour which is as conscious of blemishes as it is of worth. It would be difficult to find a writer more thoroughly in sympathy with his subject than Mr. Wylie, and at the same time so thoroughly true to the other world of life and feeling. We have Carlyle painted by a friendly hand; not the creation of the artist's sympathies, but Carlyle himself in loving, sympathetic lines. We have seldom read a more pleasing and instructive memoir.

The Carlyles are manifestly among the oldest families of Scotland, and before they came to Annandale were of one of the most powerful houses of Cumberland, preserving their large estates at the time of the Norman Conquest. By marriage they became allied to the royal house of Scotland, and were ever found with the chivalrous defenders of the king and his crown. Nevertheless, "greater than the proudest lord of Torthorwald is he who sprang from the ranks of the homely farmers of Hoddam."

The father was first a stonemason, then a small farmer, who by frugal industry laid by a little for a rainy day; the mother had been a domestic servant, early able to read, and who in advanced life set to work with praiseworthy diligence to learn how to write. The old man was evidently a character. There are premonitions of the son's hatred of shams in the story, if true, that when a mason, "he, in order to evince his contempt for a 'pup' who was pass-

* "Thomas Carlyle: The Man and his Books." By Wm. Howie Wylie. Marshall, Japp & Co., London, England.

ing, let fall upon him from the top of a ladder a huge mass of mortar." "Sic names he would gie to things and folks," said an old Scotch lady of the old man, indicative of a power the son inherited, and used with telling effect. "He could not tolerate anything fictions in books," said Thomas, "and walked as a man in the full presence of Heaven, and Hell, and the Judgment." A critic has suggested—specially of the latter two. Carlyle's mother, though poor, was a lady in spirit and bearing, active and careful with Martha, contemplative as Mary. Her gentleness did much to mellow the sterner features of the husband. The home was Christian after the old Scottish type, which, whatever men may think, has nurtured heroes indeed, and which, with its seeming harshness, is infinitely preferable to the namby-pamby Nothingism that is so sadly pervading hearts and homes in this agnostic day.

Carlyle's parents were Scottish Nonconformists, belonging to the Secession Church, which "had its origin in the attachment of the best part of the Scottish nature to two things, without which a true Church is simply impossible—*purity of doctrine and life, and freedom of administration.*" Yet the sage never professed Christ, as the churches in general judge of profession; perhaps the churches are wrong, and deserve the censure implied in some remarks which fell from an Edinburgh Nonconformist pulpit at his death—"It is said Carlyle did not attend church or chapel, which, if true, as it is only partially, need not be marvelled at when it is considered what both church and chapel have done to drive such men away from their doors." It may be that he belonged to a broader church than our short-sighted vision in general beholds. Can we really afford to allow such men to be esteemed "without"? Of blameless life, gifted with the rugged spirit of the prophets of old, claimed as he in fact has been since his death by the general voice of Christendom, no existing organized denomination would have admitted him to its ministry, scarcely to its membership.

His early struggles with scanty means, his indomitable Scotch endurance and pluck, his marriage with and tender reverence for the memory of one of Scotland's characteristic maidens, his indefatigable searching after every reliable hint that would enable him to

utter truth in his writings and nothing else, must be searched for and read in other pages than ours—in none more vividly than in the biography which has suggested this article. There, too, may be read how he died, not of any organic disease, but because life had gradually burnt itself out, and the vital power had gradually failed. Let us, however, listen to a few closing words:—

"Three nights ago, stepping out after midnight and looking up at the stars, which were clear and numerous, it struck me with a strange, new kind of feeling: 'In a little while I shall have seen you also for the last time, God Almighty's own theatre of Immensity, the Infinite made palpable and visible to me. That also will be closed and flung in my face, and I shall never behold it any more! The thought of this eternal deprivation, even of this, though this such a nothing in comparison, was sad and painful to me.' And then a second feeling rose in me: 'What if Omnipotence, that has developed in me these pieties, these reverences and infinite affections, should actually have said, "Yes, poor mortals, such of you as have gone so far shall be permitted to go further. Hope; despair not. God's will—God's will, not ours, be done."'"

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.*

Reminded by the little volume whose title is given in the foot-note, we would draw attention to one whose life was a "Ministry of Song," the echoes of which are not soon to die from the Christian ear. Miss Havergal had a double talent—music and song. She consecrated them both to the service of the Saviour whom she loved, for whom she toiled, and whose face in death she rejoiced in the hope of beholding. In her own sweet words the prayer of her life is expressed:—

"Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.
ALL FOR THEE."

A sympathetic critic has indicated from her poems several strongly-marked features of a Christian, and therefore of the noblest life, finding therein the secret of her power and suc-

* "Leaves of Life: Choice Poems by Frances Ridley Havergal." American Sunday School Union.

cess. This writer notices that her life was a life of FAITH in the true sense—not of a mere *credo*, but of *trust*, the trustful confidence of a child in a loving parent's care. Of Him whom her soul loved she sang—

"I could not do without Thee;
O, Saviour of the lost!
Whose precious blood redeemed me
At such tremendous cost.

"I could not do without Thee;
I could not stand alone;
I have no strength or goodness,
No wisdom of my own;
But Thou, beloved Saviour,
Art all in all to me;
And weakness will be power
If leaning hard on Thee."

Sympathy, too, was hers. In her poem on "The Ministry of Song," when she sings,

"In God's great field of labour
All work is not the same;
He hath a service for each one
Who loves His holy name."

she calls upon those "to whom the secrets of all sweet sounds are known" to rightly fulfil their "charge, of the Ministry of Song."

"Sing to the little children,
And they will listen well;
Sing grand and holy music,
For they can feel its spell!"

"Sing at the cottage bed-side;
They have no music there;
And the voice of praise is silent
After the voice of prayer.

"Sing to the tired and anxious;
It is yours to fling a ray,
Passing indeed, but cheering,
Across the rugged way.

"When you long to hear the Message
Home to some troubled breast,
Then sing with loving fervour,
'Come unto Me and rest.'"

Every line breathes sympathy. The lines we have italicised manifest how she could truly enter into others' wants and feelings; and thus she sang

PRAYER, PRAISE, and EVANGELICAL faith are also strongly marked features of her writings:

"I lay my prayer before Thee, and trusting in Thy Word.
Though all is silent in my heart, I know that Thou hast heard;
To that blest city lead me, Lord (still choosing all my way),
Where faith melts into vision as the starlight into day."

There is pure poetry in the last line—as pure as any Tennyson has written. How thoroughly consecrated was the talent to Him to whom prayer was made!

Miss Havergal struck also the jubilant chord:

"O, full of truth and grace,
Smile of Jehovah's face,
O, tenderest heart of love untold!
Who may Thy praise unfold?"

"Thee, Saviour, Lord of lords and King of kings,
Well may adoring seraphs hymn with veiling wings."

Evangelical truth is the scarlet line of every poem she has written. Would that every life could put forth its work with her dedication:

— "This — be Thine,
Filled only with Thy teachings, only filled
For Thee, and for the pilgrims to Thy home."

Her life was according to her songs, which in her case were not the outward seeming of an inward alienship, but the warm outgoings from the abundance of the heart. "The Teacher had taught her to 'abide' in Him, as the branch abides in the vine, and thus her life blossomed, and she brought forth fruit."

FAITH'S ROLL CALL.—I.

I. ABEL.—HEB. XI. 4.

The history of Abel is very brief; allusions few. They are all contained in the following passages: Gen. iv. 2-9, 25; Matt. xxiii. 35; Luke xi. 51; Heb. xi. 4, xii. 24; 1 John iii. 12.

From these notices must be gathered all that can be found authentic regarding the character whose name stands first in this roll call of faithful ones. Avoiding all speculation, we shall endeavour faithfully to read out from, not into, the records, the teachings they contain.

Interest first centres in Abel's sacrifice. In what respect did it differ from Cain's? You will notice that the act called "sacrifice" in Heb. is in Gen. iv. 4 called an "offering;" by the same term Cain's act of worship or homage is designated. There can be no doubt but that the word *minchah* is not the word (*zebach*) by which propitiatory sacrifice is usually designated, and is translated sacrifice in our version only (1. Kings xviii. 29-36; Ezra ix. 4, 5; Psalm cxli. 2.)

There is positively no indication in the records that the offerings Cain and Abel brought were looked upon as propitiatory, as the sacrifices upon the great day of atonement undoubtedly were; rather that they were simple acts of grateful acknowledgment to the All Father, whom they acknowledged as the author and giver of every good and blessing.

It has frequently been assumed that Abel's offering being of blood was in accord with a divine command, and *therefore* accepted, whilst Cain's being in disregard of that requirement was rejected. Thus a popular commentary: "This element of blood-shedding was that which Cain's sacrifice lacked, and his choice of such a bloodless offering, against the divine requirement, was his open profession that blood-shedding was not requisite, at least for him. He set up his own plan against God's, his own reason against faith, and, of course, he found no room in his system for the gospel of the Old Testament" (Jacobus *in loc.*), all of which is pure assumption, and against the express declaration of our text, "*By faith* Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which (faith) he had witness borne to him that he was righteous" (Comp. Rom. viii. 16): "And through it (that same faith) he being dead, yet speaketh." Here plainly the essential difference between the offerings is declared to be "faith" rather than the matter of the offering, and by that faith, which "is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen," Abel, though dead, from among the "great cloud of witnesses," "yet speaketh."

Revelation was manifestly progressive: to read Leviticus into these earlier records is a pure anachronism; nor can Heb. xii. 24 be read rightly as a parallel to ix. 13, 14.

Of Heb. xii. 24 two interpretations alone are tenable, according as the italicised words "*that of*" are retained or omitted. Retain them, and the contrast stands between the mount that burned with fire and the city of God's own home; between the blood that cried for vengeance (Gen. iv. 10, "the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground"), and the blood which seals the covenant of mercy. Not judgment but deliverance, not wrath but love, the blood of Jesus brings.

"Love that condemns the sinner's sin,
Yet, in condemning, pardon seals;
That saves from righteous wrath, and yet,
In saving, righteousness reveals."

Omit "*that of*" and read "better than Abel," the meaning seems to be that whilst Abel by his faith testifies, and thus strengthens, Jesus stands our *Paraclete*, giving life and power. I have dwelt somewhat particularly upon the interpretation of these few allusions to Abel's history, that we may be freed from those theological conceits which in great measure hide the simple lesson to be gathered by a consideration of him who, though dead, by faith still speaks—a simplicity so simple that our morbid wonder-craving cannot rest therein, and yet, by not resting therein, we miss the practical power of simple truth. For are not great forces also simple? In our school days we have wearied over some problem, the head has ached, the spirit been overtaken—one single word and the problem is solved. We wondered it did not occur to us at once, it was so simple, and yet that very simplicity was its mystery. We sought to fetch from far what was really at hand. Far-fetched theories are very apt to obscure the plain teaching of God's own word. Read in the light of Heb. xi. 4, we learn from (Gen. iv. 2-9, that the brothers worship the same God, are under the same revelation of His power and glory; they have, it would seem, the same seasons set apart for worship (for "in process of time" or at "the end of days" apparently points to a stated season—perhaps the weekly Sabbath); their manner of service, too, was the same—each brought of his own an offering to the Lord. We, however, soon trace a difference: Cain brought of the fruit, Abel the *firstlings* and the *fat* thereof. The faithless offerer is the same in all ages, and Mal. i. 8 is anticipated in Gen. iv. 3. It was to Cain a form, to Abel a grand reality, and therein lay the whole secret of the rejection of the one, the acceptance of the other. Cain's faith was a mere *credo*, wanting the living power. Abel *believed unto, on, in*. Cain was a mere ritualist; Abel a believer, and thus found favour with God—yea life—trust *in* Him.

Let us learn, then, the one simple lesson. The spirit in which we perform an act is the test in eternity's light of its acceptance or rejection, and the inward witness to ourselves of God's approving "well done." Even worship is an abomination where faith is not. [Isa. i. 14.]

Unto Abel and his offering God had respect. Imagination has been busy with guessing at the manner in which God showed respect. Was it, as in Elijah's case, by fire from heaven? How beside the mark all such suppositions are may be seen by noting closely the records. The respect (Gen. iv. 4) was not to the offering merely, but to Abel and his offering; and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews expressly states that by that faith with which he offered the more excellent sacrifice, he had witness borne to him that he was righteous. Abel's sign was the inward witness of a meek and quiet conscience, the possession of which is more than life itself. Cain lived; but a powerful pen has, without doubt, traced that life in the weird curse it puts in Eve's lips, as, distracted, she views the slain:—

"Hence, fratricide! henceforth that word is Cain,
Through all the myriads of mankind,
Who shall abhor thee, though thou wert their sire!
May the grass wither from thy feet! the woods
Deny thee shelter! earth a home! the dust
A grave! the sun its light! and heaven its God!"

And that hell must, sooner or later, reign in every breast that departeth from the living God; for though here conscience may and does slumber, we shall, sooner or later, see things as they are—the light of the throne reveals ourselves as well as our surroundings. And who can endure that revelation?

"Oh! the godless gloom
Of a life without sun, without health, without hope, without any delight;
Can anything upon earth lift? Ah, God that terrible night."

Abel's death was heaven; Cain's faithless life a hell. Faith, after all, is the only assurance which rests upon a rock. We talk of being sure of that which we see. Sure of what? Of fleeting clouds and changing earth; of fortunes tottering and life that a moment dashes into nothingness; of friends that are torn from our grasp; of an earth that is shaking to its centre, and for aught we know liable at any moment to be scattered as meteor dust along the abysmal path of heaven. Sure of nothing! unless faith lay hold upon a God unchangeable, and a word that comes from Him; and Abel had that faith even unto death. Ah! the assurance that faith brings, "Calm in the midst of storms." Stronger than woe or death is

that faith which, going out towards God, rests upon Him and finds continued confidence and peace therein.

Young men, is your life to be a life of faith or unbelief? Remember, faith ennobles every work—the sweeping of a warehouse, the sealing of a bargain, the lighting of a candle in a garret, the gas glare of a comfortable parlour. Not *where* but *what* you are; not *what* you do, but the spirit in which you do it, makes earth either heaven or hell—your life that of righteous Abel or that of vagabond Cain.

Remember, moreover, there are some controversies that can only be settled one way—that is those where truth is only on one side. Such is the controversy in your life between faith and unbelief. Life is only by faith in Jesus Christ, and you were not created for death; therefore we urge, end the controversy at once; live by faith in the Son of God; you may find Him *now*, and *here*, if but the clouds of prejudice and misapprehension are driven away. Thus life will in truth be worth living, and death be but the entrance to that "before the throne," where in perfect service God's servants shall serve Him, and He that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them, and God shall wipe away all tears from every eye.

A BRIEF RESUME OF THE LIFE OF JESUS.

I. THE NATION AND THE TIMES.

Rome was mistress of the world; Augustus ruled Rome. Never before or since has the sun risen on such an empire—shone on such a crown. Rome's rule may not have followed the course of the sun as we fondly dream the rule of Britain does, but the then historic world all owned the sway of the crown-wreathed Emperor of the seven-hilled city. Between Britain and her possessions other lands, tongues, peoples lie—other nations that can and do treat with her as equals. From the Pillars of Hercules to the Babylonian plains; from the inhospitable forests of Northern Europe and the Scythian wilds of Asia to the Sahara wastes; from the Cassiterides to the Orient one compact empire prevailed. The Mediterranean was a great inland Roman lake. Sweep where they would, the Roman galleys

could but touch on Roman shores. For a refugee, the then known world was a Roman prison. "Wherever you are, remember you are still within the power of your victor," said Cicero to a political exile. Beyond the frontiers of the empire—the ocean, deserts, barbarous unknown tribes, or dependent rulers, holding the sceptre at the will of the world's master. Cæsar's throne, like the exceeding high mountain, surveyed all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. Along the great radii of roads centring at the Golden Mile-post in the Roman Forum continually surged—to be laid at its feet—"the merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thynine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men."—Rev. xviii. 12, 13.

The empire was at peace. Seven hundred years of consolidation, conquest, power, of civil strife and bitter wars, had left their record; for the third time the Temple of Janus was closed; for two centuries it had stood continually open, during which relentless Rome had spread her conquests and led her legions to victory. No wonder the world sighed for peace—now even the Britons were at rest. In these halcyon days the angels sang o'er Bethlehem's plain the natal song of the long-expected Prince of Peace.

The Land of Promise was captive. Herod, an Idumean tyrant, Rome's nominee, reigned on the throne of David and over the destinies of Israel. Herod had married Mariamne, the last of the Maccabean line, whose noble achievements had endeared them to the entire Jewish people; he had also murdered her; and the vigour of his reign, the extravagant adornment of the Temple under his hands, could not remove from the patriotic heart the disgust of seeing a descendant of the hated Edomites and the outcast Ishmaelites reigning on Zion's Hill, and patron over Solomon's Temple.

For sixty years, through plots and desolating wars, the prize won by Augustus had been struggled for by rival generals. In the provinces, sides were taken as interest seemed

to dictate; Judea thus suffered many vicissitudes. The faction supreme in the East was destined to fall before the Western conqueror. Many were the political changes to curry favour with the rising power. Thus Israel was rent and demoralized. Had the Jews been united, they might have exerted a powerful influence; they were themselves torn asunder by factions, political and religious. Now, however, the hand of Augustus restrained all outbursts. Palestine shared the empire's peace, though embers were smouldering, soon to burst forth with consuming fire.

To the patriotic and reverent Jew the land was full of sad memories. Caves reminded of faithful men who there had been constrained to hide, desolate villages told sad tales of the conqueror's track. Even the Temple, unexcelled even by Solomon's, had not a Roman commander entered and thus polluted the most holy place? And the High Priest—what was he but the hireling puppet of the hated conqueror? Roman encampments, standards, custom-houses were everywhere; at no time were the people allowed to forget that they were a captive province. Bitterly gailed the Roman yoke.

Add to this spiritual destitution. The Pharisees sat in Moses' seat, walked the market-place with mincing step, looked pale and wan, and hid the law of truth under many childish but burdensome precepts. A ribbon sewed on a garment, thus becoming of a piece therewith, could be lawfully borne on the Sabbath day; but a ribbon worn, not thus fastened, was a burden, therefore a transgression. Truthfully has been penned an earnest enquirer's experience; it might be taken as having possible counterparts now: "When I sat in the school with the scribe, and heard his answers, and asked him questions, so long I seemed to myself righteous and on the path of righteousness; but when I came forth into the streets, or back to my mother's house, then seemed my righteousness immediately to have vanished away. At such seasons the learning of the wise seemed to me not bread, but a stone." There was then, what has too often appeared since, a separation practically allowed between religion and morality—outward conformity to rite and dogma exalted above purity of heart and life, so that it was possible for the worst men among them to be esteemed as the most religious (Matt xxiii. 15). The

Sadducees were rationalists in the broadest acceptance of that term. Rome, too, was more than pagan. In her senate-house, by the then Emperor and Pontifex Maximus, it had been avowed without contradiction that there was no immortality for man; indeed on that avowal had been based an argument against capital punishment being meted out to certain conspirators, as thereby their sufferings were only momentary, and adequate punishment would not be endured.

This, then, was the religious state of Palestine—the dominant political power was practically Atheistic under a pagan pretence. The leading religious school was that of the Pharisees, whose very name has become the synonym of all that is sectarian, proud, formal, hard and hypocritical. Wealth and culture was Saddusaic—that is, coldly sceptical, religiously indifferent. Was it to be wondered at that the Saviour's compassion (Matt. ix. 36) should go forth to such a people?

The state of the nation at Christ's advent has been thus epitomized: "A nation enslaved; the upper classes devoting themselves to selfishness, courtiership and scepticism; the teachers and chief professors of religion lost in mere shows of ceremonialism, and boasting themselves the favourites of God, while their souls were honeycombed with self-deception and vice; the body of the people misled by false ideals; and, seething at the bottom of society, a neglected mass of unblushing and unrestrained sin."

Yet were they the children of Abraham, heirs of the promises of God, upon which they dwelt with sullen bitterness as the ensigns of the Gentile power were ever present to their gaze. Moreover, was not the abomination of desolation in the holy place (Dan. ix.), and must not now Messiah the Prince appear? The expectation of Messiah was widespread. Roman writers bear testimony that not only among the Jews, but throughout the Orient, the expectation was general that some great deliverer was to come. What deliverance could the Jew hope for now, in his degradation, so earnestly as deliverance from the hated Roman yoke? The presentation of a Messiah who could simply point to a kingdom set up in the hearts and manifested by the lives of men was a revelation which would excite the scorn of the power-loving and Atheistic Roman, the bitter hostility of the form-loving

Pharisee, and would call forth bitter resentment from the people, whose one hope might thereby be doomed to disappointment. And yet the fullness of the time had come and Messiah's advent was at hand. At the acme of Roman triumph and power, in the bitterest hour of Israel's captivity, when what of religious life remained was formalism and bigotry, when Messianic hopes were all lowered to the expectation of a conqueror who would trail Rome's ensigns in the dust, and make Jerusalem the centre of a temporal kingdom more destructive than even Rome had been, then—in a moment when the world, weary of strife, had sheathed the sword of offence and of defence—Christ Jesus came, a root out of a dry ground, despised and rejected, to preach peace to those afar off and nigh, and give everywhere access to God and the Father in Himself.

THE LONELY COTTAGE BY THE SEA-SHORE.

BY MRS. ALEXANDER THOMSON.

Many years ago, in one of the large islands in the North, resided a worthy couple, a man and his wife. He had in early life been a sailor, but was then a fisherman, the owner of a boat, a cottage with a small garden, and a piece of ground in which he grew corn, oats, and potatoes. He was a good man, honest and true, industrious and sober. Together he and his wife earned a comfortable living, and were able to lay by year by year a small sum of money which would be useful to them when old age and its infirmities might prevent their usual employment. She attended to the breeding of poultry, sale of eggs, knitting of stockings and making of fishing nets, which they bartered at stated times when the boats visited the island. The cottage was a lonely one by the sea-shore; it was bordered by a narrow strip of green land, gradually rising from the sea, which sheltered it from the violence of the wind and waves in stormy weather. Beyond the cottage was a narrow path leading up to a glen of great beauty, though dark and sombre when not illumined by the sunlight. Sweet flowers bloomed in endless variety. There were to be seen the tall and kingly foxglove, meadow-sweet, mountain pansies, the lowly daisy, the lovely blue bell, wild roses and honeysuckle mingling with the various ferns, gorse, and purple heather, with "love's own true flower, forget-me-not," making a picture which one would ever pause to gaze upon. Nor was the silver stream wanting to add its murmuring music as it left its mountain home and wandered to the sea.

The lofty hills rose in the back-ground, giving a solemn sadness to the view, the mountain ash and

sweet-scented pines grew in rich abundance on the rugged steep, and as you looked back upon the various heights, and then upon the jutting headlands and caught the crimson glow of the golden sunset, the heart responded to the beauty of the scene and blessed God for the world which He had made so lovely, and crowned with His goodness.

In this quiet retired spot lived this worthy couple, he a man of fifty years, his wife somewhat younger; one child had been born to them in their early married life, but died in infancy; they grieved for the lost little one, but never murmured, for it was "the Lord's will;" that sufficed for Archie and Elspeth Cameron.

We will look in upon them as they sat one evening by the bright peat fire: a small oil lamp lighted up the room, Elspeth sitting with her knitting, while her husband was mending a net. It was the end of October, the day had been fine, but its beauty had faded; a low, murmuring sound reached them from the sea; suddenly a loud clap of thunder shook the cottage, and down came the rain in torrents, the wind rising as it were in a moment.

"'Twill be a wild nicht, the nicht, Elspeth."

"Aye, aye, wild eneuch the noo; pray God there may be no ship near us the nicht."

Just then a loud rap came to the door, and a friend of Archie's, a shepherd, entered.

"What a nicht; the storm is fearful."

"Tak' a seat, my man, ye canna' win hame the nicht; we can gie ye shelter."

The shepherd took off his plaid and wet clothes, and changed them for the dry ones Archie gave him.

Elspeth busied herself to prepare the evening meal: very homely but kindly she looked, neatly dressed in the short gown over a thick woollen petticoat, a coarse wincey apron, and a clean white mutch with the black hood shewing her comely face, the simple dress of the Scottish women worn at that period. The meal was served and ended, and the two men went out to look upon the sea, while Elspeth prepared the bed for the shepherd. They quickly returned, for they saw that it was in vain for them to weather the storm.

"I will stay wi' ye till to-morrow's morn, and gladly," said Jem; "it is a wild nicht for man and beast."

"God grant that there may no' be a ship near in the storm the nicht," again said Elspeth.

"A large one was nigh upon the headland this morn; she was beating up the channel. Maybe she has got into shelter by noo," said Jem.

The Bible was brought out, Archie devoutly read a portion, the psalm was sung, and earnestly did the good man commend themselves and all who might be exposed to the violence of the storm to the care and protection of their heavenly Father.

The morning rose bright and cloudless; all appear-

ance of the storm had passed away. The two men walked down to the shore, launched the boat and went to examine the fishing nets which were out in the bay. They had taken the fish, had again baited the lines and cast them into the sea, and were returning home, when at a short distance they saw something floating upon the water. At one glance they both discovered what it was and rowed towards it. It was the body of a fair young girl fastened to a spar, with an infant folded in her arms. They quickly brought her to the shore; the babe was wrapped round with a large silken scarf, the mother's arms still tightly clasped around it. To fetch his wife was but the work of a moment; they unwrapped the little one; it opened its eyes and began to weep bitterly. The mother was dead. Her golden hair was dank with the sea-foam, and her sweet blue eyes would never again unclose on this side the grave.

There was no mark to tell who she was, nor whence she had come, nor whither she was bound; upon her hand was a wedding ring, and another of antique form with diamonds and opals of priceless value; the silken scarf, inwrought with gold, which had bound the mother and child together; and round her neck a small handkerchief with the name of Margaret upon it, was all there was left to tell to strangers who she was, and what was her name.

The minister of the parish came to the cottage and offered all the help he could, but Archie and Elspeth Cameron determined to keep the babe until it was claimed by the relatives, should they be found. It was as a message borne to them from the sea, "Take this child and nurse it for Me."

That it was of gentle birth was evident by the texture of the clothes upon the young mother and infant, but no other trace was found. A large vessel afterwards was known to have struck upon the rocks, foundered, and all were lost. The mother was buried, a simple headstone placed upon her grave, with—

Margaret.

LOST AT SEA.

OCTOBER, 17—.

The baby throve under the kindly care of Elspeth, the clothes and rings were carefully preserved, and the story was soon a thing of the past.

The child was named Margaret for its dead mother's sake. She grew up very lovely and healthy, sweet and gentle, but bright and joyous as a bird; the sea was her delight, and to ramble among the hills and through the pine woods was her constant joy. But Archie and Elspeth Cameron never forgot that she was not "one of themselves," and fondly did they hope that at some future time she might be restored to those from whom, through God's mysterious provi-

dence, she had been severed. No coarse garments were ever placed upon her, no menial service was ever required from her, and while allowing her to call them father and mother, and acting towards her in that endearing relationship, "the little lady" seemed to stand alone. The good minister superintended her education, and his kind wife instructed her in many feminine employments. Very fair and beautiful, she was graceful as a fawn, with dark blue eyes and golden hair. Thus lived the little lady at the Lonely Cottage by the Sea-shore.

Fifteen years had passed away since the little stranger from the sea had been saved by the kindly care of Archie and Elspeth Cameron. The good minister died, and his wife was leaving the island to go and reside with her friends in Edinburgh. She felt that it was no longer right that the child should be kept in ignorance of the facts connected with her history, for the time might soon come when she would be deprived of her trusted friends, who were no longer young, and then she would be left to do battle with the world alone. One day they told her the story of the wreck and her mother's death and burial; they gave to her the only things that belonged to her. She gazed upon them in silence; large unshed tears filled her eyes; she spoke not a word, but went quietly to her own room. She came down in the morning in a sort of stupor; utter hopelessness and weariness seemed to have taken hold upon her. She wandered down to the shore, and gazed far out upon the sea, while a yearning anguish of pain rent her heart. She felt utterly alone; those dear friends she could no longer look upon as parents, and a bitter cry escaped her lips, "My God! oh, be Thou my Father and my Friend; I will be Thy child. Have pity, have pity upon me!" Was it not heard by the Father of her spirit, to whom such a prayer was never offered in vain? The Comforter came down and soothed her breaking heart. She returned to her humble home, and though a great change had passed upon her, she was soon again bright and happy.

The winter passed; spring with all its beauty again gladdened the earth. Margaret had been wandering up the glen, and was returning home laden with her favourite flowers, when she observed two strangers, an elderly and a young man, coming from the cottage. They asked for Archie Cameron, as they wished him to take them out in his boat. She accompanied them to the shore, and it was arranged that Archie should take them in the evening to fish—Margaret to steer, as she was wont to do. They were much pleased with the intelligence of the old man, who freely entered into conversation with them, and with Margaret, who told them where the rare plants and ferns were to be found; and upon the following day she and the fisherman accompanied the strangers in a ramble up the glen

and mountain, and they all returned to a simple repast prepared by Elspeth.

The young man was an artist; he was much struck by the beauty of the girl, and begged Elspeth to allow him to make a sketch of her, to which she consented.

"What a vision of beauty and grace," he said, as he laid the drawing upon the table on which the hostess of the little inn was placing their supper. "Do you know the young girl who lives at Archie Cameron's Cottage; is she his daughter?"

The woman quickly replied that she knew her well, and then related to them the story of Margaret's life, and what the worthy couple had done for her.

The following day they left the island to return home. They may have thought as they passed away from its lovely scenes, and in the dim distance saw the roof of the lowly cottage where this young girl lived whose history had just been told to them, and filled them with so much interest, how glad would they be if their chance visit to this secluded spot should one day lead to the unravelling of this mystery, for they would carry the story with them to the distant city where they were going. *Chance visit!* Oh! unworthy thought! There cannot be, there is not, such a thing as *chance* in this world of ours, where an overruling Providence is ever around us, and God's Almighty power encircling us on every hand. We have but to "wait His time," to be willing like little children to be led by our Father's hand, and what is now dark will be made light, and in that light we shall rejoice.

Reclining upon a couch in an elegant room in the city of Edinburgh was a man in the prime of life; sickness had wasted his manly form, the hue of health had long since left his countenance; the enervating climate of India, but still more the one great sorrow of his life, had done its work; and though surrounded by wealth and all that could minister to his present enjoyment, he was there with nothing to cheer, nothing to comfort him. He laid down the book whose leaves he had been listlessly turning, and with a deep sigh turned his weary eyes to the portrait of his wife, whom he had loved so well and so early lost. There she stood in all her youth and beauty as it were, from those deep blue eyes looking down in pity upon him; her golden hair floating like a veil around her, her hand resting upon the head of her favourite hound, the ring he had given her as a pledge of his affection represented there. "Margaret, Margaret," broke from his quivering lips, and a flood of tears burst from his eyes, for much as he deplored her loss, the horror of her untimely fate had still more told heavily upon him. He had returned from India a short time before, and made a home in the city where his widowed sister resided. She was well known as a woman of deep piety and charitable deeds, and now much of her brother's wealth was at her disposal. She grieved over

his saddened life, and tried to soothe him by her gentle counsel, but his heart was crushed by his sorrow; he could not believe that "it was not in cruelty—not in wrath" that God had afflicted him. Ever present to his inward sight was the form of his beloved wife with her infant folded in her arms as he last saw her on the deck of the homeward-bound vessel returning to her native land; since that all was a blank. Like one of old he could only say—"All these things are against me."

A stranger was announced, and accompanied by a lady in deep mourning entered the library. He saw an expression of surprise pass across the face of the lady as she withdrew her veil and involuntarily looked upon the only portrait in the room. The gentleman soon told his tale, the facts of which were confirmed by the lady, who was the minister's widow, and had seen both mother and child when they were taken from the sea; the artist's sketch was produced, which bore a striking likeness to the portrait of her mother; the ring itself was to be a sufficient proof of their identity. Communication was made with Archie and Elspeth Cameron, and the father and his child were reunited. It was in vain that he offered another home to the worthy couple; much as they felt the parting from the child they had loved and cherished so long, their simple habits could not be changed, and they clung with loving fondness to their island home. They had trained this child for the Lord, and they knew the Lord was calling her from them to place her in another home where she would have duties to perform far greater than any that could be rendered in their humble sphere.

It was Margaret's last evening in her island home; her father allowed her to spend it in the fisherman's cottage. She went out alone, visited her mother's lowly grave, and passed onwards to her favourite walk along the glen. She rested herself upon the trunk of a fallen tree, and looked earnestly upon the scene she was so soon to leave, the place which never again could be her home. It was very dear to her, that lonely cottage by the sea; there she had lived all her young life; there she had been cherished,—oh, with what tender care!—by those simple pious friends, who to her had been father and mother. She knew that she was leaving them to enter upon new scenes far different from those through which her childhood's days had been passed. How well she remembered the day and the hour when she cried to God and asked Him to be her Father and her Friend, and her young heart once more looked to Him in loving reverence and trusting faith. "I will be Thy child; oh! be Thou my Father." Solemnly did she devote herself to His service; she felt her faith strengthened, and her heart at peace. She arose; the sun had gone down behind the mountain; a golden glory was upon both land and

sea, the air was soft and balmy, filled with the odour of sweet-scented pines; she still lingered. All was silent, even the little birds were still; in the distance might at times be heard the rise and fall of the tiny waves, as they broke upon the shore; a gentle breeze stirred the tops of the trees, and the hum of a tired wild bee passed by her as it was returning to its home in the distant wood; the silver stream sang to her a parting farewell. The silence was very solemn, as one by one stole out the stars in the darkening sky. A sweet feeling of gratitude and thankfulness filled her young heart as she whispered to herself, "The Lord has been very gracious to me; my whole life shall be devoted to His service."

Many years have passed since that night. There in all their grandeur still rise the noble hills that adorn this island; the deep and sombre glen is there in all its unaltered beauty; the silver stream is still wandering to the sea, fit emblem of our mortal life; sweet flowers are still blooming and shedding their fragrance around; but the cottage is no longer there, no representatives of the worthy fisherman and his wife are living now. But is all gone? has all passed away as a nightly dream? Ah! no; good works and noble deeds never die! Far away from the island went that lovely girl to shed her influence in another and far different home. Wealth was hers, and as years rolled on that wealth was consecrated to God's service in feeding the hungry, clothing the destitute, spreading the truths of the Gospel, and exemplifying in her life and character its living power. Of her it might well be said, "When the ear heard, then it blessed" her, and "when the eye saw, it gave witness" to her, because "she delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him." Such was her life; very happy was she in her home; an honoured wife, a happy mother. Once only did she revisit that spot, together with her husband and children. With tears of gratitude and joy did she point them to the place where she was rescued from the sea, and taken from the dead arms of her mother; and then over again did she there tell them the simple story of her childhood's years in the "Lonely Cottage by the Sea-shore."

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA AND EPHRAEM SYRUS AS HYMNISTS.

BY FREDERICK S. WILLIAMS.

Alexandria—now little more than a huge hotel and port on the overland route—once sat proudly by the blue Mediterranean sea, a queen among the cities. The stately buildings told how to Egyptian massiveness had been added the luxury and chasteness of Grecian art, while all around these palaces were gardens, groves, alcoves, flowers, and statues. Foreigners from every land thronged the streets, and spoke every

language of the then known world, from that of the barbaric Goths from the Black Forest to that of the glossy negro slaves who basked in the sun in the market. By day the white quays on the beach, and by night the blazing flame that gleamed from the Pharos and flung its beacon light far across the sea, bade welcome the fleets of the world, and the harbour of Eumostus was crowded with countless masts—from that of the gaudily painted barge, to the ships which were loading their many decks with costly manufactures of linen, paper, and glass, with Oriental merchandise, and with corn from the valley of the Nile which lay beneath that ramless sky in huge unsheltered heaps.

The city of Alexandria was the home not only of merchants and men of money, but also of those who ruled in the world of mind—of historians, geometricians, philosophers, and poets—until her intellectual influence upon the age was almost supreme. And though the Jew in his own land was not of very literary taste, there were some in Alexandria who caught the spirit of the city, and the children of Abraham might be seen busy with the works of Plato and Aristotle, and discussing subtle Greek theories, Roman dogmas, and Oriental dreams of ethics and philosophy. But before the close of the first century a mightier power than they had ever known was working among the people of the city—a power richer than all their wealth, and wiser than all their wisdom—the gospel of Jesus Christ. The philosophies of Paganism and the prejudice and obstinacy of Judaism came into fierce conflict with the new faith; and persecution assailed the preachers of the Cross. But within a hundred years from the resurrection of our Lord, the Christians of Alexandria formed so important a proportion of the inhabitants, that, it is said, they “were as numerous as those who remained attached to the indigenous superstitions.”

Towards the close of the second century, and while Alexandria was a centre of thought and life, the slightest pulsation of which vibrated in a thousand directions, there might be found in the city one who seems to have been a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls, until he found, at length, the pearl of great price. “He wandered restlessly from school to school, seeking, it seems, not to become learned, but to find truth; not content, as an intellectual curiosity-hunter, to hoard up treasures of information, he wanted some living truth to live upon.” Clement of Alexandria was his name. Pantœnus was his teacher in the truth of Christ, and when the master resigned his office as head of the catechetical school at Alexandria in order to go as a missionary to India, the pupil succeeded to his post; and here, amidst many labours and trials, and while daily “martyrs were burned, beheaded, and crucified before his eyes,” Clement

taught and wrote. And he was the earliest Christian hymn-writer whose name has come down to us.

We know but little of the particulars of the outer history of Clement, but still he speaks to us by his writings, and speaks through us in our Sabbath worship. We seem at a glance to know much of the heart that could thus utter itself on prayer: “Prayer,” he says, “if I may speak so boldly, is intercourse with God; even if we do but lisp, even though we silently address God without opening our lips, yet we cry to Him in the inmost recesses of the heart, for God always listens to the sincere direction of the heart to Him.” He bids the Christian husband and wife consecrate each day by commencing it with reading the Scriptures and prayer; but he adds, “that the Christian may pray in every place,” and “although he is ever thinking on God in the little chamber of his soul, and calling on his Father with silent aspiration, God is near him, and with him, for he is still speaking to God.” And is there not a new joy, and something of profit, too, when in these days we celebrate the anniversaries of our Sabbath-schools, and tell how “He shall gather the lambs with his arms,” that we are repeating the devout thoughts that filled the heart of Clement of Alexandria, seventeen hundred years ago, as we join in the song!*

Shepherd of tender youth,
Guiding, in love and truth,
Through devious ways;
Christ, our triumph King,
We come Thy name to sing,
And here our children bring,
To shout Thy praise.

But we must now turn to another scene and another name. The earliest triumphs won by the Christian Church beyond the boundaries of Palestine, among those who were “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel,” centred around Antioch, the capital of Syria, where the disciples were “first called Christians.” The position which that city occupied made it a place of concourse for all classes and races of people, and it was accounted, what Constantinople afterwards became, “The Gate of the East.” Here poets spent their young days; here generals died; here emperors were filled with admiration; here Oriental superstition mingled with the vices of heathenism, and all that was beautiful in art and nature was made the minister of sin.

Such was the arena on which the gospel of Christ fought its first battles, and won its first spiritual victories among “strangers.” And from that Syrian metropolis the work of God spread over the land, and the saints were multiplied. Tradition assures us that the Apostle Thomas founded the Christian Church at Edessa. It is probable that here the Syriac transla-

* Congregational Hymn Book, No. 975.

tion of the New Testament was prepared, and it is certain it was used here towards the close of the second century—the period at which Clement was commencing his public career at Alexandria. In this region the ecclesiastical Syriac tongue, which is a peculiar form of the Aramaic dialect, early prevailed. It is in this garb that Syriac Church literature appeared, a large part of which, though it seems to be written as prose, has been found by the learned to be metrical in form.

In the structure of the hymnody of the Syrian Church, two forces came into play to which we have already adverted. It is evident that, from an early period, the psalter of the Old Testament was in use, and it appears that about the middle of the third century the Bishop of Antioch forbade the use of any other sacred songs than the Psalms of David. This prelate was Paul of Samosata, who sympathized with the heresy which afterwards took the name of Arius; and thus, under the pretence of a love of antiquity, he sought to silence those freer compositions which directly discountenanced his own views.

Gradually, however, the stately hymnology of the Hebrew Church had to enter into alliance with the more free, varied, and popular rhythms familiar to the ear of Greek and Latin converts; and the best appliances of heathen minstrelsy were not only made servants to the house of the Lord, but were employed as powerful engines of controversy for good or for ill. In Syria, as elsewhere, says Dr. Burgess, Christians "introduced into their practice whatever of national customs, in relation to music, they found ready to their hands."

The first name connected with the metrical literature of Syria is that of Bardesanes, a Gnostic Christian, and a native of Edessa. He flourished in the second century, and wrote nearly two hundred hymns. He seems to have cultivated the art of accommodating his opinions to those that were prevalent; though, as Neander says, "he could write from honest conviction against many of the Gnostic sects then spreading in Syria. His own heresies, however, he circulated far and wide by the use of metrical composition, in which he had great skill." "He thus concealed," said Ephraem, one of his successors in song, "for the simple, the bitter with the sweet. For the sickly do not prefer food which is wholesome."

Harmonius, the son of Bardesanes, greatly improved the metrical compositions of Syria, introducing into them some of the results of his study of the language and arts of Greece, and enriching them with new Grecian measures and melodies.

But the father of Syriac poetry was Ephraem Syrus, deacon and monk of Mesopotamia, who flourished about the middle of the fourth century. Twelve thousand songs are said to have come from his pen—

songs in which he turned the weapons of heresy against itself by fitting the hymns of orthodoxy to the tunes of Bardesanes and Harmonius. And while the productions of his predecessors have been nearly all consigned to oblivion, his own survive, "an everlasting monument of fine abilities consecrated to the service of God." This "champion of Christ," says an anonymous Syriac writer, "the blessed Ephraem, seeing that all men were led by music, rose up and opposed the profane games and noisy dances of the young people, and he stood like a father in the midst of them, a spiritual harper," and "taught them odes and scales and responses, and conveyed in the odes intelligent sentiments, in a sententious form, until the whole city was gathered to him, and the party of the adversary was put to shame and defeated."

Nor is this estimate overdrawn. The materials which this good man wove into song were no mere creations of the fancy. "He knew," says Dr. Burgess, "of no storehouse of facts and principles but the Bible, and the very slight addition made to it by ecclesiastical tradition. His God is the Jehovah of the Old Testament, revealed in the person of Christ, in connection with the personal existence of the Holy Ghost; his world of the invisible and spiritual beings is peopled with the cherubim and seraphim, the archangels and angels, both bad and good, made known by the inspired writers; his heroes are saints and martyrs, who triumphed over sin and death through the indwelling power of the Redeemer." But while the fountain of which he ever drank was that of

"Siloa's brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God,"

still he showed everywhere the creative energy of a master-mind, though the translators have complained of the exceeding difficulty of conveying the Doric sonorousness and grace of the Syriac language into another tongue.

The monastic life of Ephraem appears to have choked up no fountain of human kindness in his heart. His hymns "breathe much of the fragrance of a home." His hymns touch upon many and varied Christian themes. One tells of "the death of a Presbyter," and how "the wings of supplication, which are swifter than air, and the pinions of angels of whom thou hast been a companion," should guide the wanderer along the "trodden pathway" to the "habitation of the living." In another, he tenderly refers to the parting of the body and soul at death, and tells how the spirit cares little for aught besides the dear one from whom it is to be sundered; and then, standing apart, addressed the now tenantless abode (the original, though not the translation, is metrical):—

"Death has dismissed me;
Remain thou here in peace,
For I am going away."

Then the body replies -

"Depart thou in peace,
O soul, tenderly loved!
The Lord who hath fostered us,
He will procure our deliverance
From Gehennah!"

He moralizes on the death of the beggar and the prince, and tells how each must lie as lowly as the other, and bids the rich not confide in his riches, for his possessions cannot descend with him into the grave, nor the comely in his beauty, for it will fade in the tomb. He sings the song of the morning, and how the evening brings release to the world and its toils; of the Sabbath as the day on which our Lord arose from the sepulchre, "with power and might, and with the strength of a giant," for which the "Holy Church adorns herself," and he prays in song for defence against Satan.

But his themes are more varied and more sweet than we have time to tell. It must content us merely to add, in the words of Chrysostom: "St. Ephraem was the arouser of the slothful, the consoler of the afflicted, the instructor of the young, the guide of the penitent; an arrow and javelin against heretics, a depository of virtues, and a habitation and resting-place of the Holy Spirit."

THE POSITION OF ISLAM.

Hitherto but little direct Christian effort has been made on behalf of the followers of Mohammed. The instant and violent opposition awakened, and the close connection of religion with the state in all Mohammedan countries, have stood in the way of such effort. The methods adopted have sometimes savoured too much, perhaps, of the old traditional hatred of the Turk, and have failed to recognize any possible common ground in the beliefs of Islam and of Christianity.

In the meantime great changes have occurred in the relative position of the adherents of the two opposing systems. The political power of Islam has steadily declined, and cannot much longer be the support of its religious system. The two are alike losing their hold on the popular mind, and such civilization as they have hitherto developed and maintained becomes more and more corrupt and worthless, as a means of improving the condition of its devotees. With the exception of Central Africa, where a spirit of proselytism is still active, the political and intellectual forces of the so-called Western or Christian nations are steadily hemming in, and undermining the power of Islam. Even in China the late formidable Mohammedan rebellion was put down, and thirty to forty millions of Mohammedans submit to the rule of the followers of Confucius. As many more in India are subjects of the Christian Queen of England, while the jealousy of European powers only prevents the immediate dissolution of the Turkish

empire, in order to its gradual but slower disintegration by the separation of one province after another. In the meanwhile, the Central Government, by its opposition to all healthful progress and the best aspirations of the people, by the repression of all industry, and an oppressive system of taxation that only makes the people poorer and more helpless, is justifying its early doom as a necessity for the best interests of mankind.

While these changes are in progress, weakening the power and breaking down the pride of the adherents of Islam, and thus leading them to distrust the worth of their system of faith, the Christian Church has not been neglectful of its opportunity. Vigorous efforts have been put forth to reform the decayed and corrupt systems of Christian faith, prevalent in the Turkish empire, which have been a reproach to the Christian name, and have hindered any attempt to reach the Mohammedan population. Though these efforts have not succeeded in just the way that was anticipated, yet thousands of the adherents of the Armenian, Nestorian, Greek, and Coptic Churches have been won to illustrate a purer faith, in organized communities, in educational enterprises of every grade, and in a widely circulated Christian literature, including the Scriptures in the sacred language of the Koran and in the vernacular languages of the people. Hundreds of young men have been trained, or are now being trained, in Christian colleges and seminaries, so as to be ready to preach the Gospel to Mohammedans when the time comes for doing so with impunity—and that time may not be far off.

Of hardly less significance in this regard is the attention now given to the Koran on the part of scholars, and the acquaintance with it thus secured to the Christian public. It is enough to mention the valuable labours of Sir William Muir, and the translation of the Koran (Qu'ran) by E. H. Palmer, in the Series of "The Sacred Books of the East," edited by Max Muller. The last work leaves nothing to be desired to one who would become thoroughly acquainted with the Koran, and the circumstances attending its composition. The little volume of Sir William Muir, published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, having for its title "The Koran, its Composition and Teaching, and the Testimony it bears to the Holy Scriptures," is of special interest at this time to those who are proposing to labour among Mohammedans. "It presents a collection of the whole evidence contained in the Koran, and from it draws the conclusion that the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, as current in the age of Mahomet, were by him held to be genuine and of Divine authority." It is a remarkable fact that Mohammed thus appeals to our Scriptures, attests their inspiration, and inculcates their observance. Sir William has brought together

one hundred and thirty-one passages, giving the Arabic and the translation of the same, to show the testimony which the Koran thus offers to the authority of the Holy Scriptures. When we add to this testimony, scattered through the Koran, the large number of Biblical stories and incidents, and passages quoted with little change, it is obvious that there is thus a common ground on which to meet adherents of Islam. It is much that the Koran, despite all its errors, inculcates "the Divine unity, perfections, and all-pervading providence; the existence of good angels as well as of Satan and the fallen angels; the immortality of the soul; the resurrection and retribution of good and evil; the sin of idolatry."

We cannot but feel that there is a future before the millions that now accept of Islam, and that their widespread diffusion is not without some sublime purpose in the economy of grace. Shall we not be as generous in dealing with them as the founder of their system was with Christians? "And contend not with the people of The Book but in a generous manner, excepting those of them who act wickedly; and say, 'We believe in that which hath been revealed to us, and in that which hath been revealed to you; and your God and our God is one.'"—*Missionary Herald*.

THE OUTLOOK OF THE TIMES IN REFERENCE TO THE PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY.*

... An aspect in the outlook of the present, of auspicious as well as profound significance, and exhibiting a decided trend of the world toward Christian civilization if not Christian faith, is the attitude of Christendom as the ascendent historic power compared with Paganism, or Mohammedanism, and as unquestionably the dominant factor of the world's future. The new forces thrown into the life of the world and so vastly accelerating its movements are all the gifts of Christian civilization and the present equipment of Christian nations; insomuch that such nations seem, compared with others, a superior race, and are recognized and accepted by them as the lords of human affairs. This decided preeminence of Christendom in arts, arms, literature, wealth, and empire, indicates a trend not only to some new and more rapid movement, but also one in a given direction, that of Christian civilization. It is the sign, put on Christianity, of God, before the nations, as the religion of light and life, and the creator of superior culture and empire; and assuring to it, if faithful to the demands of the hour, the dominion of the faith of the world in the coming cycle.

But this aspect presents with it the signal of urgency, that Christian missions keep pace with the advantages of Christian civilization and empire. This being accomplished, this aspect of Christendom in relation to other parts of the world, as the expanding illuminated disc to the dark and receding one, as that of civilization to barbarism or savageism, as that of a living and progressive society to one dead and stagnant, or effete and retrograde, augurs for Christianity a destined universal triumph.

Another augury within Christendom itself, the political and moral leadership, the ascendancy in the realms of thought and material force, attaching more and more to Protestantism as compared with Romanism, assures the supremacy of the party of superior light and liberty and profounder spiritual culture and faith, amid the demiurgic factors of the coming age.

At the same time, contemporaneous with the aggressive ascendancy of Christian nations, is presented a progressive decay of faiths and philosophies of the Pagan and Mohammedan world; inasmuch as in many portions of it the human mind is exhibited as a shrine forsaken of its deity, and waiting a new Avatar, or the advent of a god. To this aspect of the times attach signals of intense missionary exigency and urgency, lest, while we are slow, seven spirits worse than the first enter into the vacant sanctuary.

Another most auspicious aspect of the times is the appearance, simultaneously with this decay of false religions, of a sun-burst of missionary spirit and enterprise among Christian nations, not surpassed since the age of the apostles; exploring wild continents, seeking out lost isles of the ocean, pioneering or following the track of colonization or commerce, and kindling new centres radiant of Christian faith and civilization through the dark fields of the world.

All these aspects of the times evidently look toward some great event in the kingdom of God, in the not distant future. For it the whole creation waits. It is a period of vast preparation and expectancy, like the half-hour's Apocalyptic pause in heaven on the opening of the seventh seal. Preparation and arrangement for some continuous, simultaneous impulse through the earth seem well-nigh completed. The lines laid, connections and combinations established, the chain work of electric conduction complete in its links, there waits only the celestial flash, the fire from heaven. Like the city of mechanism, a department in the centennial exposition at Philadelphia, silent and moveless around the grand Corliss engine, also silent and moveless, hand, wheel, and cog, all adjusted, waiting a single touch to a single spring or lever to start the whole to one vast, simultaneous, mighty life; so now the world, with its preparation, seems waiting the access of the Spirit's power promised to the prayers of the people of God.

* An extract from an Address delivered by Dr. Post at the late Annual Meeting of The A. B. C. F. M.

Meantime—another aspect of the times—here is a tremendous agitation of the world under the impact of the new and mighty forces thrown into its life, and the disintegration of old forms, and the aroused, conscious antagonism of principles that have been sleeping for ages, side by side, unconscious of each other. The agitation hastens crystallization. Chaos must soon come to order. What stamp and form shall it bear?

The valley of dry bones seen by the Hebrew seer is before us, bone gathered to its fellow bone, articulated, organized, clothed with tendon and tissue, waiting only the breath of God to start them to life, an exceeding great army. That breath it is ours to invoke, night and day. Nor are we without tokens of its presence. The Spirit of God, if the Church is ready to receive it, seems ready to inaugurate the especial spiritual era prophesied for the Church in the latter days. Never since the day of Pentecost have there been more abundant indications of the readiness of the Divine Spirit to clothe the Word with power than in these times. Signals of urgency to faithful prayer and faithful work effectuating it thicken over this aspect of the hour.

CHANGES WROUGHT BY THE GOSPEL IN THE FIJI ISLANDS.

FROM MISS GORDON CUMMING'S "AT HOME IN FIJI."

Strange indeed is the change that has come over these isles since first Messrs. Cragill and Cross, Wesleyan missionaries, landed here in the year 1835, resolved at the hazard of their lives to bring the light of Christianity to these ferocious cannibals. Imagine the faith and courage of the two white men, without any visible protection, landing in the midst of these bloodthirsty hordes, whose unknown language they had in the first instance to master, and day after day witnessing such scenes as chill one's blood even to hear about. Many such have been described to me by eye-witnesses.

Slow and disheartening was their labour for many years, yet so well has that little leaven worked that, with the exception of the Kai Tholos, the wild highlanders, who still hold out in their mountain fastnesses, the eighty inhabited isles have all abjured cannibalism and other frightful customs, and have *lotued* (i. e. embraced Christianity) in such good earnest as may well put to shame many more civilized nations.

I often wish that some of the cavillers who are for ever sneering at Christian missions could see something of their results in these isles. But first they would have to recall the Fiji of ten years ago, when every man's hand was against his neighbour, and the land had no rest from barbarous inter-tribal wars, in which the foe, without respect of age or sex, were

looked upon only in the light of so much beef; the prisoners deliberately fattened for the slaughter; dead bodies dug up that had been buried ten or twelve days, and could only be cooked in the form of puddings; limbs cut off from living men and women, and cooked and eaten in presence of the victim, who had previously been compelled to dig the oven and cut the firewood for the purpose; and this is not only in time of war, when such atrocity might be deemed less inexcusable, but in time of peace, to gratify the caprice of appetite of the moment.

Think of the sick buried alive; the array of widows who were deliberately strangled on the death of any great man; the living victims who were buried beside every post of a chief's new house, and must needs stand clasping it while the earth was gradually heaped over their devoted heads; or those who were bound hand and foot, and laid on the ground to act as rollers, when a chief launched a new canoe, and thus doomed to a death of excruciating agony; a time when there was not the slightest security for life or property, and no man knew how quickly his own hour of doom might come; when whole villages were depopulated simply to supply their neighbours with fresh meat!

Just think of all this, and of the change that has been wrought, and then just imagine white men who can sneer at missionary work in the way they do. Now you may pass from isle to isle, certain everywhere to find the same cordial reception by kindly men and women. Every village in the eighty inhabited isles has built for itself a tidy church, and a good house for its teacher or native minister, for whom the village also provides food and clothing. *Can you realize that there are nine hundred Wesleyan churches in Fiji, at every one of which the frequent services are crowded by devout congregations; that the schools are well attended, and that the first sound which greets your ear at dawn, and the last at night, is that of hymn-singing and most fervent worship, rising from each dwelling at the hour of family prayer?*

What these people may become after much contact with the common run of white men we cannot, of course, tell, though we may unhappily guess. At present they are a body of simple and devout Christians, full of deepest reverence for their teachers and the message they bring, and only anxious to yield all obedience.

Of course there are a number of white men here, as in other countries, who (themselves not caring one straw about any religion) declare that Christianity in these isles is merely nominal, adopted as a matter of expediency, and that half the people are still heathen at heart. Even were this true (and all outward signs go to disprove it), I wonder what such cavillers expect. I wonder if they know by what gradual steps our own British ancestors yielded to the Light, and for how

many centuries idolatrous customs continued to prevail in our own isles! Yet here all traces of idolatry are utterly swept away.—*Missionary Herald*.

DURING the last forty years 120 missionaries have fallen victims to the climate of the west coast of Africa; but the converts to Christianity number over 30,000.

THE Fiji islanders, who within half a century were savages, give £15,000 a year to religious objects. The population is 120,000, of whom the Governor reports that 102,000 are regular worshippers in the churches.

THE increase in the number of native workers in connection with the missions of the London Missionary Society is given as follows:—Native ordained pastors in 1870, 106; in 1880, 371; native preachers in 1870, 1,644; in 1880, 4,529

It is now six years since the Free Church of Scotland set about establishing the Livingstonia Mission Settlement in Eastern Africa, as a memorial of Dr. Livingstone. A sum of £21,000 has been expended, and not only has the gospel been preached to the natives on the shores of Lake Nyassa, but an effectual check has been put on the slave trade. Within the past year, eight new missionaries have joined Bishop Steers, of Central Africa, including a senior student of Christ Church and six other graduates of Oxford or Cambridge.

It is now seventy years since the first Hindoo baptism by Dr. Carey. There are in India, Burmah and Ceylon 500,000 persons of the native population professing themselves Christians. It is reported that about one-fifth of the subjects of the Maharajah of Travancore, Southern India, are nominal Christians belonging to various denominations. In Tinnevely, the adjoining district, the forty members of the Christian Church, one hundred years ago, have increased to 97,605, not including those who have died during the century. Mr. Clough, Baptist missionary at Ongole, India, reports 2,758 baptized in 1880, in connection with the Ongole mission, established in 1866.

NEWS OF THE CHURCHES.

UNIONVILLE, under Bro. Ebbs, is spiritually growing, and \$47.50 was collected by the little church there—an average of \$1.83 per member. Would that every Church gave such a record!

MISSIONARY MEETINGS.—Unionville, Stouffville and Manilla were visited by Messrs. Powis, Ebbs and Kinmouth. Messrs. Ebbs and Kinmouth exchanged pulpits on the previous Sabbath, Dec. 4th, with great acceptance to the churches.

SOUTH CALEDON.—The roads extremely bad and the night dark and stormy, which gave us a small congregation.

MANILA still pastorless; grateful that they were remembered by the deputation. Collection, \$3 90. May an under shepherd soon appear!

NEWMARKET.—The attendance, though small, was not without encouragement. We are happy to report Deacon Millard as recovering from a severe illness, and the little band gathering heart.

GEORGETOWN.—The evening dark and wet, yet the attendance was good and the meeting spirited. Collections large, and given with a good will. This congregation has suffered much from removals during the last two years; yet all financial matters progress in a manner highly complimentary to the church.

STOUFFVILLE had a very stormy night, which compelled friends away. Under Mr. Kinmouth the cause is growing, pastor and people united. The missionary collection was \$17.30, of which \$14 was collected in the Sunday school. Right, Bro. Kinmouth; train and interest the young, and our churches may look hopefully to the future.

WESTERN TORONTO.—The sixth anniversary of this church was held Nov. 27th by special services morning and evening, whilst the Sabbath school in the afternoon shared in the celebration. The young are rallying round their pastor, and our brother, Mr. McGregor, is receiving many encouraging tokens of success, among which we may note a handsome easy chair presented by the youth of the church as a mark of regard to their pastor.

CHURCH HILL.—The attendance at this church was good. Contributions not all gathered in. The following regarding these last two stations has been delayed:—Mr. Alcibiades Kaye (late of Owens College and the Lancashire Independent College, Manchester, England) was ordained at Union Congregational Church, Caledon, Ont., on the 31st October, 1881. The Rev. F. Wrigley, of Alton, gave the address on Congregational principles: the Rev. Jos. Griffith, of Hamilton, the charge to the Pastor; and the Rev. Jos. Mosworth, Georgetown, the sermon to the church and congregation. We have much pleasure in noting this fact and recording our esteem for our brother, and in stating that already encouraging tokens of a successful pastorate are appearing. Our best sympathies and prayers for church and pastor.

WINNIPEG.—The people of Winnipeg are good to their pastors. At the close of a largely attended prayer meeting of the First Congregational church in the Odd Fellows Hall, Dec. 14th, Mr. D. D. Foster, on behalf of the Sunday school and Bible class, presented the pastor of the congregation, Rev. J. B. Silcox, with a coat and mitts of the finest Persian lamb. Mr. Hector

McLean, on behalf of the members of the church and congregation, presented the pastor's wife with an envelope containing the handsome sum of \$300. To complete the surprise, a tasteful writing desk, costing \$65, was sent by friends and placed in the pastor's study. Addresses accompanying the gifts spoke of the high esteem in which the pastor and his wife were held, and Mr. Silcox responded, expressing his gratitude for this unexpected evidence of their regard.

"ALL RIGHT."

I'm only an engine driver,
That works on the line of rail;
Without e'en a mother or sister,
Or wife, my lot to bewail.
It's not very lively to think of,
But I have a sensitive mind;
At least, that is for a driver,
A thing you may not oft find.

It's not very pleasant to fancy,
Each day you may drive to death,
And yet that's the case with us drivers,
Safe neither in limb nor breath.
I've had friends on many an engine,
Who died in red blood on the line;
Crushed like a dog—and I'm thinking,
One day the same end will be mine.

Did I ever have a fond mother?
Well, stranger, I just think I had;
But 'twas years ago in the far off,
When I was a roving young lad.
Don't laugh!—I loved my good mother—
No, no, it wasn't a tear
I dropped from my smoky eyelids!
Do you want to hear me swear?

I need to, and that in earnest,
But that's some time ago;
I've got to be somewhat religious,
A respectable driver now.
It's praying, I s'pose, for our parson
Says that it's right to pray:
There's room for us drivers in heaven,
Last night I heard him say.

'Tant often I go to church,
For us chaps aint got no time;
From morning to night we're driving,
Along this old smoky line.
But I went, and felt very funny,
A dreadful sinner, I guess,
And I've prayed that I might be religious.
Tho' I wear but a driver's dress.

Well, there, I must turn on steam;
A driver's no time to lose;
The whistle's the word to us chaps,
And 'tant for ourselves to choose.
So push on, my hearts—I love
To hear her shriek in her flight;
It's only the signal that stops us,
And now the signal's "All Right."

—W. Barnett.

FAITH CURE.

There occur from time to time instances of remarkable cures in answer to prayer. They seem like miracles. Friends are overjoyed. Believers are encouraged. "The age of miracles is returning." Science is sceptical and attributes the result to "vitality," to "nature," to some unknown cause.

But are there not many "faith-cures"? Are there not real answers to prayer in healings of body and soul, for which the Lord gets no credit?

A young man goes deep into business. Difficulties arise. He puts forth all his energies. He carries a heavy load. He suffers a terrible strain. He sees himself on the brink of utter financial ruin. And at the crisis of his fate his health begins to fail. In his distress he calls on the Lord. Believing friends also pray for him. His strength is continued. He triumphs over obstacles. He fights his way through. He begins to rise. With prosperity, health returns. He recovers his old buoyancy and vigour. He may think gratefully, "The Lord heard my cry," or he may say, "My high hand and not the Lord hath done this." The world may praise him. And the idea that faith had anything to do with the result may seem to many quite unscientific. But there may be hearts near him that know better. There may be those who had boldness by the blood of Jesus to enter into the holiest and wrestle for him, and who obtained the blessing. They will always believe that it was a "faith-cure." God be praised that such faith-cures are more common than we think.

The light of eternity will show a profound meaning in those words of Jesus, "Every one that asketh receiveth."—Charles Beecher.

STRAIGHT BY THE CROSS.

A short distance from where the writer lives there are the remains of a stone cross, which was set up more than five hundred years ago, to keep in memory a great battle which was fought on the neighbouring hills, and which resulted in a great victory for the English forces. It stands by the road-side, near the parting of two ways; and besides commemorating the victory, it serves the purpose of pointing out the way to certain places beyond. It is not uncommon, therefore, when people ask the way to these places, to say, "You must first get to the cross, and then go straight on."

That is just what we have to do spiritually. It is a crucified Redeemer to whom we are to come. It is by a crucified Redeemer we come to God. We come by the new and living way which Christ had consecrated with His own blood. Christ by His death has opened the kingdom of God to all believers.

But there is a way we have to tread after we are reconciled by Christ's death. We have to go straight

on from the cross. We have to tread in Christ's steps. He left us an example that we should do so. We have to walk even as He walked. We are to be followers of Him. The way He trod was the way of obedience—the way of submission—the way of well-doing. It was the way of dependence on God and of fellowship with Him. This is the way we must tread in all the circumstances in which we are placed, in all the relationships and callings in which we find ourselves.

How would Christ have acted in our place? How do his precepts require us to act? We may sometimes be perplexed, for though the precepts are plain, their application to particular cases is not always simple. But if guidance be truly sought, the seeker will hear a "voice" behind him saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." "Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness."

But the way which leadeth unto life is a narrow way—a way of tribulation. It is the way of crucifixion to the world. Christ says that if any man will follow Him, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily. You will find evil remaining in your own hearts to the end, and you will meet in the world with temptations which will require, if you are to overcome them, many a hard struggle. But you must not faint or grow weary in the way. Christ will be with you and help you. His grace makes His yoke, which He summons you to take upon you, easy, His burden light, and then the end and reward will be life in the presence of Christ in glory.

Two promises, one spoken by the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and the other by His servant and apostle Paul, assure us of this: "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be." "God will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuation in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life."—*Friendly Greetings.*

THE EGYPTIAN IDEA OF IMMORTALITY.

The following curious theory of life after death, which influenced the ancient Egyptians in the construction of their tombs, is taken from an illustrated paper on "Oriental and Early Greek Sculpture," by Mrs. Lucy M. Mitchell, in the *January Century*:

In Egypt, from the very earliest time, the tomb was of the greatest significance for sculpture. Of temple ruins on the Nile, from that hoariest past between the First and Eleventh Dynasties, there is scarcely a trace. How vivid the witness borne to the sepulchral art on the plains of Memphis, the capital of oldest Egypt! Along the margin of the desert stretches the vast Necropolis, with a hidden population of statues, sen-

timelled by those stupendous royal tombs, the Pyramids. Where else have such preparations been made for the final rest of the dead as in this great *campo santo* of the ancient empire!

Though mingled with much that was naive and material, how vivid were the conceptions of that ancient people concerning the future world! They believed this life but an episode in an eternal existence. Death to them was 'the real life, only evil spirits being spoken of as dead. The coffin was called the "chest of the living." But to the ancient Egyptian the immortal part, even after death, was in some mysterious way dependent for its contented existence upon the preservation of the body; hence the importance of embalming, the care taken to keep the body as life-like as possible and secure from harm during the long period of the soul's probation. The "eternal dwellings," hewn in the solid rock, high above the floods, were in strong contrast to the abodes of the living, built within reach of the swelling Nile, and of which scarcely a vestige remains.

The massive chamber of this tomb where lies the mummy is pictureless, and its entrance is closed by solid masonry. From it a shaft leads up, which was at many places thirty metres deep, and was filled with a dense mass of earth and stone, making more inviolate the mummy's rest. Over the concealed entrance of this shaft there rises that other essential part of the tomb, the sacred chapel (*mastaba*), of equally solid construction.

In a dark recess (*sordidh*), aside from this chapel, are found many statues walled up. These are usually twenty or more in number, and represent the deceased with great diversity. To what purposes are they here? Singular beliefs, prevalent among the Egyptians and read from the hieroglyphics by Maspero, furnish us the key to this problem.

An immortal second-self, *ka*, somewhat resembling the "eidolon" of the Greeks and the shade of the Romans, was believed to spring into being with every mortal, grow with his growth, and accompany him after death. So close was the relationship of this strange double *ka* to man's proper being, that it was of the greatest importance to provide it with a material and imperishable body which it should occupy after death, sharing with the mummy the security of the "eternal dwelling." It was believed that the shade *ka* could come out of this statue and perambulate among men in true ghostly fashion, returning to it at will. The stony body for the dead man's *ka* was naturally made in his exact likeness, and also bore an inscription stating his name and qualities. But a single statue might perish, and future happiness be thus forfeited. Hence that most unique feature of Egyptian statuary, the multiplication of the portraits of the deceased in his tomb.

International Sunday School Lessons.

IN commencing the Sunday School Lessons for THE INDEPENDENT, the writer would desire to make a word or two of explanation. The necessity of occupying but a limited space (one column for each lesson was allowed by the editor, but that has been exceeded somewhat) has compelled condensation of thought to the utmost. The sketch is but a skeleton, and it is for the teacher to clothe it with living flesh. The writer, from his long practical knowledge of the work, is sure that each sketch contains material, if rightly used, for a very full lesson. It is recommended that the "Incidental Lessons" be introduced in their place, going through the portion in order; and that the "General Lessons," with the scriptural references, be the summing up of all. If the teacher wishes other references they can be found, but experience teaches that, as a rule, two or three to a subject are sufficient. It is intended to give the first lesson of the following month in each number, so that every lesson will be in hand in good time.

Jan. 7. } **THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL.** { Mark i. 1-13. 1882. }

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me."—Mal. iii. 1.

TIME.—About A.D. 26, reckoning the birth of Christ as four years before A.D. 1.

PLACE.—Wilderness of Judea, west of the Dead Sea, near the Jordan. The baptism of Christ likely took place at Bethabara, higher up the Jordan.

PARALLEL READINGS.—Of John, Matt. iii. 1-12, Luke iii. 1-18. See also John i. 6-35. Temptation of Jesus, Matt. iv. 1-11. Luke iv. 1-10.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Central Thought.—"Beginning": There had been a beginning in the counsels of God—a beginning in Paradise when the Gospel was first preached to the sinning pair. This is the beginning of the *manifestation* of God's purpose and love.

Dangers.—Do not spend much time talking about John's appearance, dress, food, or how all the people of the land were or could be baptised by him; your business is with the message of John—what he has to say about Christ.

What to Teach.—That this "beginning of the Gospel" is the one all important event in the world's history; that every human being to the latest son of Adam has an interest in it. That it was in the "fulness of time," the time and circumstances to which all the prophecies pointed, Christ came. That John was the promised messenger before the face of the Saviour, and that his preaching all pointed to Jesus. That the temptation of Christ proved His fitness for the work; "He was without sin," and assures us of his sympathy, seeing that He was "in all points tempted like as we are."

You will find in the lessons for this year from Mark, which are so full, packed with facts, incidents, lessons, etc., that it is more than ever necessary to do what should always be done—have a clearly marked line of teaching and thought. You know your class, or ought to do, and the mental and spiritual food that will suit them. You should best decide what to give—do it conscientiously, prayerfully, and with a sense of responsibility.

How to Teach.—Fill your own mind full of the Old Testament promises of a Saviour, then get your class to give out such as they can remember. One of our recent lessons—Balaam—contains a striking prophecy. Then draw from

them briefly the circumstances of the birth and early days of Jesus, as told in Matthew and Luke. To fix John in the minds of your scholars read the first lesson of 1881, "Zacharias and Elizabeth." Then pass on to the lesson portion. You have spoken enough of the messenger—speak of the message. It was a *call* to preparation for the coming of Christ; it was a *call* to repentance, that sins might be forgiven; it was a *call* to Jesus, to the one "mightier" than John, He who should baptize "with the Holy Ghost." Upon the baptism of Jesus and the Temptation, subjects each requiring a lesson apart, you will not have time to say much. You may shew by a few verses of other Gospels the facts of each event; get your class to tell you these if possible. If not too young, get their ideas as to why Christ was baptised, and why He suffered the terrible temptation in the wilderness, referring them to Matt. ii. 15; Heb. iii. 17-18; iv. 15.

Explanation.—(Ver. 1) "Gospel," good news, glad tidings, good-spell, "Jesus," Saviour, "Christ," anointed. (2) "In the prophets," & the prophet Isaiah—from two prophets, Isaiah xl. 3; Mal. iii. 1. (3) "Prepare," as in ancient times, when roads were poor and few, a messenger went before kings to prepare their way. (4) "The baptism"—omit the article; "baptism of repentance"—a ceremony professing a change of mind, and a desire to be cleansed from sin. (5) "All the land"—see Matt. iii. 7. Luke iii. 7-12—there was an universal expectation of the coming one. (6) "Camel's hair"—not the skin; short garment woven of the coarse hair, would keep out heat, cold and rain; so Elijah. (7) "Latchet," the thong by which the sandal was fastened to the foot; so our shoe *lace*. Note John's humility, it was the work of a slave. (8) "Nazareth," his home until now, not mentioned in Old Testament, 70 miles north of Jerusalem. (9) "In whom," & "in thee." (10) "Dri-veh," an irresistible impulse, Matt. iv. 1, Luke iv. 1, each say "led." (11) "Satan," Lit. "the Satan;" Heb. adversary; so devil, Greek, accuser. "Wild beasts" were found there in those days—the temptation of terror.

Running Lessons.—The most glorious "good news" ever proclaimed the coming of Jesus.

That great as John was, he was greater in being the servant of Christ.

That the disciples of Jesus, like their Master, must make a public profession of their faith.

That God's approval comes to us in the path of duty.

That resisted temptation will be followed by blessing from heaven.

General Lessons.—The Gospel of Jesus is for all, John iii. 16; xii. 32; Rom. v. 6, 8, 18; Heb. ii. 9.

It is the duty of all to proclaim Jesus, Mark xvi. 15; so Philip and Andrew, John i. 41, 45; so the dispossessed of the devil, Mark v. 25.

A change of life must follow a change of heart, Luke i. 74-75; Titus ii. 11-12; Col. iii. 1, 2.

Like their Master, the followers of Jesus must expect temptation, James i. 2; 1 Peter i. 6; Rom. v. 3; Heb. xi. 33-39.

NOTE.—Whenever the letter *κ* occurs in this type, it refers to the Revised New Testament.

Jan. 8, }
1882. }

JESUS IN GALILEE.

{ Mark i.
14-28. }

GOLDEN TEXT.—“The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.”—Isa. ix. 2.

TIME.—About a year later than last lesson, at the end of first or beginning of second year of Christ's ministry.

PLACE.—Galilee, by the sea—Capernaum on the Sabbath.

PARALLEL.—Vs. 14-15. Matt. iv. 17, Luke iv. 14-15. Vs. 16-20. Matt. iv. 18-22, Luke v. 10-11. Vs. 21-27. Luke iv. 31-37.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Dangers.—Talking too much about John and the circumstances of his imprisonment. About the disciples being fishermen, how they fished, what they caught, style of their boats, etc. Any elaborate discussion as to the real site of Capernaum.

Central Thought.—Christ's power over men and spirits.

What to Teach.—The coming of Jesus was in the fulness of time—that to receive Him there must be repentance and faith. The first fruits of His coming is the turning to Him of those who are constrained by His word; the recognition of Him and the greeting to His authority by God's spirits, with the wonder and popularity which his teachings and miracle excited.

How to Teach.—Give the shortest possible reference to the imprisonment of John—in the lesson portion it occupies about one-thirtieth part of the whole—don't give more of your teaching-time to it in proportion. Then dwell on the subject of Christ's teaching. The first upon which he dwells—“the time,” “the kingdom,” and the lessons he founds thereon, “repent,” “believe.” You will then be able to bring out very clearly the duty of obedience to the commands of Christ, even when they involve personal sacrifice, and a leaving of friends and kindred, as shewn in the actions of the pair of brothers, Andrew and Peter, James and John. Note that this was not the first time that two of the disciples, at least, had met with Jesus (see John i. 35-42), and doubtless the others also. Point to the significance of this first recorded miracle of Mark. Between the seed of the woman and the serpent there can be only enmity (Gen. iii. 15). It is the triumphant beginning of the conflict that is to crush the head of the serpent. Shew that in his words are authority; he had the right to command; and power, he could enforce his authority. Place yourself, and endeavour to place your class in the position of the hearers of these teachings and the beholders of this miracle, and get from them what would have been their thoughts; you can then easily pass on to what should be their present thoughts and feelings towards Him whose teachings and miracles they know so much more fully than did those Galileans.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 14. Jesus had before this visited Jerusalem, but his ministry in Galilee did not commence till John was in prison.

Ver. 15. “Tim-fulfilled,” predicted, expected. “Kingdom of,” Matthew, “heaven,” Mark and Luke, “God”—same meaning.

Ver. 16. Sea of Galilee, so named from province on west side; other names, Sea of Tiberias, Lake of Galilee.

“Simon,” contraction of Simeon. The references to Peter support the idea that he furnished much of the information.

Ver. 17. Their worldly occupation would enable them to understand and fit them for their spiritual work.

Ver. 18. The first brothers were preparing to cast; these had finished their haul and were mending their nets.

Ver. 20. So then Zebedee was a man of means, and they could leave him thus without inflicting injury upon him. True religion does not interfere with duty to parents.

Ver. 21. “Straightway,” so the Master, so the disciples. Christ was straitened to accomplish His work (Luke xii. 50).

Ver. 22. Different preaching to their accustomed; rather “sensational;” not what Rabbi this and that taught, but “with authority” (Matt. vii. 29).

Ver. 23. Under the influence of Lit. *in* “an unclean spirit.” One sin is unclean.

Ver. 24. No word of Christ had been spoken to the unclean spirit, but his preaching had disturbed it. All that the devil wants is to be let alone, left in possession. They recognized and felt the power of Jesus (Acts xvi. 17; xix. 15). “Holy one,” opposite to me. Emphasize the concealed designation of the Messiah (John vi. 69.)

Ver. 25. Somewhat like “beast be muzzled.” Christ had no parley with demons, His kingdom does not want their help.

Ver. 25. The demon did its worst (see chap. ix. 26, Luke ix. 42), but came out, deliverance, liberty.

Ver. 27. “New doctrine,” “authority.” They thought that as there was a new power there must be a new revelation.

Ver. 28. Through all Galilee and beyond its boundaries.

Incidental Lessons.—That Christ wants active men and women; laziness is not the stuff out of which He makes His workers.

That he who follows Christ loses nothing, though he forsakes all.

That Christ honoured the Sabbath and public worship. That we, like the demon, may know Christ as the Holy One, and yet know Him not as our Saviour.

That we, like the people of Capernaum, may be “amazed,” and question concerning Christ, yet may never receive Him.

Capernaum, the after home of Jesus, so highly favoured, did not receive the Gospel, and the terrible prediction (Matt. xi. 23-24) has been fulfilled to the letter. Let us beware.

General Lessons.—It is our duty to follow Christ and work for Him (Matt. x. 37-38; John v. 17, viii. 12; Eph. v. 1).

Christ came into the world to destroy the works of the devil (Luke x. 18; Heb. ii. 14; 1 John iii. 8).

Deliverance from the power of the evil one is only through and by Jesus Christ (Heb. ii. 14, 15, 17; 1 Cor. xv. 57; Rom. viii. 2; Col. i. 12-14).

Jan. 15, }
1882. }

POWER TO HEAL.

{ Mark i.
29-45. }

GOLDEN TEXT.—“I am the Lord that healeth thee.”—Ex. xv. 26.

TIME.—Vs. 29-38. Immediately after the last lesson (39-45), covering two months later probably.

PLACE.—Still Galilee.

PARALLEL.—Vs. 29-34. Matt. viii. 14-17; Luke iv. 38-41; vs. 35-39; Matt. iv. 23-25; Luke iv. 43-44; vs. 40-45; Matt. viii. 2-4; Luke v. 12-15.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Dangers.—Peter's wife's mother has before been a diversion and a diversion; don't let it be so to you; nor yet spend much time, more than is needed, to bring out the spiritual thought on leprosy. It is a painful subject, but

we have heard some dwell upon it as though it was entertaining.

What to Teach.—The readiness of Christ to heal. Never did He send away the sick and suffering without a blessing; and His cures were all complete at once; no long, tedious recovery. Multitudes, more than we think, were no doubt healed. That prayer was a great factor in the work He did. His zeal for His work, that would not let Him rest on His popularity, but sent Him forth into other places to preach. The infinite compassion and condescension by which He could touch the unclean and heal; and how the disobeying of His commands by the leper shut Him out from further work in the city.

How to Teach.—You have two main incidents; two miracles; give your principal attention to the facts and lessons of these, with any moments possible to the intermediate matters. You cannot teach all fully. Shew how in these, as in other miracles, there is the self-contained power. He did not heal as His apostles, in another's name. It was "I will." Shew how these miracles proved not only His power and goodness, but His divine mission. Refer to other miracles of a like character. There are some particulars about the cure of the leper that it will be worth your while to note. Ask your class, taking the narrative item by item, what they shewed in the man. "Came," "beseeching," "kneeling," "thou canst." The answers to these should help you to shew a sinner's approach to God through Christ. Picture Christ in the city, surrounded by crowds hanging upon His words, and the same Christ in a solitary place praying, and shew the connection between the two. Touch briefly the fact of His wishing to avoid publicity and the reasons He may have had for it, and apply your teaching.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 29. Jesus shunned notoriety. Peter and Andrew formerly lived in Bethsaida, now in Capernaum.

Ver. 30. "Anon," at once, R "straightway." Paul refers to Peter's wife as travelling with him (1 Cor. ix. 5). The neighbourhood was marshy, and fevers common.

Ver. 31. "Came" at once. Note the succession, "came," "took," "lifted," "left her," "ministered." So she was not only cured of the disease, but delivered from its weakening results.

Ver. 32. "Evening" and "morning." (Ver. 35), Jesus never slacked in his labours. "Brought;" to whom better could they bring? "Even," the full close of the Sabbath; it would then be cooler, and religious prejudices would not be shocked. "Devils," demons.

Ver. 33. "All," the diseased, their friends and the lookers-on.

Ver. 34. "Many," need not suppose any were left unhealed. "Suffered not," so bad men (chap. xi. 16); then they wanted to speak. "Knew," what they knew (Luke x. 41.)

Ver. 35. Day and night he watched for our salvation. "Solitary," thrice, in quick succession, he is found in solitudes (vs. 12, 35, 45). "Prayed," he made the desert a temple of God.

Ver. 36. "Simon," foremost already (Luke viii. 45; ix. 42).

Ver. 37. "Found him," after considerable search. "All men," just why He had gone away; He did not want popularity—alone. "All," natural and right. Is your class seeking Jesus?

Ver. 38. He could not limit His labours to one spot. Christ goes after the lost. "Therefore," etc., R to this end, not from the city, that for prayer, but from heaven, from the Father.

Ver. 40. "Leprous," the most loathsome of diseases—gospel type of sin. "Beseeching"—Matt. viii. 7 says "worshipping." He believed that Christ was able; that was

something, for, so far as we know, He had not yet healed a leper; but he was not so sure of the willingness. Christ was willing, is always, but the trouble is, men are not willing to be healed.

Ver. 41. "Compassion," how like him (Heb. xiii. 8). "Touched," no one else would have dared—he became unclean. "I will," blessed; "I wills," of Christ. What power and comfort in them. Surely none could so speak but God.

Ver. 42. "Immediately," again (as in ver. 35, John v. 9).

Ver. 43. "Straitly," peremptorily. Strictly he was still ceremonially unclean—perhaps had come where a leper had no right to enter.

Ver. 44. Christ would not depreciate the law (see Lev. 14). "Say nothing," this first duty to fulfil God's requirements.

Ver. 45. "Began to publish;" just so, very wrong to disobey, yet we have sympathy with him; but the result was bad—Jesus could not preach again in that city.

Incidental Lessons.—That we should tell Jesus of our sick ones.

That He can still cool the fevered brow and give back health and strength.

That Satan and his angels are under the power of Christ.

That it was in the wilderness in prayer Christ got strength for His work.

That none are too vile to come to Jesus.

That Jesus is as ready to save from sin now as then.

That while "it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing," it should be "according to knowledge."

That Christ is always willing to save if we are to be saved.

Main Lesson on the Leper.—Leprosy, the worst form of disease, the Bible type of sin. (1) *Incurable* (2 Kings v. 7; Jer. ii. 22). (2) *Hereditary* (2 Sam. iii. 29; Rom. v. 12). (3) *Loathsome* (Lev. xiii.; Isa. lix. 3). (4) *Fatal* (2 Kings xv. 5; Jas. i. 15; Rom. vi. 23).

Cure.—(1) Must come to Christ, who is able to save (Heb. vii. 25). (2) Christ invites (Matt. xi. 28.) Must come humbly, with faith, as the leper, and salvation is ours. "Just as I am, I come, I come."

Jan. 22, }
1882. }

POWER TO FORGIVE.

{ Mark ii
1-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."—Isa. xliii. 25.

PLACE AND TIME.—Capernaum, immediately after last lesson.

PARALLEL.—Matt. ix. 1-13; Luke v. 18-32.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Dangers.—The greatest: trying to teach too much. Seventeen verses such as these it is impossible to cover. Consider what you will teach, and do it thoroughly. Don't spend too much time on the construction of Eastern houses; a few words will explain, especially if you have a picture.

What and How to Teach.—Mark, in this lesson, advances a step in the development of Christ's power: before, He could *heal*; now He can do more, *forgive*. Note the progression also in the framing of the miracle: in the first, He came in contact with the unclean spirit in the synagogue; in the second, He was *told* of the sick one; in the third, the leper *came* to Jesus, and now we have one *brought*, and with strong faith on the part of his friends too. Shew how the scribes, by their very reasoning, confirmed His divinity. Point out and apply the truth to your class how Christ reads the heart. Let one of your scholars describe the condition of the man, another the character of his friends,

another the opposition of the scribes, a fourth the action of Jesus, and a fifth the effect on the people. Have read by your scholars the parallel accounts of the call of Matthew (Levi), see above. Bring out especially the love and condescension of Christ in eating with publicans and sinners, and refer in connection to Luke xv. and its beautiful parables, and impress on all that Jesus came to heal the sick, to call the sinners to repentance and receive them to Himself. Have you—has your class heard the voice, and are they now "friends of Jesus?"

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 1. "Again," the same as Matt. ix. 1. This took place after the journey to Gadara. "House," possibly His own, as he "dwelt there" (Matt. iv. 13).

Ver. 2. Not only house, but court filled. "Preached," in constant in season and out of season.

Ver. 3. "Palsy," likely paralyzed entirely. "Of four," so he was a grown-up man, though not old (ver. 5.)

Ver. 4. They could pass on to the roof by the outside steps; they would easily break up the roof of lattice-work and clay, then, by the four corners, let down the bed into the room or court. "Bed," light mattress, or possibly only a sheepskin rug, hence v. 11.

Ver. 5. "Their faith," including the palsied man. They don't appear to have said anything yet. "The sins"—the Jews thought sickness and death a judgment of God for sin (Luke xiii. 2, 4.) Still, disease is the result of sin, so first Christ forgives sin.

Ver. 6. "Scribes," the custodians and interpreters of the law—legality and tradition their life—right through Christ's life His bitter enemies.

Ver. 7. "This man," with scorn, such a man. "Blasphemies," irreverent, impious words. "Who can forgive," quite right, an unwilling testimony to Christ. He only who is sinned against can forgive.

Ver. 8. He knew their very thoughts, He knows ours. "In His spirit," His own, which is omniscient. The Holy Spirit not called Christ's before the day of Pentecost. Matthew is very graphic. "Seeing their thoughts."

Ver. 9. None could answer. Here, as often, the cavillers against Jesus had to keep silence. Note the question is, "Is it easier to say?" *i.e.*, to claim; not to do either.

Ver. 10. "May know," here was a thing capable of proof; on this they could not be deceived, and from this they might accept the other; one of the many purposes for which Christ's miracles were wrought—to confute unbelievers.

Ver. 11. "Bed"—see (on ver. 4) with what conscious power and authority He speaks.

Ver. 12. No word of doubt now, all silenced. "Glorified God"—Luke tells us he first glorified God. He knew the source of the healing. They followed, not the scribes, we may be sure.

Ver. 13. "Forth," indicating the position of Capernaum, connected with the sea by a suburb of fishers' huts and custom houses—*Lange*.

Ver. 14. Alphaeus—distinct from Alpheus, father of James the Less. Matthew's occupation and associates no bar to Christ's call to him, afterwards named Matthew. "Sitting," all trades sit at their work in the East. "Receipt of custom," at the custom house. "He arose"—no hesitation. Luke says "left all." He was a publican, *i.e.*, a tax collector for the Romans, and as such hated by his countrymen.

Ver. 15. "Sat at meat." Matthew made him a great feast, later on likely—Luke v. 29. "Publicans and sinners," bad and disreputable, Christ came into contact with them as a friend.

Ver. 16. "When the Scribes," etc., they did not sit down, oh, no! R omits "how is it that"—reading "He eateth;" more forcible; these Pharisees were shocked at Christ.

Ver. 17. "Heard"—overheard or told by his disciples. "They that are whole," lit. "strong"—"not the righteous"—their own idea of themselves. "Sinners," their judgment of all others.

Current Lessons.—That we should bring the sick of body and sick of soul to Jesus.

That faith will surmount all difficulties.

That in Christ is fulfilled Psalm ciii. 3.

That we should glorify God for His mercy to us and others.

That Christ searcheth the heart and knoweth our thoughts.

That Christ finds the men He wants where some would least look for them.

That formal religion is utterly ignorant of the heart of Christ.

General Lessons.—All men are sinners—soul sick, Isaiah i. 5-6; Psalm liii. 2-3; Rom. iii. 10-12.

Christ is the friend of such and came to save them, Luke xiv. 9, 10; Rom. v. 8; 1 Tim. i. 15.

All who have felt the power of Christ's love should strive to bring others within sound of the Gospel. See Lesson 1. (This truth will bear repeating.)

Jan 29, } **THE PHARISEES ANSWERED.** { Mark ii. 18-1882. } { 28; iii. 1-5.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."—Ex. xx. 8.

TIME.—Not quite certain—likely two periods are included, one shortly after last lesson, the other probably some months later.

PLACES.—Still in Capernaum and its neighbourhood.

PARALLEL.—Vs. 18-22; in Matt. ix. 14-17. Luke v. 33-39. Vs. 23-28; in Matt. xii. 1-9. Luke vi. 1-5; iii. 1-5; in Matt. xii. 10-14. Luke vi. 6-10.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Dangers.—Several in this lesson. The temptation to some to air their knowledge about facts among the Jews; about customs and ceremonies of Oriental weddings; even much talk about the Sabbath as a Divine institution, would be out of place here; nor yet go into the whole circumstances of David's history in connection with taking the shew-bread: each of these may have—should have—a passing notice, but that should not occupy the time of the pith of the lesson.

What and How to Teach.—By putting the incidents together, you will see that the key thought is the place and power of religious forms and observances; and the teaching is that there is a place for fasting, that there is righteousness in the observance of the Sabbath, but that these are secondary to the spirit of Christ's religion. That His people are not to be burdened with outward forms, but to have the liberty of the sons of God. That to attempt to do otherwise is like putting new wine into old bottles—they would burst. With reference to the Sabbath, two incidents in the portion enabled Jesus to place that in its right light. The first was the plucking by the disciples of ears of corn when passing through the cornfield on the Sabbath; in so doing they had violated the traditions of the Pharisees. Christ shews that necessity is higher than a form, and quotes a remarkable instance of its violation in a case of necessity—never condemned; and having defended his dis-

ciples, he afterwards proceeds in his own actions to teach the same truths. A man with a withered hand is in the synagogue; shall he wait until sunset to be healed? Yes, would have said the Pharisees. No, said Christ—and he healed the poor sufferer. Those three incidents—the disciples of John coming to Jesus about fasting, the disciples plucking corn on the Sabbath, and Christ healing the withered hand on the Sabbath, with the thought he gives of his relation to it—will furnish you with ample material for an effective lesson on this subject. See that you use it well. You will distinguish between forms as the outward expression of heart feeling, and forms which are only such—have no soul in them. Give illustrations of each—going to church or school because it is a delight to join in the worship of God and study His word, and doing the same because other- do it, or from habit. Show from these incidents that the religion of Jesus is a thing of joy and gladness; that it puts no bar on the proper pursuit of earthly things; that it will be in us a well-spring of good to others, and make our Sabbath days of delightful service.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 18. The formalists and the ascetics are one in this. John in prison—his disciples perhaps specially fasting. "Used t. fast," R "were fasting"—doing so then. Several of John's disciples had followed Jesus. Probably this day of Matthew's feast, a traditional, not a legal, fast day.

Ver. 19. The Jews, accustomed to their long glad wedding ceremonies, would understand this. John had spoken of Christ as the bridegroom, John iii. 29.

Ver. 20. First intimation of the Passion. "In those days," lit. "in that day"—*Tischendorf*. Did they recall this in that dark day? We have Christ always with us; why should we fast? He prescribed none, nor did His disciples.

Vers. 21, 22. Illustrations of the unfitnes of burdening the Gospel with the law. "The new," etc., R lit. "the new piece is rent away from the old." "New"—un-brunk. "Bottles," not glass, as with us, but skins. Sometimes whole skins; after a time they become dry and hard; "new," unfermented wine put into them would burst them.

Ver. 23. The action places this incident in the early summer. *Lange* says: "This and the healing belong to a later period, but Mark connects with appropriate facts. The picture is, Jesus making his way through the growing corn, pushing it to the right and to the left, and the disciples following, rubbing and eating."

Ver. 24. Moses forbade only the sickle, allowed plucking, Deut. xxiii. 25. The Pharisees had improved on their law-giver!

Vers. 25, 26. See I Samuel xxi. 6. It was consecrated bread for the priests, not for common use, and David was their model of piety.

Ver. 27. Here is the true position. What the origin and purpose of the Sabbath? Surely for man's good—his servant, not his master; a blessing, not a stern curse. How guilty they who would steal God's gift to man, be they Pharisees or Free-thinkers.

Ver. 28. "Son of man," found 37 times in the New Testament, applied to Jesus. "Lord," ruling over and ordering it in its New Testament freedom. The R gives force to the main idea by reading "so that the Son," etc., the idea being, because the Sabbath was made for man, the man's Lord is its Lord.

Chap. iii. Ver. 1. Not that Sabbath, the next, so Luke. "Withered," dried up; not so born, but from disease or injury.

Ver. 2. "Watched." Nice use they were making of the Sabbath and God's house; just like formalists. It was a

miserable, diabolical sort of watching. "Accuse," and so bring the condemnation of death.

Vers. 3, 4. A vivid picture, the man standing up, Christ's questions—the silent Pharisees—"to save—to kill." He would save the man they would kill the savel. "Held their peace," as they often did when they could not answer.

Ver. 5. Grief and anger, for they were hardening their hearts. Christ's work means many things. (See verses 3 and 4.) "Stretch forth"—there in the sight of all the miracle performed.

Incidental Lessons.—That forms and observances must ever be secondary to the spirit of religion—being like Christ.

That those who love Christ have no gladness without Him and no sadness without Him.

That a censorious spirit, seeking to find fault in others, is utterly opposed to the religion of Jesus.

That Christ was often grieved at the hardness of heart among his hearers, and once wept because of the sins of the Jews and the punishment that would follow.

That the miracles of Christ were in the sight of His enemies, and they could not deny them.

Main Lesson on the Sabbath.—(1) He who made man, made the Sabbath for man, Gen. i. 26; ii. 3.

(2) The Sabbath is a human need, Ex xvi. 23-29; Heb. xiii. 15-19.

(3) The best observance of the Sabbath is in works of love to God and love and mercy to man. (Lesson portion and parallel passages.)

(4) Our Sabbath the first day of the week. Christ's resurrection and appearing, Mark xvi. 14; Luke xxiv. 36; John xx 19-26. Apostles confirmed change, Acts xx. 7; I Cor. xvi. 2.

(5) The Sabbath a type and an earnest of eternal rest, Heb. iv. 9; lit. "a Sabbath keeping."

Feb. 5,
1882. }

CHRIST AND HIS DISCIPLES.

{ Mark iii.
6-14.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit."—John xv. 16.

TIME.—Not long after the earlier events of the last lesson; towards the close of the first half of Christ's ministry.

PLACE.—Still near the Sea of Galilee, but some miles south of Capernaum.

PARALLEL.—With vs. 6-12. Matt. xii. 14-21, with vs. 13-19; Matt. x. 1-15 (much fuller than here); Luke vi. 12-17.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Dangers.—Do not make this a geographical or a biographical lesson. You may have—ought to have—a map, to point out the wide extent of the fame of Christ, but stop there; so with the Twelve. You may portray their characteristics in a few words—the impetuous Peter, the Boanerges brothers, the survivor of whom was to become the apostle of love, and so on, but don't trouble yourself or your class with queries as to the names of their father and grandfather, where they were born, and so on. You have to tell of their work—a work which, in some of its aspects, all may do.

What and How to Teach.—Get a clear idea of the gist of the lesson. For the practical purposes of your teaching it is nearly all found in verses 13 to 19. Christ has been doing His work single-handed, so to speak; now He brings in twelve others to whom He gives a commission to preach His gospel, and, for the purpose of confirmation, He gives them "power to heal sicknesses and to cast out devils." Call the attention of your class to this fact of Christ's sole work during nearly half of His ministry, that, while seldom alone, while for some months He had those with Him, disciples and followers, who hung on His words, and doubtless did Him some kind of service, yet they were not preaching the gospel. Now He makes them co-workers in His mission. Point out that this had become a necessity, from the causes stated in vs. 7-10—the multitude that pressed upon Him, such crowds that He had to secure a fisherman's boat that He might push off from the land. Question your class as to the motives of the people who thronged about Him. What for? Ask why crowds turn out to see any special person to-day—Lord Lorne, for instance. Curiosity in nearly all—so many there—others that they might be healed, if they could but touch Him; others—not many, we are afraid—because of the gracious words which fell from His lips, and still fewer because they believed that He was the Messiah, the Christ of God. Ask your class finally what they imagine was the effect on this vast multitude of Christ's teachings and miracles: some to go away and forget, some to carp and sneer, some to hate and seek to destroy, and some doubtless to consecrate their lives to Him in loving gratitude. The application of these thoughts is plain.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 6. "Herodians," supporters of Herod in his desire to get the whole kingdom, as Herod the Great; a political faction that cared nothing for the Sabbath; bitterly opposed by Pharisees; now willing to join in an attempt to destroy Christ from mutual hate—foreshadowing Luke xxiii. 12.

Ver. 7. "Withdrew," not merely to coast, to sea, from their plots; His hour was not yet come.

Ver. 8. Meyer says in ver. 7, The greatness of the mass of people is prominent in this, their varied nationality. Just about now was manifested the desire to make Him king, another reason for withdrawal. "Idumea," Edom, dependants of Esau. "Tyre," etc., so north, south, east and west were represented.

Ver. 9. One of their fishing-boats; a relief from the crowd, and retreat from foes.

Ver. 10. "Pressed," the idea is of rushing upon Him, would not be denied. "Touch," the touch of faith. Many touched Him in hate; they had no blessing.

Vers. 11, 12. "Not make Him known," this was not the time, and these were not the messengers.

Ver. 13. "A," R "the mountain," indicating one known. Supposed to be the "Horns of Hattin," the only prominent eminence west of Sea of Galilee. "Called," made known His wishes in some way; likely selected these out of the larger discipleship; He knew each perfectly.

Vers. 14, 15. "Ordained," nothing to do with our idea of ordination, lit. appointed. Half had been called before; they were to be with Christ, to preach the gospel, to work miracles. Here, then, are the requirements of His messengers to-day: a call from Christ, communion with Him, preaching Him. The gift of miracles was special and extraordinary.

Vers. 16-19. The giving of a surname a mark of distinction. "Sons of thunder"—a glorious name—the thunderbolts of the Gospel; fiery, grand, sublime spirits. "Simon," impulsive, ready to draw the sword for Christ one moment and the next to deny Him. "John," courageous and ambitious, the earliest follower of Jesus; the only one to stand with him in the judgment hall and at the cross;

the first disciple at the sepulchre; the last to lay down his work for rest. "James," the first martyr of the Twelve. "Andrew" (see John i. 40, 41), to his eternal honour. "Bartholomew," supposed to be Nathaniel, "an Israelite indeed." (See John i. 45-47.) Names together there—"Matthew," whose call we have been lately studying. "Thomas," the doubter and the candid, frank confessor. "James" the Less, called "Cleopas" (Luke xxiv. 18; John xix. 25). "Thaddeus," supposed to be the "Judas" of Matt. xii. 55. "Simon," not a Canaanite, as we understand, but in Luke vi. 15, and literally "Zelotes," a Zealot, a Jewish extreme sect. "Judas," "which also"—the eternally infamous.

Incidental Lessons.—That if Jesus gave temporal benefits to-day, He would not want followers.

That Jesus is the great Physician, and the healing of the soul means the resurrection of the body.

That when bad men join hands, some good man or cause is in danger.

That Jesus does not want the aid of evil spirits or men to proclaim His kingdom.

That wherever the Gospel of Jesus comes, blessings follow.

That there is a right and a wrong way of following Jesus.

Main Lesson.—Work and workers for Christ.

Christ can use men of all temperaments and positions in life to do His work.

Those who have listened to Christ's words and had fellowship with Him, are the men and women for His work.

Christ never calls any one to His work without giving them power.

Among the Twelve a Judas. Let us not be surprised or disheartened if they are found in the Church now.

We are the true "successors of the Apostles" if we do Christ's work.

Who will say, "Here am I, send me?"

For these various points, see John xv. 4, 5; 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17; Acts ix. 36; Titus ii. 14; 1 Tim. vi. 18; Col. i. 10; John iii. 21; 1 Peter ii. 12; 1 Cor. iii. 9; xii. 7-12; 2 Cor. vi. 1.

BIBLE PRIZE QUESTIONS.

We intend giving monthly a series of Bible Questions, for correct replies to which, during the year, we shall give

THREE PRIZES

in books of the value respectively of FOUR DOLLARS, THREE DOLLARS and TWO DOLLARS. The replies are not to be sent until the close of the year. With the December number forms will be sent out for the use of any who desire to try.

The conditions are that those who send replies must not be more than twenty-one years of age, and they must not have been assisted in the questions. The Scripture reference or references must always be given.

PRIZE QUESTIONS FOR JANUARY.

- One of the things which Moses told the children of Israel was plentiful in the land of promise, was forbidden to be used in a burnt offering. Name it.
- Give a verse speaking of a great crowd of people gathered together on a wet day.
- Luke, in the Acts, mentions two men of the same name, one of whom took part in a trial of the Apostles, and the other was prominent in a tumult. What was the name?

LITERARY NOTICES.

THE CENTURY for this month promises to be fully up to its own self, which is saying a great deal. A coloured frontispiece portrait of ex-President Thiers is promised, and an artotype copy of the portrait sent by Mrs. Garfield of her late husband to Queen Victoria. No literary monthly is more worthy of a place upon our tables than THE CENTURY and ST. NICHOLAS—of the latter, 8,000 copies are circulating in England alone.

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE continues its weekly visit of choicest review reading, creaming the standard magazines and reviews. We shall notice in our next issue some of its articles.

I. K. FUNK & Co. have issued "HUGHES' COMMENTARY ON MARK." It is divided into forty-eight sections, corresponding with the forty-eight lessons of the International Series; each section is carefully analyzed, words and phrases explained, persons and places accurately described, errors pointed out, and rendering of recent revisions indicated. It is emphatically a Sunday school commentary—suggestive, simple, brief, with evident marks of unobtrusive scholarship, and of full trust in the Scriptures as the very Word of God. Its "practical lessons" are really the framework of sermons, and the overtaxed pastor or earnest layman may find efficient aid therein for homiletic work. We cordially commend it as filling a place of its own.

THE DECEMBER number of the HOMILETIC MONTHLY, by the same house, fully maintains the character already earned of affording at a minimum cost reliable and select homiletic matter of the very best order. Pernicious literature is vigorously handled, and there are many valuable hints to preachers and Bible students in this number.

PEARLS FROM THE EAST, by Dr. R. Newton (American Sunday School Union), is a very appropriate gift-book for the young. It is a selection of such Scripture topics as "The Prince in Midian," "The Unseen Army," "The Transfiguration," etc., each illustrated. The tone is simple, scriptural, reverential—a children's book that older ones may read with pleasure, and profit.

THE SPRAG BOY, by the same house, is the story of a little boy who, tenderly reared, had to perform hard duty in a coal mine of which his dead father had been part owner. We are told how the little hero learnt often by hard experience to conquer self, to be more than a time server, and to be a teacher of good things. Boys may learn how to conquer more truly than by blows, remembering that a soft answer turneth away wrath; and, as in the Bible history of Joseph, know how a man may become a nobler man by bearing the yoke in his youth.

WIDE AWAKE, an Illustrated Monthly Magazine for Young People. (D. Lothrop & Co., Boston.)—Must certainly grow in favour with the young if it at all keep up to its present excellence. "Wee Willie Winkie," the little urchin that would not go to sleep, with his night ramble through the city, followed by all the children in night-gowns arrayed, in the December number, is a charming "John Gilpin" ballad, which, with its five illustrations, keeps the nursery and evening fireside ringing with merry voices till sleep claims the little ones.

THE PANSY and LITTLE FOLKS' READER, by the same firm, are equally good, being more in the paper form—the former fitted for Sunday schools, the latter for a pleasing text book—making reading even to children a pleasure. All are worthy of patronage.

STORIES FOR LANGUAGE LESSONS is another children's book by the same publishing house as "Wide Awake," in which blanks are left in very simple stories for the children to fill, an illustration being always there to suggest the needed word. "Oh! mamma," said Nellie, "I am no more afraid of a bear now than of my own —," and a little kitten is sleeping cozily on a mat. A charming exercise book for youthful learners how to read. Remembering the good old times and hard seats of our young days, we almost envy the easy and pleasant road of learning now.

THE TEMPTER BEHIND, from the same house, a neat volume, contains a thrilling story, not of love and adventure, but of the struggle with alcohol; the o'er true tale of wine suppers and happy companions; the revel, the riot, and the hell that certainly follows. The battling of life with death, of conscience with a will that has been paralyzed, is not more vividly described than true. Let those who read learn wisdom.

D. LOTHROP & Co. are also issuing a series of tales for the young, under the title of the "Pansy" Books. "ESTER REID" is before us. If all in the series equals this one—and the publications we have above noticed from this house seem to warrant the expectation that they do and will—the name of D. Lothrop & Co. will become justly a household word, and no library designed for the young can afford to put aside their catalogue. The little card Ester Reid found in the corner of a fashionable store, inviting itself to be taken from among its companions, is worthy of being copied in letters of gold, and children of a larger growth will be the better for observing:

I SOLEMNLY AGREE, as *God shall help me*—

1. To observe regular seasons of secret prayer, at least in the morning and evening of each day.
2. To read daily at least a small portion of the Bible.
3. To attend one or more prayer meetings every week, if I have strength to get there.
4. To stand up for Jesus always and everywhere.
5. To try and save at least one soul every year.
6. To engage in no amusement where my Saviour could not be a guest.

Children's Corner.

SIR WILLIAM NAPIER AND LITTLE JOAN.

Sir William Napier, one bright day,
Was walking down the glen—
A noble English soldier,
And the handsomest of men.

Through fields and fragrant hedge-rows
He slowly wandered down
To quiet Freshford village,
By pleasant Bradford town.

With look and mien magnificent,
And step so grand, moved he,
And from his stately front outshone
Beauty and majesty.

About his strong, white forehead
The rich locks thronged and curled,
Above the splendour of his eyes,
That might command the world.

A sound of bitter weeping
Came up to his quick ear,
He paused that instant, bending
His kingly head to hear.

Among the grass and daisies
Sat wretched little Joan,
And near her lay a bowl of delf,
Broken upon a stone.

Her cheeks were red with crying,
And her blue eyes dull and dim,
And she turned her pretty, woeful face,
All tear-stained up to him.

Scarcely six years old, and sobbing
In misery so drear!
"Why, what's the matter, Posy?"
He said,—“Come, tell me, dear.”

"It's Father's bowl I've broken ;
'Twas for his dinner kept.
I took it safe, but coming back
It fell"—again she wept.

"But you can mend it, can't you?"
Cried the despairing child
With sudden hope, as down on her,
Like some kind god, he smiled.

"Don't cry, poor little Posy!
I cannot make it whole.
But I can give you sixpence
To buy another bowl."

He sought in vain for silver
In purse and pockets, too,
And found but golden guineas.
He pondered what to do.

"This time to-morrow, Posy,"
He said, "again come here,
And I will bring your sixpence.
I promise! Never fear!"

Away went Joan rejoicing—
A rescued child was she;
And home went good Sir William ;
And to him presently

A footman brings a letter,
And low before him bends:
"Will not Sir William come and dine
To-morrow with his friends?"

The letter read: "And we've secured
The man among all men
You wish to meet. He will be here.
You will not fail us then?"

To-morrow! Could he get to Bath
And dine with dukes and earls,
And back in time? That hour was pledged—
It was the little girl's!

He could not disappoint her,
He must his friends refuse.
So "a previous engagement"
He pleaded as excuse.

Next day when she, all eager,
Came o'er the fields so fair,
As sure as of the sunrise
That she should find him there.

He met her, and the sixpence
Laid in her little hand.
Her woe was ended, and her heart
The lightest in the land.

How would the stately company,
Who had so much desired
His presence at their splendid feast,
Have wondered and admired!

As soldier, scholar, gentleman,
His praises oft are heard,—
'Twas not the least of his great deeds
So to have kept his word!

—*Celia Thaxter, in St. Nicholas for January, 1882.*

THE UNHAPPY BOY MADE HAPPY.

"I cannot tell how it is, mother, but I have not spent a happy day."

And why was it that Charles had not been happy? The day had been just such a day as a boy or girl loves to see. The sun had shone in the sky; the birds had sung very sweetly; and the flowers were in full bloom in the garden. Charles was in good health; he had a nice home, and kind friends. What then could make him unhappy?

"The reason is plain, Charles," said his mother. "The fault has been in yourself. You began the day in a wrong way. Instead of rising early, you lay in bed a long time. You were called two or three times, but you

thought you would lie a little longer. When at last you got up, you hurried over your prayers, and did not with your heart ask God to bless and keep you. Then when you came down from your room, breakfast was over, and you had to sit alone. This, you know, put you sadly out of humour, and you had no mind to think of the blessings which should have made you happy and thankful. But what happened next?"

"When I was ready to go to school, I could not find my 'History,' because Mary had taken it to look at the pictures."

"Yes, Charles, and I am sorry to say you left home in a naughty temper. How did you get on at school?"

"Why, mother, I lost my place at the top of the class. George Jones spelt a word which I could not. And you should have seen how proud he was of it! Then as I was coming home, my cousin William knocked my hat off."

"Perhaps he only did it in play. Did he not pick it up again?"

"Yes, and said that he did not mean any harm."

"Why, then, did you look so cross when you came home? You know I saw you sitting in the garden with quite a sullen look; you were pulling some flowers to pieces, and treading them under your feet. My dear Charles, you have let evil passions dwell in your heart; and if you do so, you cannot hope to be happy. Does not this show you that your heart is evil, and that you need the grace of the Holy Spirit to cleanse and renew it? Do you not feel that you have sinned, and should ask God to pardon you, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord?"

Charles's mother now kissed him. As he lay down that night to rest, he thought he would try to be on the morrow a better and happier boy.

The next night, when Charles was in the garden looking at the setting sun, his mother gently said, "I think my Charles has been more happy to-day than he was yesterday."

"Yes, mother," he said. "I got up early, and

it did not seem near so hard as when I lay and thought about it. I had time to pray, and came into the garden, and had a run round all the walks. The birds were singing so very sweetly; I never heard them sing better; the flowers were very nice to smell; and the air seemed so nice and pleasant."

"The boy who lies in bed," said his mother, "is not the boy to find out these things. Then, I think, you had time to look over the school lessons of the day."

"Oh yes, and I was in good time to have my breakfast along with the rest, and my run in the garden made me enjoy it too. Then I was early at school, with my lessons all ready. When we were in class, George Jones was very near misspelling a word, but I thought if he lost his place he would feel as bad as I did, and so I waited a moment, and he spelled it rightly. In coming home one of the boys tried to vex me, but I knew it would be wrong to be angry, so I took no notice of what he did. When he slipped in running, I went to him and helped him to get up."

"I was glad, Charles, when you came in and found your sister Mary with your library book, that you did not rudely snatch it from her, as I have sometimes seen you do."

"I am sure, mother, it was kind of my sister to give it to me when she saw I wanted it."

"Now, Charles, it is time for you to go into the parlour, for family prayer. I hope that God will give you His grace, and help you to overcome all bad passions. You will not forget that if you yield to evil, not fine weather, nor the singing of birds, nor kind friends, nor health, nor money, nor any other thing can make you happy. But if you have peace with God, by believing in our Lord Jesus Christ, and trusting and loving Him, then you will be at peace with yourself and with all around you. Seek this peace in the first place; praying to God to give you the Holy Spirit for Christ's sake; and then, though you may have troubles in life, you shall enjoy that happiness and comfort which nothing else can give."