

THE
GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

"COMFORT YE, COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE, SAITH YOUR GOD."
"ENDEAVOURING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE."
"JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER."

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The Family Portion ;

OR, WORDS OF SPIRITUAL CAUTION, COUNSEL, AND COMFORT.

"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."—2 COR. I. 4.

OPPRESSED, BUT NOT DESTROYED.

"*I was brought low, and He helped me.*"—PSALM cxvi. 6.

THE much-tried children of GOD are often a wonder to themselves. The severe, searching ordeals of affliction and distress through which they are led by the faithful hand of their covenant LORD are at times well-nigh overwhelming while yet they are in progress. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." In all ages of the history of the redeemed Church of CHRIST—"My Church," as JESUS called it—tribulation has been her heritage, and will be unto the end. It is a settled certainty that "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of GOD." Our blessed LORD and MASTER trod the self-same path, and has entered thereby into the eternal glory. The members of His mystical body may travel by no other road than that which was trodden by the sacred feet of their divine FORERUNNER. "It is enough for the servant to be as his Master, and the disciple as his Lord."

The Psalm in which our experimental subject is found dwells specially on the faithfulness of JEHOVAH, and the inspired writer tells forth with adoring joy the love he felt towards his GOD

for His condescension and mercy in hearing his supplications in the season of distress. "I love the LORD, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live." There seems to be probability that this Psalm is prophetic of the experience of the suffering SAVIOUR Himself; at any rate, that which touches the least of His brethren touches the apple of His own eye. "SAUL, SAUL, why persecutest thou Me?" is still the language of the Church's glorified HEAD when the persecutor dares to smite and oppress even the little ones of CHRIST's blood-bought flock.

"I was brought low." No child of GOD is a stranger to this condition of soul and circumstances. The providential dealings of our heavenly FATHER are sometimes clothed with darkness—thick darkness. In our judgment they then appear like manifestations of His displeasure, and our hearts sink within us. It was this which afflicted JOB. "Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him: on the left hand where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him; He hideth on the right hand, that I cannot see Him" (Job xxiii. 8, 9). These gloomy seasons deeply depress a spiritual mind, and sorely test the faith and hope of poor and needy souls. There is left, however, the sweet reflection, "But He knoweth the way that I take; and when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (verse 10). Yes, indeed! This truth is the heritage of every member of the household of faith.

The saints of GOD are taught by the HOLY SPIRIT that "all things work together for good to them that are the called according to His purpose," to them that love Him because He first loved them. They, thus, in their worst times possess an assurance that in due season their darkness shall be turned into light, and their tears into gladness. Mark the close connection, dear reader, between the *troubles* and the *prayers* of the Psalmist: "I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the Name of the LORD: O LORD, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul." The "Name" of JEHOVAH is an expression which embraces the entire perfections of the Covenant character of GOD. Those precious attributes of His Being are next set forth: "*Gracious* is the LORD,

and *righteous*; yea, our GOD is *merciful*. The LORD *preserveth* the simple: I was brought low, and He *helped* me" (verses 5, 6). What a graciously attractive revelation is this of the all-sufficiency of our heavenly FATHER! His "Name" is indeed the "strong tower" into which poor, tempest-tossed, persecuted, down-cast souls flee for shelter and rest. "I was brought low, and He helped me." Faint and bruised and broken, the spirit of many a dear child of GOD can do nothing but bow at the feet of his compassionate REDEEMER, and lie low there in utter helplessness till grace enable a cry, a sigh, or a groan. "Brought low." The Hebrew, a commentator observes, signifies the feebleness and weakness consequent on sickness—the prostration of strength by disease. In that low and needy condition it is that the strength and help of the LORD find a befitting sphere of operation. "He helped me." The GOD of our salvation does all things in due time. When His children are at their lowest ebb, His promised assistance is most near. "He helped me"—to bear the worst, to hope for the best, to pray for deliverance, to wait for it unto the end. Persecution for righteousness' sake, for the truth's sake, for the LORD'S sake, is apt to "wear out the saints of the MOST HIGH," but they are yet in loving hands—hands which will not fail to soothe, and sustain, and restore, and revive. It may be some down-trodden witness for the precious truth of the Word is tracing his own case in these reflections. If so, may the rich grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST sweetly distil upon the withered branch, and speedily cause it to spring forth in freshness of vigour, and to yield praise and thanksgiving sevenfold to the glory of a delivering SAVIOUR.

The people of GOD can never perish under affliction. "Cast down, but not destroyed," is the SPIRIT'S own description of their lot. The lower they fall in their own feelings, so do they sink into the hollow of the hand of omnipotence. "He sent from above, He took me, He drew me out of many waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me. They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay. He brought me forth also into a large place: He delivered me, because He delighted in me." Large indeed is the place of liberty where our gracious LORD sets free His prisoners from the bonds of misery and distress.

Then their souls take unto them, as it were, the wings of a dove, and they flee swiftly to the bosom of their all-merciful and almighty BENEFACITOR. "Return unto *thy rest*, O my soul: for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee." How delightful is rest after conflict and the mental tension consequent on anxiety, fear, and foreboding! And, oh, brethren, if on earth its sweetness be so grateful, what will be its plenitude when the Wicked One shall cease from troubling, and our last conflict, care, and sorrow shall for ever cease, and we dwell in the bosom of our adorable REDEEMER?

"All unseen the Master walketh
By the toiling servant's side;
Comfortable words He speaketh,
While His hands uphold and guide.

"Grief, nor pain, nor any sorrow
Rends thy heart, to Him unknown:
He to-day, and He to-morrow,
Grace sufficient gives His own.

"Holy strivings nerve and strengthen,
Long endurance wins the crown:
When the evening shadows lengthen,
Thou shalt lay thy burden down!"

THE EDITOR.

THE cross is the invincible sanctuary of the humble, the dejection of the proud, the victory of Christ, the destruction of the devil, the confirmation of the faithful, the death of the unbeliever, the life of the just.—*Quarles*.

SOME of the Lord's people are tried because their prayers are not better put together. They have "no language," they say, to express their wants; when they fall down upon their knees before the Lord, they "cannot put sentences together in good order." It is a good thing they cannot. This dove-tailed prayer suits hypocrites, and those whose religion lies on the tip of their tongue, but who know nothing of the work of the Spirit upon the heart. When sentence is nicely fitted into sentence, it suits those whose religion never sinks below their throats. But the prayers of God's people, the sighs and groans that come out of their bosom, are living testimonies that they have something more to come to the Lord with than lip-service, something more weighty to pour out before Him than mere head notions and language of man.—*J. C. Philpot*.

Wayside Notes.

SPIRITUAL FRUITFULNESS.

"Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples."—JOHN xv. 8.

THE Arabs are said to reckon that the palm-tree is capable of being put to 365 different uses. It certainly is a marvellous tree, and the Holy Spirit in Scripture employs it as an emblem of the righteous, while the wicked are likened to the grass, which withers and soon loses its glory. "The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree . . . they shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to show that the Lord is upright." Fruit-bearing is the vocation of grace-saved sinners, for spiritual fruitfulness glorifies and honours the God of Salvation. "From Me is thy fruit found." Apart from Christ, the Vine, no fruit is possible. There must first be Spirit-wrought union with Him in His resurrection life before "the fruit of the Spirit" can be brought forth. Only a good tree can produce good fruit. The flesh can only bear the evil fruit of dead works. The natural heart of fallen man is a fount of unmixed iniquity. It is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

One of the principal means employed for the production of spiritual fruit in God's beloved people is sanctified chastening. Thus, the Lord Jesus, when speaking of His redeemed ones, under the emblem of a vine, says: "Every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." This process He attributes to His Father, the "Husbandman" of the Vine. "Purging" is painful. Sometimes the knife of the Husbandman cuts deep—even to the quick. "Moreover, Job continued his parable, and said, Oh that I were as in months past." This sorrowing exclamation was uttered in the hour when the wounds of the knife were many and sharp. We ourselves know the same experience in our spiritual life. In a moment the iron has entered into the soul, and anguish unutterable has possessed our inmost being. What *proving* times such ordeals have been made unto us! What searchings of heart and walk they have produced! What consequent humbling of ourselves, what condemning of

ourselves, what loathing of ourselves have we then known! Never do the substance and reality of the Covenant promises of our heavenly Father appeal more effectually to faith in our hearts than when correction and chastening lay us low. Then it is that the inspired words of Isaiah exactly fit our lips: "But now, O Lord, Thou art our Father; we are the clay, and Thou our Potter." We are melted and softened, rendered pliable and impressible—even like wax. The seal of acceptance and deliverance is then set upon the conscience of God's poor trembling ones, and the "afterward" of the purging process yields "the peaceable fruit of righteousness" to their deeply exercised souls. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."

Not a living branch in Christ, the Vine, is exempted from the glittering knife, as occasion arises, and the unerring wisdom of a loving Father sees fit. Let it ever be remembered that He takes no pleasure in the afflictions and sorrows of His saints. The deeper the wounds He inflicts, the deeper His pity and mercy towards the sufferers, and the greater His joy to mollify and heal the "faithful wounds" He has inflicted for the profit of His beloved ones. Varied are the precious fruits resulting from the Divine pruning. Holy Scripture describes them as "Fruits meet for repentance;" "Fruits of righteousness;" "the Fruit of the lips," that is, praise; "Fruit unto holiness;" "Fruit unto God;" "Fruit unto life eternal;" "the Fruit of the Spirit,"—with many more. Perhaps one of the most pleasing of all the Spirit's fruit in a chastened child of God is humility—that "meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." It is so truly Christ-like. In Him it was inherent. In us it is derived and communicated, and comes instrumentally by the providential dealings of our heavenly Father—very largely by affliction, distress, sorrow, and persecution. The conforming of believers to the likeness of Christ is the supreme purpose of the Father. "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the First born among many brethren." If the Son of God was "made perfect through suffering," and His likeness is to be reproduced in His followers, the cross must needs be their lot and experience. In Him was no sin to be corrected, no holiness to be increased, no separation from the world to be

effected; for He was perfectly "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." Yet "it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief," for our salvation, and as our example.

Hence it is well that in all our various afflictions we should recognize with humility the painfulness of our condition as conducive to our spiritual profit and increase. "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt Thou recover me, and make me to live. Behold, for peace I had great bitterness; but Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back." Such was the testimony of godly Hezekiah when under the pruning-knife. Seasons of distress lead us to contemplate our blessed Lord in His sevenfold sorrows, and to learn of Him how to endure patiently.

"Why should I complain of want or distress,
Temptation or pain? He told me no less;
The heirs of salvation, I know from His Word,
Through much tribulation must follow their Lord.

"How bitter that cup no heart can conceive
Which He drank quite up, that sinners might live!
His way was much rougher and darker than mine;
Did Christ, my Lord, suffer, and shall I repine?

"Since all that I meet shall work for my good,
The bitter is sweet, the medicine is food;
Though painful at present 'twill cease before long,
And then, oh! how pleasant the conqueror's song!"

It is indeed good for us to be afflicted, if grace thereby constrain us to drink more deeply into His Spirit, and to walk in closer fellowship with Him. He, by His infinite sufferings—even unto death—brought forth fruit in the salvation of myriads of sinners. His Church treads in His footsteps in tribulation—though the measure of her afflictions be limited in degree and remote in results—yet there must be an experimental drinking of the cup of which He drank, and a being baptized with the baptism of blood wherewith He was baptized. "The Spirit itself beareth witness that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; *if so be that we suffer with Him*, that we may be also glorified together." Oh for grace to keep this connection between suffering and glory well in view at all times, and to be cheered by the truth contained in Albert Midlane's lines:—

- “Be not weary,” *toiling* Christian, good the Master thou dost serve ;
 Let no disappointment move thee, from thy service never swerve :
 Sow in hope, nor cease thy sowing ; lack not patience, faith, or
 prayer :
 Seed-time passeth ; harvest hasteneth ; precious sheaves thou
then shalt bear.
- “Be not weary,” *praying* Christian, open is thy Father’s ear
 To the fervent supplication and the agonising prayer ;
 Prayer the Holy Ghost begetteth—be it words, or groans, or tears—
 Is the prayer that’s always answered ; banish, then, thy doubts and
 fears.
- “Be not weary,” *suffering* Christian, scourged is each adopted child,
 Else would grow in sad profusion nature’s fruit, perverse and wild ;
 Chastening’s needful for the spirit, though ’tis painful for the flesh ;
 God designs a blessing for thee : let this thought thy soul refresh.
- “Be not weary,” *tempted* Christian, sin can only lure on earth ;
 Faith is tried by sore temptation ; ’tis the furnace proves its worth ;
 Bounds are set unto the tempter, which beyond he cannot go ;
 Battle on, on God relying, faith will overcome the foe.
- “Be not weary,” *weeping* Christian, tears endure but for the night ;
 Joy, deep joy, thy spirit greeting, will return with morning light ;
 Every tear thou shedd’st is numbered in the register above !
Heaven is tearless ; sweet the prospect—sighless, tearless land of
 love !
- “Be not weary,” *hoping* Christian, though the vision tarry long ;
 Hope will bring the blessing nearer, change thy sorrow into song ;
 Nought shall press thy spirit downwards, if thy hopes all brightly
 shine ;
Hold thy hope, whate’er thou loosest—living precious hopes are thine !
- “Be not weary,” *troubled* Christian, rest remains for thee on high ;
 Dwell upon the untold glory of thy future home of joy ;
 There nor sin nor sorrow entereth ; there thy soul attuned to praise
 Shall, in strains of heavenly fulness, songs of happy triumph raise.
- “Be not weary,” *loving* Christian, in this heavenly grace abound ;
 Jesus, well thou knowest, loved *thee*, though in mad rebellion found ;
 Drink, drink deeply of His Spirit—Jesu’s love knows great nor
 small ;
Nature loves but what is lovely—*grace* embraceth one and all.
- “Christian, thus in grace unwearied pass thy sojourn here below ;
 Spurn lukewarmness, let thy bosom ever with true fervour glow !
 Look to Christ, thy bright Exemplar, copy Him in all His ways ;
 Let thy life and conversation tell to thy Redeemer’s praise !”

Pilgrim Papers.

WELL-SPRINGS.

“For the weight of the brass could not be found out.”—2 CHRON. iv. 18.

THE Hebrew word rendered “brass” by our translators is the same as copper, as quoted in Ezra viii. 27, “Also twenty basons of gold, of a thousand drams; and two vessels of fine copper, precious as gold.” (Margin: “yellow or shining brass, as desirable as gold.”) It is a metal formed by a combination of zinc with copper, and is referred to by Job (xxviii. 2). “Iron is taken out of the earth (“dust,” margin), and brass is molten out of the stone.” And the Vulgate rendering of this passage is “The stone liquefied by heat is turned into brass.”

Because brass was capable of so fine a polish and of retaining its lustre for so long a time, it was used for weapons of war and defensive armour among the ancients.

And again we have its uses found in the “looking-glasses” with which the women provided themselves in the time of Moses (Exod. xxxiii. 8). This was the metal so highly polished as to represent the clearness of glass, and of which offering the brazen laver was also made. “Thou shalt make a laver of brass, and his foot of brass, to wash withal; and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein” (Exod. xxx. 18). The use of this laver was for the washing of the priests and their sons whenever they entered the holy place for service. Mark its *position*: “between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar.” Was not this to impress upon the minds of the priests, before they could appear in the sight of Him they were to worship, the utter necessity of cleansing from all stain or pollution? The laver was there as a standing truth to the need of washing; for had there not been defilement, there had been no need for a provision for washing. It all pointed to that “washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.” That there was no record of measurements taken of the laver teaches us how the Spirit works immeasurably—in perfect sovereignty—with Divine freeness, to meet the needs of purification from sin, regeneration from sin, the daily washing from the contamination of the walk.

And in passing, let me add with regard to this type of the laver and altar, which were of brass, and the Hebrew of which stands for serpent, the author of sin, how perfect is God’s order of things. Here, outside, ere the priests could enter, the sins of the people were to be put away. But when they entered the holy place there was no utensil found of brass. No memorial of sin could be found *there*! but all the vessels were of gold, and emblematical of the righteousness of Christ, Who has put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself once and for ever.

But we pass on from the Tabernacle appointments to those of the Temple, and see the wonderful scale for largeness, abundance, and free-will offerings, in the chapter from which our text is taken. "He made also *ten* lavers of brass . . . to wash in them" (v. 6). "Furthermore, he made the court of the priests, and the great court, and doors for the court, and overlaid the doors of them with brass" (v. 9).

"The pots also, and the shovels, and the fleshhooks, and all their instruments, did Hiram his father make to King Solomon, for the house of the Lord, of bright brass" (v. 16). "Thus Solomon made all these vessels in great abundance; for the weight of the brass could not be found out" (v. 18).

What do we learn here? Do we not see how brass was representative of the power of endurance in the Lord Jesus Christ? As the God-Man, "He *endured* the Cross." He exposed Himself to the fiery wrath of God. He was "made sin for us Who knew no sin." He came out unscathed, untainted. How does the word of our hymn melt the heart to live, and adore, and magnify, as we sing:—

"O Christ, what burdens bowed Thy head!
Our load was laid on Thee;
Thou stoodest in the sinner's stead,
Didst bear all ill for me.
A Victim led, Thy blood was shed,
Now there's no load for me.

"Jehovah lifted up His rod;
O Christ, it fell on Thee!
Thou wast sore stricken of Thy God;
There's not one stroke for me.
Thy tears, Thy blood, beneath it flowed,
Thy bruising healeth me."

The vision of that Holy One is given to Daniel the prophet, who saw "His feet like in colour to polished brass"; and the beloved John saw "His feet like unto fine brass as if they burned in a furnace," denoting the strength and firmness of His work, His unsullied holiness and spotless purity, even in this sin-polluted, fallen world of ours, and His being "made perfect through suffering."

Thus the types, shadows, emblems, all pointed to Christ's wondrous Atonement: the Sin-bearer, the Scape-goat, the Mediator betwixt God and man. "As Moses lifted up the serpent" (of brass and named so, not only from similarity of colouring, but in shape of that deadly monster, the serpent, which deceived, and worked its deadly doing in our first parents, who fell under him). "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." The serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field." Yes. Thus was the command of Jehovah to Moses, "Make you a serpent of brass, and set it up upon a pole." Show it to all Israel. Declare the truth of it. Tell them only as they look upon that which represents their glorious Sin-bearer shall they live. "Even so must the Son of man be lifted up." But the type fades, the shadows flee away, and Jesus is revealed. The Sent One of God

“ever liveth,” and is the Alone Object of worship, “to make intercession for the transgressors.” Oh! brethren! contemplate this wondrous mystery, and see God’s deep thoughts in setting before us those things of brass which could not be weighed. They represent the furniture of the Temple of Solomon, small and large, from the altar and laver to the little “pots and shovels,” etc. Mark well their uses and the particular places appointed them. They were all known and placed, whilst the *weight* of them alone remained unaccounted for. What are we to learn here? “But in a great house,” says the Apostle Paul, “there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every good work” (2 Tim. ii. 20, 21): every little as well as large vessel in its place designed, and accomplishing the purpose of the Master of the House. “They shall hang upon Him the glory of His Father’s house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups even to all the vessels of flagons.”

“*The weight of the brass could not be found out.*” Sin, one mighty load, one vast accumulated mass, laid upon Him, Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God! and carried away into a land of oblivion to be no more seen nor remembered. Oh! herein is the Gospel story of love, and pity, and mercy. “He hath made Him to be sin Who knew no sin.” And Jehovah has dealt with sin on Him, His spotless Son, once and for ever, and will for *His sake* “remember it no more.” It has been accounted for before the bar of Justice once and for ever; and innumerable, immeasurable, as were your sins and mine, beloved child of God, redeemed by the precious blood, they are forgiven, blotted out, and will be no more brought against us. Oh, “Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage?” What a wonderful, incomprehensible act of sovereignty of the righteous and holy God to *pass by* the transgression of His people! Yes, and for Jesus’ sake, it is true, and gloriously true. And for Jesus’ sake He will look upon them no more, but has declared it through His prophet, “Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back;” in other words, Thou hast put them out of Thy sight. And, as if further to comfort, “Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea”—covered in that ocean of love which cannot be fathomed, nor sounded, nor shored. Oh! beloved reader, let us contemplate more this Divine mystery of love, and hear Him once again speak for our comfort, when sin distresses, harasses, annoys, and would rob us of our joy and peace. Listen to His voice of tender pity and exalted power—“As far as the east is from the west, so *far* hath He removed our transgressions from us.” And so long as the points of the compass can never meet, so long, yea, for ever, are your sins and mine removed from us. Moreover, they are “blotted

out"—cleansed "as white as snow"; forgiven and forgotten! Oh it was a true saying of the beloved martyr, John Bradford, "A sinner and the Saviour exactly fit." And as Hart sang:—

- "No reckoning can we rightly keep,
For who the sum can know?
Some souls are fifty pieces deep,
And some five hundred owe.
- "But let our debts be what they may,
However great or small,
As soon as we have nought to pay,
Our Lord forgives us all.
- "'Tis perfect poverty alone
That sets the soul at large;
While we can call one mite our own,
We have no full discharge."

But it is when "They had nothing to pay, He frankly forgave them both;" that is Gospel tidings to us.

Now beloved reader, if the Holy Spirit have moved your heart to gratitude and adoration, as you ponder the glories of so great a Saviour and His salvation which has saved you from the wrath to come, and gathered you to Himself in His mercy, and not cast you away, and hath forgiven you "for His name's sake," and will no more remember nor weigh out your sins to your reckoning, but has put them to His account; if such a knowledge of free and sovereign mercy and forgiveness be yours by grace, may a grateful song of praise ascend everlastingly to Him Who hath washed you in His precious blood—that blood so intrinsically precious in God's sight that it cannot be estimated, reckoned up! It is priceless! Oh! to be ever seeking for "more grace" to set forth by lip, life, and conduct, the glories of our Emmanuel! To tell what God hath done for us in Him. Yes; get you much to Calvary. Seek to spend much time of contemplation in Gethsemane. Seek to lie low at His cross in remembering how your sins brought Him there. The least sin, as well as the blackest sin, in this hellish heart of mine, brought Him there. Love and pity for such a sinner moved Him to die; cost Him that precious blood-shedding that must needs cover the greatest sin too. For one and all redeemed sinners are covered by the greatness of the Redeemer's Sacrifice. Such a Saviour and a great One! Such an High Priest! And all for chief sinners; *the* sinner which each Spirit-taught one feels himself or herself to be: the deserved outcast; the Gentile dog. But faith looks more to the all-efficacious blood of Jesus than to the soul's victory over corruptions. It rests upon that Sinless One Who alone is able to save utterly. It is as Christ is apprehended and rises in the soul that the world, the flesh with its outward and inward corruptions, must fall, and the believer be more and more occupied with the glories of that victorious Conqueror, Who has "finished transgression and made an end of sin," "having forgiven you all trespasses, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances

that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

"Great High Priest, Whose prayers are music
In the Father's ears,
I shall know their glorious answer
Through eternal years.

"Even now, O Lord, I know it,
Made by Love Divine.
One with Thee, henceforth, for ever,
Therefore one with Thine."

Oh, beloved reader, may our hearts be more occupied with this wondrous theme of mercy. May we look off from self and sin to Christ and His perfect Atonement, which alone can satisfy a Just God—and our guilty conscience—no satisfaction out of Him! Perfect rest and satisfaction in Him.

"Oh! who can weigh Him!" wrote the sainted Rutherford. "Ten thousand thousand heavens would not be one scale, or the half of the scale of the balance to lay Him in. Oh! black angels in comparison of Him! Oh! dim and dark and lightless sun, in regard of that fair Sun of Righteousness! Oh! feckless and worthless heaven of heavens, when they stand beside my worthy, and lofty, and high, and excellent Well-beloved! Oh! weak and infirm clay-kings! Oh! soft and feeble mountains of brass and weak created strength, in regard of our mighty and strong Lord of armies! Oh! foolish wisdom of men and angels, when it is laid in the balance beside that spotless, substantial Wisdom of the Father! If heaven and earth, and ten thousand heavens, even round about these heavens that now are, were all in one garden of paradise, decked with all the fairest roses, flowers, and trees that can come forth from the art of the Almighty Himself; yet set but our one Flower, that groweth out of the root of Jesse, beside that orchard of pleasure, one look of Him, one view, one taste, one smell of His sweet Godhead, would infinitely exceed and go beyond the smell, colour, beauty, and loveliness of that paradise. Oh, to be with child of His love! and to be suffocated (if that could be) with the smell of His sweetness, were a sweet fill and a lovely pain. Oh, worthy, worthy, worthy loveliness! Oh, less of the creatures, and more of Thee! Oh, open the passage of the well of love and glory on us, dry pits and withered trees! Oh! that Jewel and Flower of heaven; if our Beloved were not mistaken by us, and unknown to us, He would have no scarcity of wooers and suitors! He would make heaven and earth both see that they cannot quench His love, for His love is a sea:—Oh, to be a thousand fathoms deep in this sea of love! He, He Himself, is more excellent than heaven; for heaven, as it cometh into the souls of spirits of the Glorified, is but a creature; and He is something, and a great something, more than a creature. Oh, what a life were it to sit beside this Well of love, and drink and sing, and sing and drink; and then to have desires and soul faculties

stretched and extended out many thousand fathoms in length and breadth, to take in seas and rivers of love!"

May our souls be transported, "lost in wonder, love, and praise," as we contemplate this theme of themes, and we find our souls stretching forth "to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church, in Christ Jesus throughout all ages—world without end. Amen."

R.

"WHERE HAST THOU GLEANED TO-DAY?"

JOB xl.

"MOREOVER the Lord answered Job, and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct Him? he that reproveth God let him answer it." The speaker, the Word of God, is here styled Jehovah, the incommunicable name is given to the Son, the second person in the Trinity. He answers Job's cavillings at the dispensations of God's providence, and answers in majesty. "Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct Him?" How vain a thing it is to strive against such an all-powerful Being, how much more to teach Him what to do or how to act, or least of all, to reprove Him, "the God in Whose hand our breath is, and all our ways." Shall we rebuke God or find fault with His dealings with us?

"Then Job answered the Lord, and said, Behold I am vile; what shall I answer Thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." This brought the patriarch into his right place before God, in the dust of self-abasement! He confesses his condition—"Behold I am vile!" "There is hope in Israel concerning this thing" when we are brought by the Spirit of Holiness to see that we are altogether as an unclean thing, and that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Job had said, "My righteousness will I hold fast, and will not let it go." Now, in the presence of the Holy One, only one epithet suits him—"I am vile!" It is not too strong a term, though it confesses evil of the most hideous character, and there is no adjective in our language that expresses so much. It is good when the Spirit of Light opens our eyes to behold our deformity, depravity, and detestableness of sin in the sight of Him Who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and Who cannot look upon sin. This conviction shuts up any utterance, and makes us dumb before God, having *nothing* to answer.

"Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further." This is the experience of the saints of God under such views of the holy presence and majesty of the Most High! Even Moses, brought face to face as a man speaketh with his friend,

said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." David, the man after God's own heart, said, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, for Thou didst it." Isaiah, when he saw the glory of Christ, and spake of Him, exclaimed, "Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." How gracious and blessed it is that beside this view of himself that would sink Isaiah into nothingness there was added a vivid view of the atonement continually ascending before God, and the application of a live coal from off the altar effectually purged his lips, "and thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin is purged." We must have the humbling sight of ourselves, "Behold I am vile," before we can estimate at all the value of that which purges away all impurity of speech or thought. The Holy Spirit keeps us lowly in heart; but at the same time let high views of the perfection of the cleansing fire of the altar that consumed our Surety and brought Him into the dust of death ever be deepened in us; so in proportion as we have low views of ourselves shall be our exalted views of Christ's sacrifice and we shall "extol Him." So when Daniel saw a vision of one like the Son of Man he became dumb, and set his face towards the ground, taking the place of utter prostration before Him. "Yet heard I the voice of His words." "Then He said unto me, Fear not, Daniel, for from the first that thou didst set thine heart to understand and *chasten thyself before God*, thy words were heard, and I am now come for thy words." The strengthening touch follows immediately upon the confession of sin and self-abandonment before God. Let us covet earnestly this lowly posture and lowly mind, for it is blessed indeed. So the disciple whom Jesus loved, when in Patmos he heard a great voice as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, and had a glorious vision of the Son of man, he fell at His feet as dead. The humbling was first complete, and then strength was vouchsafed to fit him for further revelations. Let us not be afraid to be taken into the valley of humiliation with the patriarch Job, even to see our own vileness, for from that lowly posture we ascend to the heights of divine communion. It is an endless chapter, "Behold I am vile." Let us each study it for himself: how great its magnitude; and even before God in the attitude of prayer, how irreverent we are; we should not presume to treat an earthly sovereign so.

"Then answered the Lord out of the whirlwind, and said, Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare now unto Me." "The Lord hath His way in the whirlwind and the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet," says the prophet Nahum; and the whirlwind is not always a token of vengeance, for Elijah was taken up by a whirlwind into heaven, but it is always a display of the might of Omnipotence. It is, doubtless, meant to impress Job with the majesty of Jehovah, for God to speak out of the whirlwind would indeed be "a powerful voice." It shaketh the wilderness. No doubt it shook the inmost soul of Job; and he was commanded to gird up his loins as for some arduous work, as indeed

it was to answer the Maker and Ruler of the universe whatever He demanded of him. Who can stand before the great and glorious Lord God, while spotless angels veil their faces with their wings?

"Wilt thou also disannul My judgment? Wilt thou condemn Me, that thou mayest be righteous?" The lesser must bow before the greater. In disannulling My judgment, you make yourself wiser and mightier than I. Every one does exalt himself that enters into judgment with God, and considers himself more righteous than Jehovah. "We are verily guilty concerning this thing" with the patriarch, and have not a stone to cast at him. If God should enter into judgment with us, we must fall under His almighty hand. How often have we cavilled at His dealings with us, and been at length obliged to confess that "the ways of the Lord are right." "Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints." When we get into the judgment-seat instead of Him Who only has right to be there, and call Jehovah to sit at our bar, we err and show ourselves childish and foolish and sinful and perverse; but our God is gracious and condescending to His little children, and stoops to argue with them and set them right. How gracious was He thus to reason with Job, and to place the record of His argument for the instruction of all generations in the Word of God.

"Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like Him?" Consider well the arm of the Lord, how almighty it is. How terrible it is to His enemies, crushing, irresistible! but to whom it is revealed, how tender, upholding, and omnipotent that arm to lean upon; no creature-arm can at all compare with it. And the voice of the Lord is full of majesty, even the God of glory thundereth; there is no terror in it to the heart of His child, though some children are afraid of their father's thundering voice; they need not fear, though none else can speak so loud as He.

"Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty." It was impossible for Job to put on the robes of royal majesty, much less to adorn himself with excellency. Those are the attributes of Deity, and however much vanity may lead a man to array himself in fine clothes and with apparel, as Dr. Watts says in his hymns for children,

"Flies, worms, and flowers exceed me still."

Only the soul that is joined to Christ by living faith, and is covered with the robe of the Redeemer's righteousness, is decked with majesty divine and esteemed "the excellent of the earth," more glorious than the angels, and beautiful in the Bridegroom's eyes, because the renown of their beauty went forth, "for it was perfect through My comeliness which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God" (Ez. xvi. 14). Notice how the Lord emphasizes His doings: "I clothed thee with brodered work, and shod thee; I girded thee; I covered thee with silk; I decked thee with ornaments; I put bracelets on thy hands and a chain on thy neck, and a beautiful crown on thy head." Thus the

Lord decked His bride with regal majesty and excellency, with "garments of salvation" in exchange for filthy rags.

"Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one that is proud, and abase him." How few can "be angry and sin not." How many boil with rage, and only manifest their unseemly temper. How difficult to express wrath at sin and wickedness or evil doctrine, and not be humbled with the view of our own severing from rectitude. How easy to pull out the mote in our brother's eye and overlook the beam in our own eye. Who can tell how much pride lurks in his own heart, before he aims at correcting others? This is easy with our God.

"Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in secret." This is the prerogative of the almighty God. He has many ways of bringing the proud low: by affliction, bodily suffering, pain and sorrow; by bereavement; by sudden poverty; by minishing; by war and tumult; by what men call accident, by wind and earthquake, tempest and storm; and by suffering others to have them in contempt. These are some of the ways that the Lord takes. He has infinite resources at hand to humble the proud heart of man and tread the wicked, chiefly to let them fall into their net and be caught in the pit they digged for His people, and hide them speedily in the dust together who conspire against His chosen.

"Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee." This is the sublime end of many of the Lord's dealings with the children of men. There is such innate clinging in us all to the law as a covenant of works, that as a drowning man catches at a straw to save him, we tenaciously hold our own works and creature-doings, till our God convinces by peculiar dispensation with us that folly is bound in the heart of a child of God, and the rod of correction must drive it far from him. Thus Job clung secretly to self-righteousness, and the design of a gracious Friend was to bring low at His feet, and lead him to cast away his garment, and take instead the robe of perfect righteousness that is imputed to all that believe. We have cause for deep thankfulness that our God does not leave us to ourselves, but takes great pains with us to search out our pride and bring us to self-abasement before Him, instead of which He might have beheld us afar off and consigned us to the bottomless pit. The greatest sinner is not more abhorrent in His sight than the self-righteous Pharisee who thinks that his own good works can save him, or at least contribute to his salvation. How much we all need the discipline of an all-wise Father to humble us and keep us "clothed with humility," "in lowliness and meekness esteeming others better than ourselves."

MARY.

WE have to do with certainties—the certainties of God's Word, His truth, His promises, His commandments. His salvation is not a fable, it is a reality, of which He gives the assurance to all who receive it.—*R. C. Chapman.*

THE LOVELINESS OF CHRIST :

TO COMING SOULS.

“*He is altogether lovely.*”—SONG v. 16.

“*Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father cometh unto Me.*”—JOHN vi. 45.

NONE can know the loveliness of Christ until he comes to Him. Coming to the Lord Jesus is the experience of every Christian. According to the testimony of Jesus above written, all comers have been first taught of God the Father, and in due time behold the glory of God the Son. Thus is fulfilled that blessed word of the dear Saviour: “This is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God; and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent” (John xvii. 3). In this manner also coming souls “have fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1 John i. 3). Very wonderful is the relationship existing between the Father, the Son, and the coming sinner; under the all-performing, all-embracing power of the Eternal Spirit!

We note, first, the Teaching of the Father; secondly, the Coming of the soul; and, thirdly, the Saviour to Whom he comes.

THE TEACHING OF THE FATHER.

This divine teaching precedes the coming of the sinner to Jesus, of which it is the real cause, however contrary this truth may be to the popular religion of the day. Moreover, the teaching of the Father is the fulfilment of prophecy:—“It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me” (John vi. 45). The Scripture must be accomplished. God always works in His own order, and that order is laid down by His Spirit in the Sacred Oracles; hence, “if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them” (Is. viii. 20). The teaching of the Father commences in convincing, and then *drawing* the convinced sinner to Jesus, for He says, “No man can come to Me except the Father which sent Me draw him” (v. 44). True Christian experience begins with the Lord’s taking a man in hand, and showing him the way to Jesus by leading him into it. Under this divine guidance he hears the Father’s voice, first in the Law, teaching him his sin and misery; and then in the Gospel, teaching him the Remedy. So he effectually knows both the malady and the remedy. Many talk glibly of the sin of our nature, who (it is to be feared) know nothing of the nature of our sin, and, therefore, nothing of Christ. The man taught of God knows something of the nature of sin, and is compelled to fly to Jesus to be saved from his sin. This is:

COMING TO JESUS.

There are certain sign-posts in the path which leads to Jesus, by

which the trembling coming one may know he is in the right way. The sign-posts pointing to Jesus are gracious experiences.

The first is *Believing*, which is the soul's coming to Jesus by faith in exercise; and this is true not only of the earlier steps in the way of Life, but also of continual comings in prayer day by day.

"Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near."

In a heavy sigh, a falling tear, or an upward look, the believer comes to Jesus by prayer.

The second is *Repentance*. A man must fully believe he is a sinner before he can be truly sorry for his sins. A humble, contrite heart grieves for sin for Christ's sake, and penitence is the turning of that heart from sin to Jesus for salvation. Faith and Repentance are the gifts of God wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit. Repentance is the second waymark set up in the path which leads to Jesus.

The third is a *Thought* upon His Name, and there is a Book of Remembrance written for such (Mal. iii. 16). To think upon His Name is for the mind to go out to Jesus in holy, heavenly meditations, or in single acts of recollection, as amid the busy scenes of the day, a thought sometimes sweetly flashes for a moment up to Jesus. Then is realized the precious truth of the beautiful words, "In the multitude of my thoughts within me Thy comforts delight my soul" (Ps. xciv. 19). Such a thought upon Jesus is the response to the thoughts of Jesus, and when this is seen and felt, the believer rejoices and confesses:—"I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me" (Ps. xl. 17).

The fourth sign-post is *Desire* after Christ, or the going forth of the heart to Him, Who is the altogether lovely and "the chiefest among ten thousand" (Song v. 10). The desire of the heart is the effect and proof of love. We do not desire the presence of those we love not. In proportion to the degree of love will be the intensity of desire. Oh, that our love to Jesus may abound more and more, through the fresh revealings and unfoldings of His love to us.

The fifth is *Hope*, of which the effects are seeking and waiting. No one seeks for what he is hopeless of finding. The Christian's hope never fails to help him looking and seeking for his Beloved. He continues to seek Jesus all his journey through; until, standing at last before His face with joy, he finds the half of the Saviour's loveliness and beauty had not been told him. Meanwhile, Hope keeps the believer waiting for Christ's appearing, for His word, and for fresh tokens of His love. "If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. viii. 25).

These are sign-posts pointing to Jesus, and proving to poor sinners they are on the right road, as it is written, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord" (Hos. vi. 3). Such wayfarers, though

fools, shall not err (Is. xxxv. 8), as they tread the path which leads them to Jesus their all and in all.

THE OBJECT

to which those come who are taught and led by the Father is the Lord Jesus Christ. "Every man that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto Me." All come to Christ's *feet* for life (v. 47), for bread (vv. 48-50), and for Himself (v. 51). They come to Christ's *Fulness* to receive the spiritual blessings treasured up in Him for them. They come to Christ's *Throne* of grace for peace, for light, and for the communications of His love. They come to Christ's *Cross* for pardon, and for cleansing in the Fountain of His blood. So Berridge sings:—

"Let him who thirsts for heavenly joys,
Come unto Me, the Saviour cries,
And drink at My spring-head;
Leave all your boasting self behind,
For from the Saviour you shall find
A glorious life indeed.

"I come, O Lord, and thirst for Thee;
Some living water give to me,
Or I shall faint and die;
All other means my heart has tried,
All other streams are vain beside
What flows from Calvary."

Bath.

E. C.

GOD has recorded these things in this manner in the Word that all the people of God may read the whole of their present state and work acted in the Scriptures, by the inspiration of the Spirit, which now breathes workings of like nature in their hearts. The least groan cannot be lost. It is part of the Lamb's war; and, therefore, there is a blessing in it.—*Dorney.*

THERE is an election of men to salvation. This is clearly implied in those noted and compendious sentences, "Vessels of mercy, afore prepared unto glory" (Rom. ix. 23); "the election hath obtained it" (Rom. xi. 7); "the Lord added to the Church such as should be saved" (Acts ii. 47); "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts xiii. 48); but more expressly in Rom. xi. 5, "There is a remnant according to the election of grace;" 1 Thess. v. 9, "God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation"; and 2 Thess. ii. 13, "God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation," etc. And these are called the election, or party of elect ones; as those circumcised are called the circumcision; and the angels that stood are distinguished from those that fell by the title of "elect."—*Elisha Coles.*

“THE MYSTERY AND MARROW OF THE BIBLE IN GOD’S COVENANTS.”—NO. II.

(EDITED BY THE REV. J. E. WALKER, M.A.).

IN his general introduction to this venerable book (1657), my copy of which, I may perhaps be allowed to add, belonged to my sainted father, and was among his most prized possessions, the author truly and beautifully says: “God’s Covenant of faith is the Scripture-star to lead the soul to Christ: Christ is the heavenly way, that brings to God: and God is heaven itself, in Whom the soul finds and enjoys all-satisfying happiness.”

He then asserts the existence of the Church in all ages and under all dispensations. Covenant-truth in this differs from the new “dispensational teaching,” which would limit the Church to the post-pentecostal times, although the words of Acts vii. 38 seem sufficiently clear as the testimony of inspiration. Nor should it be forgotten that the highest glory of the Church and her most intimate communion with her Lord have been expressed in a writing of *the Old Testament*, the Song of Songs, of which the words of Bernard are very beautiful: “This canticle, by its incomparable sweetness, surpasses all others. Only the inward anointing of grace can teach the soul its meaning. Those who have had experience of it know it well, for this song is not a voice from the mouth, but the gladness of the heart: not the sounding of the lips without, but the movement of joys within the soul: not a concert of words, but of desires moving in symphony. Only she (the Church) who sings, and He in whose honour it is sung, that is the Bridegroom and the Bride, can hear the accents of this song.”

Indeed the Song of Songs may be called “The Divine Book of the Church,” of the Church as the true *Ecclesia*, called not *into* the world, as the modern perversion of the inspired name would seem to believe, if we judge by the breaking down in all denominations of every barrier of separateness between the Church and the world; but the congregation of grace, called *out* of the world that as her Lord’s “undefiled, who is but *one*,” she may become a pilgrim and “go forth through the wilderness leaning on the arm of the Beloved” (Cant. viii. 5).

So our author writes: “In all ages God has had His Church, separated unto Himself peculiarly, though not at all times of equal extent. It was at first only domestical, confined within the narrow compass of certain particular families—Seth, Enoch, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Afterwards it grew up and became national, called ‘the Church in the wilderness.’” But at last it became, when Christ, the blessed Seed of the woman, had come, œcumenical or universal.* Thus *one* covenant of eternal grace in God became fruitful,

* This has been the faith of all the reformed Churches—that the true Church has been in all ages “the fellowship of God’s elect people”—a Covenant-election of eternal love in God.

as administered under various dispensations, in *one Church*, "elected," as our author says, "eternally in Christ, redeemed of Christ by His own blood, and effectually called" out of the world into God in His Son by the spirit of life and regeneration. "To this Church," says our author, "God unveils the hidden secrets of His wisdom, grace, truth, lovingkindness, righteousness, and holiness. He walks and dwells among His saints. He is a God and Father to them, and they become sons and daughters to the Lord God Almighty, that in and by the Church the glory of all God's perfections and dispensations may be revealed, to the praise of His glory, and so by the Church His excellencies and the mysteries of His grace be for ever made known" (Eph. iii. 10). "So the Church," continues the writer, "in her infancy was taught to spell the 'A B C' of the Covenant in the promise of the Seed of the woman, and in the Covenants with Noah and Abraham: in her youth she was trained up in a more severe discipline, as under tutors and governors, in the Mosaical dispensation. But in her full age she was emancipated from all her former bondage under carnal ordinances, and invested with New Covenant liberties and enjoyments in Christ, revealed in the open and clear revelation of the Gospel of grace."

The New Covenant, therefore, is that "Everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure," which is "new not in substance, but for circumstance and administration, all the former administrations being laid aside as waxing old and wearing away; new also for continuation, in that this last dispensation of the Covenant of grace should not wax old, as did all the former, but continue still fresh and new and unaltered unto the very end of the world. And under this Covenant—in the promises and administration of its grace—the Church of Christ is, and shall be, continued, built up, and perfected from the first unto the second coming of the Lord."

It may be added that there are two words in the New Testament rendered in our version "new." The one, used of the New Covenant by our Lord at the last supper (Matt. xxvi. 28), and also by St. Paul (1 Cor. xi. 25; 2 Cor. iii. 6-14), intends the administration of the *eternal* Covenant in the Gospel as opposed to those former administrations that were all predestined to wear out and to pass away: the other, the open and clear and abiding manifestation of grace in Him "Who verily was *fore-ordained before the foundation of the world*, but was made manifest in these last times," as the Mediator of the Eternal Covenant (Heb. xii. 24, and xiii. 20), and the Lamb of the great redemption. This administration of the Eternal Covenant has an everlasting youth, and can never grow old or decay. (Cf. Alford, *Greek Test.*, upon Heb. xiii. 24.)

Our author then enquires into the reasons for which—it may reverently be said—the blessed God was pleased in His everlasting purpose and pleasure to give Himself, and so in His dear Son to manifest Himself to the Church which had been loved eternally in Christ under a Covenant of grace. The Holy Ghost has, in many places

of the divine Word,* written and said that there was nothing in the Church herself to be, in the infinitely least degree, imagined or supposed "inclining God to this sweet and familiar way of dealing." And when man had fallen from that first estate of innocence, in which he had been created under a Covenant of works (Hos. vi. 7; *margin, as the Hebrew*; Rom. vii. 10), his estate of guilt and trespass made and "rendered man altogether unlovely. Yea, sin has turned man's heart into enmity. So that nothing but mere grace could have inclined God's heart to embrace fallen man in a covenant way" by the promise then actually given to man of the Seed of the woman, and the redemption in Jesus Christ.

That this "Covenant-way" of love and grace is a familiar and gracious way of infinite condescending upon God's part, our author proves from the words of David in 2 Sam. vii. 19: "And is this the manner of men, O Lord God?" preferring rather the rendering of Junius, "and that after the manner of men,"† and comparing 1 Chron. xvii. 17, and he adds, "Now the distance between infinite glory and human baseness is so vast that there cannot be a familiar and reciprocal dealing (as though from man to man) by way of Covenant but in God's grace, wherein the most high God infinitely condescends and stoops down to us, and we, base worms (Is. xli. 14) ascend unto Him "in Christ, the Mediator, and so meet in friendship."

Yet another reason for God's delight in, and predilection for so dealing in this "sweet Covenant-way" with His Church, is found in these words of "the man after God's own heart." This is His everlasting desire, "to bind himself so in Christ, the Mediator, to His people that they might know certainly all the blessing, grace, and loving mercy, which they might absolutely expect from Him." Thus God's kindness to His chosen is expressed both "in His condescending to our fallen estate in so familiar and sweet a Covenant-way, and also in His storing and replenishing His Covenant with such provisions of grace for us, that, when it is rightly considered, our hearts and affections must be drawn unto Him as vehemently as ever David's were, and this will become as oil to our desire and obedience, making them as wheels running smoothly and with humble delight in the ways of God." And, yet further, an actual distinction is thus set, and a spiritual separation has been made between the heirs of salvation and all others, who remain in their unbelief, blindness, and error of heart, strangers still to the Covenants of promise now fulfilled and perfected in the New Covenant.

From these reflections our author returns again in an unwearying delight to magnify with a loving and adoring faith the eternal Covenant of grace and life in Christ Jesus.

"This Covenant of God is the key that (only) unlocks the whole Scriptures. God's Covenant administration runs like a golden thread

* Cf. Deut. vii. 7, 8; Ezek. xx. 35-44; Rom. v. 6-10 and ix. 18; 1 St. John iv. 10.

† The various interpretations may be seen in Wordsworth, *Old Test., in loc.*

through both the Old and New Testaments," more rightly indeed called the Old and New Covenant, for the testamentary administration of the Eternal Covenant would seem more immediately related to the times *after* the one Sacrifice had been slain and offered, although it is equally true that that one Sacrifice of Golgotha, as eternally predestined in the divine purpose, "the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world," gave a quasi-testamentary character even to the Old Testament administration. (Cf. McCaul, *Comment. on the Hebrews*, pp. 131, 132, on Heb. ix. 16, 17.)

The author very solemnly adds that God's Covenant in its inward revelation to the soul, quickened and illuminated by the spirit of glory and grace, is the seal of the true Church and of every living member of that elect and redeemed congregation (Ps. xxv. 13; Zech. ix. 11; Heb. xii. 23, 24).

After mention of the various conjectures, then current among the learned, upon the naming of the word "Covenant" in the Hebrew, our author prefers that, which is now generally accepted, from a root meaning "to cut," or "to divide." (Cf. Gesenius, *Lex. Heb.*; Ps. l. 5.) The *dividing* of the victims is the visible and sacrificial ratifying of the Abrahamic covenant in Gen. xv. 9-17.

In the LXX. Version of the Old Testament *Διαθήκη* is the rendering into the Greek of the Hebrew "Berith"* This Greek equivalent contains "a promise as well as a disposal, and this disposal is definitely federal, and at times also testamentary."

The chapter is concluded with an epitome of the various uses of "Berith" and *Διαθήκη*. (It has been slightly re-arranged.)

"Berith" (Heb.) "Covenant" is used:—

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| More generally as God's Covenants of grace with His Church. | { | By a metonymy, for Christ the Mediator and Head of the Church (Is. xlii. 6).
For His Covenant with His people in Christ (Is. lv. 3, etc.). |
| More specially and particularly with certain persons. | { | Of the priests and Levites (Numb. xiii. 19).
Of Phinehas (Num. xxv. 12, 13).
Of David as a type of the Lord Christ (2 Chron. xiii. 5). |
| Of the external blessings and privileges of the Covenant under the Old Testament. | { | Of circumcision (Gen. xvii.).
Cf. also Gen. ix. 9, 18. |

The other uses of "Berith" may be gathered from any concordance (cf. Josh. xxiv. 25; 2 Kings xi. 17, etc; or again, Is. lviii. 8, and Jer. xxxii. 20).

* Deut. ix. 15 in the LXX. seems an exception. "The two tables of the testimony."

Διαθήκη (Greek)—“Covenant” :—

1. In a larger sense of God's Covenant of grace. (Cf. Acts iii. 25 ; Gal. iii. 17 ; Heb. viii. 6, etc.)
2. In a more limited sense as a Testament, ratified by the death of the testator. (Cf. Matt. xxvi. 26 ; John xxii. 20 ; 1 Cor. xi. 25.)
3. For the Old Testament. (Cf. Acts vii. 8 ; Rom. ix. 4 ; Heb. ix. 18, etc.)

[To be continued.]

“HE SATISFIETH THE LONGING SOUL.”

PSALM cvii. 9.

HE, Christ the Lord, Who thirsted once
Upon a torturing cross of wood,
Now satisfies the “longing soul,”
Which He hath bought with blood.

He satisfies the “longing soul,”
In life's “dry places”* void of sweet,
Where hidden thorns oft tear the hands,
And stones oft wound the feet.

He satisfies the “longing soul,”
Which He hath made with matchless skill ;
Which all the sweetnesses of earth
Could never wholly fill.

He satisfies the “longing soul,”
Whose depths are fully known to Him
Who sits with human soul, to-day,
Between the cherubim.

He satisfies the “longing soul,”
With His own presence manifest ;
And His own perfect, deathless love,
Which “passeth knowledge” blest.

He satisfies the “longing soul,”
In this poor world beneath the skies,
And He will satisfy it soon,
And ay in Paradise.

ISA.

* Isaiah lviii. 11 (R.V.).

THAT rich man is great who thinketh not himself great because he is rich ; the proud man (who is the poor man) braggeth outwardly, but beggeth inwardly ; he is blown up, but not full.—Francis Quarles.

ILLUSTRATED ARTICLE.

BIBLE SIDE-LIGHTS FROM THE MOUND OF GEZER.*

OUR readers, we think, will endorse a slight variation this month from our accustomed rule of publishing a Portrait Article. We are anxious to call attention to a deeply interesting and instructive book, just published, on the subject of recent discoveries made in Palestine, which go to illustrate the inspired historical records of the Bible, and to confirm their absolute accuracy, in the face of the pretentious claims of the so-called "Higher Criticism." Our frontispiece (kindly lent by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton) represents the work of excavating the ruins of the ancient city of Gezer, which, for some years past, have been carried out under the superintendence of Mr. Stewart Macalister, M.A., on behalf of the Palestine Exploration Fund—a Society whose enterprise and labours in the Holy Land have placed Bible students under lasting obligation.

The publication of this book is admirably timed, for it has a direct bearing on many Biblical questions which lie beyond scientific consideration. Mr. Macalister has shown in his fascinating work how the unearthing of an ancient site not only yields evidence confirmatory of Scripture narrative, but sheds unexpected light on matters only vaguely alluded to in the Bible, and hitherto only partially understood. There is a chapter in the book which specially illustrates this valuable fact. It deals with the "Iniquity of the Amorite," and shows, by the evidence afforded by the Gezer excavations, "the nature of the heathen worship, including the sacrifice of children, which the Hebrew prophets so continually denounced." In another chapter, by the help of the evidence disclosed by the ancient buildings buried under the Mound, the manner of the remarkable death of Samson is lucidly explained. During the process of digging up the remains of the old Philistine city, "a wedge (or tongue) of gold" was discovered, answering in point of weight, and otherwise, to the ingot of precious metal which Achan coveted, stole, and hid in his tent. The writer says:—"In a stratum which was approximately contemporary with Joshua two gold ingots were found; one of them, a bar whose weight was not far from 50 shekels—the weight of the ingot stolen by Achan. Its shape was long, narrow, and slightly curved; it might well be described as a 'tongue,' and it is probably similar to Achan's prize." An engraving of this interesting article is exhibited in the book, along with a profusion of photographic and other illustrations, which greatly assist the reader in following the letter-press. Mr. Macalister has generously adopted a simple

* "*Bible Side-Lights from the Mound of Gezer: A Record of Excavation and Discovery in Palestine.*" By R. A. Macalister, M.A., F.S.A., Director of Excavations, Palestine Exploration Fund. With illustrations. Pp. 232. 5/- (London: Hodder & Stoughton).

untechnical style, and his tone is uniformly reverent and in evident sympathy with the needs of that large class of public thought which still holds the Holy Scriptures in supreme estimation.

That our readers may be enabled to realize the interesting character of the vast undertaking of bringing to light the treasures of antiquity buried in the Mound of Gezer, we subjoin copious extracts from the opening chapter of the book, which deals with the site of the city and its chequered history. A perusal of these excerpts will, we hope, lead many to secure the volume for themselves, and, further, will induce them to extend support to the "Palestine Exploration Fund," the valuable services of which, in the interests of accurate Biblical knowledge, cannot be over-estimated.

GEZER—ITS SITE AND HISTORY.

ON the boundary line separating the foot-hills of the Judean mountains from the fertile maritime plain, which was occupied during nearly the whole of the Old Testament history by the Philistines; and about five miles south-east of the modern town of Ramleh; there rises a long low mound, rendered conspicuous by a modern two-storey house erected on its summit. This is the mound which conceals the ruins of the ancient town of Gezer.

If the reader could have visited the hill any time between June, 1902, and August, 1905, save when the winter rains or summer heats made work impossible, he would have viewed some such scene as is represented in *Fig. 2*. At the bottom of a deep trench, cut straight across the hill, would be a crowd of labourers, some with picks loosening the earth, others with peculiar adze-like hoes scraping it into baskets; while a ceaseless procession of boys and girls, filing backwards and forwards, carried away the baskets thus filled, and emptied their contents on to a rapidly growing "dump-heap." He would notice that the area in which the work was carried on was all subdivided into small compartments by low walls, crossing one another rather irregularly, exactly as is shown in the figure. These little compartments, he would learn, are the floors of rooms, and the low walls are the foundations of partitions. As he watched, possibly the foreman might bring for his inspection a small object of interest that had just been found by one of the labourers when sifting the earth before basketing it away: it might be a scarab of Amenhotep III, adding its testimony to that of the other objects already found among the houses, which experience had taught the excavator were to be assigned to the date of that monarch—say about 1450 B.C.

If the visitor should return a day or two later, he would find a change. The labourers would still be at work in the same pit; but the walls would have completely disappeared. If he should ask the cause of this, he would be told that after they had been carefully measured, planned, and, if of special interest, photographed, they had

been removed, in order to find what was underneath them. And if he should remain by the pit a certain length of time, he would see, as the work advanced, one stone appearing here and another there, till gradually a second series of walls, in style resembling the first but of a plan entirely different, would be exposed before him. So the process would continue from day to day and from week to week, till at last the rock at the core of the hill was reached. When the entire rock surface at the bottom of the pit was exposed, a second pit was begun, unless under the accumulated earth a rock-hewn cave or cistern were discovered, which would of course require to be emptied.

The history of the growth of the great mound of earth—in some places as much as forty feet in depth—which to-day covers the rock and marks the once flourishing and important city of Gezer, is the same here as in the other ancient cities of Palestine. Defence was a necessity in the times when every city was a unit whose hand was against all its neighbours—a state of society reflected in the records of the Canaanite cities, each with its own king, which Joshua subdued, and even more prominently in the Tell el-Amarna Tablets. The city therefore, like that used as an illustration in Matthew v. 14, was *set on a hill* when it was founded, the steeper and more unscaleable the hill the better. Sanitary precautions are but little heeded even in the modern Orient, and there is no reason to believe that there was any restraint in the ancient cities against flinging rubbish of all sorts into the narrow winding causeways by which they were intersected. It was nobody's business to clear away garbage, which was thus allowed to accumulate and to decay. The houses were built of rude stones, hardly if at all dressed, and cemented together with mud. This mud the rains of winter would little by little wash out of the crevices into the adjacent streets. By these and similar processes the level of the streets would from year to year become perceptibly raised. Moreover, badly built huts, such as formed the majority of the habitations in the city, could not be expected to stand for any considerable length of time; they fell before long into ruin, sometimes suddenly. A very remarkable illustration of this was found in the Austrian excavations of Tell Ta'anuk (the Taanach of Deborah's Song, Judges v. 19). The ruins of a fallen house were unearthed, and under them were the remains of the persons who had been killed by the accident. They were a Canaanite mother and her five children, aged from about sixteen to about four. From the knife in the mother's hand, and the food-vessels round about, she had evidently been preparing the domestic meal when the tragedy took place. On her skeleton were her ornaments and amulets still in their places, and on the wall was fixed the image of the goddess whom the ill-fated family had regarded as their patron.

It may seem strange that no attempt was made by the contemporaries of this household to uncover and remove the bodies; but so it was. This leads me to notice that it was not the rule completely to clear away the ruins of a house when it decayed and fell.

The loose débris may have been taken up to use again, but the foundations, which must have been partly concealed by the accumulation of rubbish in the streets, were allowed to remain. The new house was built over the ruins of the older habitation, and with no reference to its plan. No town council existed to make regulations affecting the permanence of thoroughfares; the site of the city was apparently a common, not subdivided into allotments under private ownership; so that the builder of a new house might even block up or divert a street, if it so pleased him.

If a dweller in a European city could return to earth and revisit his old home, say two hundred years after his death, he would be perplexed by the change of architectural style that had taken place in the meanwhile. He would, however, find the churches and other ancient public buildings more or less as he remembered them; and with these as landmarks he would before long recognize the thoroughfares to which in his lifetime he had been accustomed, though probably there would hardly be a single house that had not been rebuilt, or at least radically altered. The case of a resident in an ancient Palestinian city, returning in the same manner, would be different. No unwonted architectural developments would meet his eye; he would find his great-great-grandchildren occupying huts exactly similar to those in which he and his contemporaries had dwelt. But it would strike him at first sight that the city-crowned hill was a trifle higher than in the days when his daughter used daily to climb it with her waterpot from the spring in the valley; and as soon as he entered the city gate he would be hopelessly bewildered. In his day the city had been a maze of narrow crooked causeways and blind alleys, which, however, he knew perfectly. On his return he would find a new labyrinth, to which he had no clue, substituted for the old. And even if by some chance there were a palace, or other building of a more permanent character, which had lasted from the city of his recollection, it would give him no help towards finding his way through the entirely altered lanes that surrounded it.

In dealing with the remains of an ancient city such as Gezer, therefore, we may think of the different series of foundations, one above the other, as being like a set of bookshelves. The analogy is not quite perfect, for the change of level did not take place over the whole city at the same time, except in the not infrequent case of its being totally destroyed by an enemy and afterwards entirely rebuilt. For practical purposes, however, the bookcase illustration serves very well. In the top shelf will be written, for those who have eyes to read them, the records of the last inhabitants. The history, manners, customs, and beliefs of their immediate predecessors find illustration in the shelf next below.

So we proceed to the bottom shelf, where we learn what we may regarding the ancient people who were the first to dwell on the site we are examining.

Let us now apply these principles to Gezer, and endeavour, so far as the material at our disposal permits, to reconstruct its history. At

the outset, however, an important question presents itself; namely, how do we know that the mound in which we are digging is the veritable site of the city with which it has been identified?

Fortunately we are able to assert the identity of our mound and Gezer with an assurance that would be highly indiscreet in the case of many other identifications of Biblical sites that have been suggested from time to time. The discovery of Gezer is due to the distinguished French Orientalist, Professor Charles Clermont-Ganneau, and its story is one of the most interesting of the romances of modern archæology.

The site of this famous ancient city had been forgotten in modern times, and the guesses that had been made at its identification were random and futile. One day Professor Clermont-Ganneau happened to be engaged in the study of Mujir ed-Din, a mediæval Arab historian. He came upon a passage describing a raid made by certain Bedawin on the coast-plain of Palestine, and their subsequent suppression by the governor of Jerusalem. The historian stated that the governor's lieutenant had preceded him, starting from the town of Ramleh; that some hours later, the governor, following his lieutenant from Ramleh, advanced as far as "the Mound of Jazar," and on arriving there heard the shouts of the combatants at Khuldeh. The thought at once struck the scholar that *Jazar* exactly represented the Hebrew *Gezer*, the Arabic soft J taking, as usual, the place of the Hebrew hard G; and the question occurred to him whether the site of the lost city were not to be found in the place thus designated. He was obliged to postpone the investigation of the question till an opportunity should arise for visiting the district, as no map till then published showed "Tell el-Jezar" marked upon it, though the other two places mentioned, Ramleh and Khuldeh, were indicated. In the following year Professor Clermont-Ganneau was in the Holy Land, and commenced his research. The conditions of the problem were that the site to be found must be between Ramleh and Khuldeh, and within earshot of the latter place. Enquiry at these two known points very soon enabled Professor Clermont-Ganneau to find the mound, which still preserved its traditional name among the local peasantry; and the scholar's practised eye at once saw that this mound was the rubbish heap covering a large and important city. His previous investigations had shown him that if Gezer were situated in the region indicated by the Chronicle of Mujir ed-Din, it would answer all the geographical requirements that the various known events in the history of the city impose. He felt justified therefore in announcing that the long-lost site had at last been recovered.

The announcement was met with some scepticism. It was remarked by the president of the French society before which Professor Clermont-Ganneau made his statement, that if some inscription were forthcoming, mentioning the name of the city, the identification would command more respect. The discoverer very naturally replied that such a demand was unreasonable; for in any case Palestine had proved a country remarkably poor in ancient inscriptions, and the chance that

such an inscription should be preserved at the very place where it was required was exceedingly remote.

But the mound of Gezer has a peculiarity, which is displayed throughout the whole period of the excavation recently closed. It is essentially a mound of surprises; and it commenced, even at that early period in the history of its investigation, to display this pleasing characteristic. In 1874 Professor Clermont-Ganneau was once more in Jerusalem, and he became known to the inhabitants as a collector and investigator of antiquities. A peasant from the neighbourhood where the mound is situated brought him a paper on which he had rudely copied an inscription cut on a rock in the district. As might be expected, the unlettered copyist was unable to make an accurate or even an intelligible transcript; but the French scholar took a note of the place in order to examine the original whenever occasion should arise. In due time he visited the inscription, which was cut on a rock outcrop about three quarters of a mile east of the foot of the hill of Gezer. It proved to be in two languages; one part in Greek reading: OF ALKIOS—this being probably the name of the governor under whose auspices the inscription was engraved; the other part in Hebrew, reading: THE BOUNDARY OF GEZER. Subsequently other inscriptions were found, apparently marking out an enclosure of land surrounding the hill, and affording the unhopd-for corroboration of the identification suggested three years before.

It is not too much to say that of few Biblical sites is the identity so definitely assured as is that of Gezer. We may therefore without hesitation return to the point where we digressed, and trace out the history of Gezer, knowing that it is in very truth the history of the mound now known as Tell el-Jezar.

The name of the city does not appear in the Biblical record until the time of Joshua. For the long stretch of history anterior to the Israelite conquest we must rely on extra-Biblical sources. These are very meagre, and do not carry us back further than Thothmes III, that is, about 1500 B.C. Yet the excavation has revealed that behind this date there stretches for Gezer a further period of some 1500 years, concerning the life of which written history is absolutely silent.

For it cannot have been much later than 3000 B.C. when a primitive race of men first realized that the bare rocky hill (as it then was) would be a suitable dwelling-place. This tribe was a cave-dwelling race, and the hill already had many natural caves hollowed in it, which were capable of being added to or enlarged if required, even with primitive tools, owing to the softness of the limestone. Water, the first necessity of life, was in abundance. The three primitive modes of livelihood—hunting, pasturing, and agriculture—could be practised here better than in many places; for the rocky hillsides west and south of Gezer afford cover to a great variety and quantity of game; they also bear a scanty but sufficient crop of vegetation, and are to-day in the spring-time black with herds of the native sheep and goats; and the fields north and west of the hill are of extraordinary fertility. Further, for

defence—another prime necessity in early days—the hill is admirably fitted. It is steep and not easy to climb; and being fairly high it commands a wide prospect, so that the approach of enemies can be seen and prepared for.

For perhaps five hundred years this primitive race occupied the hill; then they were driven out by a stronger and more civilized people. This was the first of the successive waves of Semitic immigration which have ever since been beating on Palestine. Canaanites, Israelites, Arabs—all probably much alike in body, in mind, in habits, and in language—have successively inhabited the mound through the centuries. The modern inhabitants, typical specimens of which are shown, must greatly resemble their ancient predecessors in general appearance.

At about the same time the influence of a nation, yet greater than the Early Semites, began to make itself felt in Gezer. This was Egypt, then at the height of the glories of her "Middle Empire." Many scarabs and other objects, referable to this period, were found in the lower strata of the mound, showing that intercourse of some kind was carried on between its inhabitants and the great empire of the Nile. But, so far as they have been discovered, the monuments of Egypt itself remain silent regarding any event accounting for this intercourse, and its nature must for the present be regarded as obscure.

Gezer was captured by Thothmes III, and the bare record of the fact, in the inscription which that king left behind in the Temple of Karnak, is the earliest written reference to the city that has yet been found. More interesting is the information to be gleaned from three letters found among the great collection of tablets recovered some years ago at Tell el-Amarna in Egypt, which, as has so often been said, constitutes the "Foreign Office" correspondence of Kings Amenhotep III and IV, about 1450 B.C. From these we learn that Gezer, like the rest of the Palestinian cities of the time, was under the suzerainty of the Egyptian Pharaoh, being governed by a "king" named Yapakhi, who was answerable to the Egyptian monarch. Three letters from the collection were written by Yapakhi himself, and consist of petitions addressed to the king for assistance against the nomadic tribes that were a constant menace to safety in those days—as indeed they still are in some districts—who were pressing hard on the inhabitants of the city. There are letters, on the other hand, written from other cities (such as Jerusalem), which make complaints against Gezer, and accuse it of being disaffected towards the Egyptian overlord. Abdkhiba, king of Jerusalem, is especially bitter. He complains that the Gezerites, leagued with the men of Lachish, have invaded his own territory and done him much injury. As the best means of revenging his personal wrongs, he endeavours to turn the Pharaoh's attention towards the hostile city, and invokes the strong arm of Egypt against it.

The records are again silent for about 200 years—a silence broken only by the solitary mention of Gezer on the famous "Israel" stele

of Meren-Ptah—and the written history recommences with the books of Joshua and Judges. There is no record of a formal siege of Gezer at the time of the Israelite conquest; but the king of Gezer and a detachment of men came to the assistance of Lachish when Joshua was besieging the latter city, and paid for their interference with their lives (Josh. x. 33). When the land was divided among the tribes, Gezer was allotted to the Levites (Josh. xxi. 21) dwelling in the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. xvi. 3); but as was the case in several of the strong cities of Palestine, the conquest was partial only: the Ephraimites *drave not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer* (Josh. xvi. 10; Judg. i. 29).

In the days of David the Philistines, that mysterious people of whom we have heard so much and know so little, first appear on the scene in connexion with Gezer. It would appear as though the city were at the time actually in their possession, for in 1 Chronicles xx. 4, we read of a fight *at Gezer* between the men of David and the Philistines; and in 1 Chronicles xiv. 16, Gezer is mentioned as the terminus of the pursuit of the Philistines by David after the battle of Rephaim. Probably he stopped the pursuit at this point because the fugitives had reached their own territory.

The Canaanites, however, still lingered on in Gezer till the reign of Solomon. When Solomon celebrated his marriage with the daughter of the king of Egypt, the Pharaoh *went up and took Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slew the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and gave it for a portion unto his daughter, Solomon's wife* (1 Kings ix. 16). This incident teaches us that Solomon's dominion did not extend westward so far as Gezer, as the Pharaoh would hardly have treated a possession of his ally and son-in-law in such a fashion. If it be asked why the Pharaoh destroyed the city, the answer probably would be that Gezer had too easily commanded the great coast-line trade route from Egypt to Babylon, and probably the Canaanites had from time to time compelled caravans to pay toll to the city as they passed.

We must here notice two interesting objects discovered at Gezer, as they are so far the only known written documents yet discovered that bridge the gap between Solomon's repair of the city and the events in which Simon Maccabæus was the principal actor. These are a pair of contracts relating to the sale of property, drawn up in Gezer in the Assyrian language and character, and written on clay tablets. Both are unfortunately imperfect; but enough remains to enable us to determine their purport. The first, which is dated 649 B.C., relates to the sale of the estate of one Lu-âhê by two men, Mar-duk-êriba and Abi-êriba: the estate included the slave Turiaa and his family, but the rest of the inventory is lost. The vendors give a guarantee that the persons sold shall be free from certain specified diseases for a hundred days, and from other defects for all time. An assurance is given of the completion of the transaction, and a definite agreement concluded, that any action in a court of law regarding it would be void. One interesting fact that we learn

from this tablet is given us by the list of witnesses, which includes the name of the governor of Gezer, Hurwasi. This is an Egyptian name, and it indicates that the handing over of Gezer as a dowry to Solomon's wife did not necessarily imply handing it over to Solomon. It was the wife's dowry, the revenues from which were set apart for her maintenance and well-being, the equivalent of the "money" of Laban's daughters which they complained that their father had *quite devoured* (Gen. xxxi. 15). It remained in the hands of the Egyptian princess, and the Egyptians took care that it did not pass out of their grasp after her death. Thus we explain the existence of an Egyptian governor of the city in 649 B.C.

The second tablet is even more fragmentary. It preserves the name of Nethaniah, a Hebrew resident, and relates to the sale by him of a field. It is about two years later than the first tablet.

The chief interest in these two tablets lies in the evidence they give of an Assyrian occupation of Gezer in the time of Manasseh: evidence that may ultimately be found to have some bearing on the story of the capture of Manasseh himself by the Assyrian captains (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11). This occupation was so strong that even Egyptians and Hebrews conformed to the procedure and adopted the language and legal forms of the Assyrian garrison.

A word may be said regarding the history of the city in post-exilic times. It had varying fortunes during the wars of the Jews and the Syrians, being captured about the year 160 B.C. by Bacchides, the Syrian general, and fortified and held by him for a year; and afterwards recaptured by Simon Maccabæus, the great high priest, who fortified it and built for himself a dwelling-place within its walls. The discovery of this dwelling-place was one of the rewards of the excavation.

WHEN the heart of man rejects the Gospel of Christ, the conscience must have a good counterfeit, as in the semi-popery that is working through the breadth and length of the land.—*R. C. Chapman.*

If any part of God's Word goes against the weak believer, so that it discovers his sins, and wounds him in the tenderest part, yet he will not flee from it; he comes to the glass that discovers his deformity, and seeks the very sword that wounds him; while the false heart shuns the rays of truth, and skulks into the gloomy shades of darkness, as best suiting his complexion; "They hate the light, nor will they come to it, lest their deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God" (John iii. 21). This proves the believer to be a child of light, because he loves it, comes to it, and seeks direction from it. "While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light" (John xii. 36). And as they are children of light, so they are heirs; heirs of God (who is light) and joint heirs with Jesus Christ (the true light).—*W. Huntington.*

Sermons and Notes of Sermons.

AN EXTRACT FROM A DISCOURSE

BY THE LATE REV. JOHN MACGOWAN.

THE CASE OF THE WIDOW AND FATHERLESS CONSIDERED.

(RUTH i. 3-7.)

THE husband died, and the woman was left. Death in any, even in the mildest form, hath something in it not only awful, but tremendous to nature. When the awful skeleton creeps into the bed of a man, and takes away the desire of his eyes with a stroke of death, at once bereaving him of the comfort afforded by a bosom companion, and entailing upon him more than a double charge, the dispensation becomes truly affecting. Yet none are exempted from circumstances of this nature—none are married longer than death shall part them. The fondest couple must part, though linked in the bonds of holy matrimony. And, oh! sad the parting to hearts united! But it must be, the decree is gone forth, "Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return." Remember, ye who dote most upon one another, that notwithstanding your present enjoyments and pleasure, you must part also; you hold your pleasures by a tenure to you very uncertain. But at last your union must be finished by a separation; and, oh! that you may be united in soul, in heart, and affection, in the pure world of spirits. Ezekiel must part with the desire of his eyes, and is denied the poor consolation of mourning for his loss (chap. xxiv. 16, 17); his wife was the desire of his eyes, what every wife ought to be to her husband. Though Ezekiel was the prophet of God, he could not be screened from the stroke of affliction. Ezekiel's case was undoubtedly trying, but it is still more hard and heavy when death, as in Naomi's case, bereaves a woman of her husband, and devolves upon her a multiplicity of cares in training up a fatherless offspring.

Of all widows, we read of none whose case was more to be deplored than that of good Naomi. Banished by famine from the house of God, and the inheritance of her fathers, bereaved of her husband in an enemy's country; having two sons to educate in the midst of idolatry; and, more especially, when her two sons themselves were taken away, and two young widows were added to her burden. Yet by those things, so grievous for her to bear, infinite wisdom was only bringing about the great end originally in view, the salvation of the ends of the earth; and after being thus tried in the furnace of affliction, her faith being found unto praise, she became the honoured nurse of one of the ancestors of Jesus.

We come now to treat of Naomi's return into the land of Judah.

After being as it were buried in Moab for the space of ten years—this mother in Israel—"Then she arose." Then, after she had drunk the bitter cup—for whilst husband and sons were alive, we hear not so much as of the most distant intention of returning again into the land of Israel. But her God prepared a school of heavenly instruction for her, in the outward corrections, and by terrible things in righteousness with which he visited her, and taught her that her resting-place was not in the country of Moab. Those terrible things which she suffered made her sit loose from her then present abode, think of the land of Canaan, and long once more to visit Bethlehem, the city of her ancestors, and abode of her husband's kindred. What more than affliction tends to wean the believing soul from the things of earth and sense? What can tend more to make the heart long to be at rest in the peaceful mansions above, where sinning and suffering are known no more for ever?

She arose that she might return from the country of Moab. The Moabites may rest at ease in their native land, and worship idols of their own formation. So may worldlings of every rank, and every name, continue satisfied with earthly productions. Not so with chosen Naomi; for to her God embitters every Moabitish sweet, dries up every well of consolation, and shuts up every prospect of future happiness in that land of strangers, till her soul became as a child weaned from its mother, and she renounces the name Naomi, lays claim to that of Marah. This also is in some measure the case with every Christian to whom the Almighty is pleased to embitter all the enjoyments of the present life, in order to endear unto them the heavenly felicity.

Emptiness of all Moabitish comforts was attended with an encouraging, inviting voice from Canaan; "For she had heard in the country of Moab, how the Lord had visited His people in giving them bread." From whence we see that the Lord hath His visiting seasons, as well as times of withdrawment from His people. Sometimes, indeed, in holy jealousy, with paternal chastisement, as Psalm lxxxix. 32, "Then will I visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes." And thus He visited Israel with famine, and Naomi with stripping providences. He visits His people in manifest mercy in giving them bread after famine, and makes them say with the Church (Isa. xii. 1), "O Lord, I will praise Thee; though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortest me."

It is precisely the same in the case before us; in jealousy for His holy Name He visited His people with a famine; and He also in tender compassion visited them in giving them bread. This news reached the ear of Naomi, and was good news from a far country, and, therefore, was to her as cold water to a thirsty soul. Oh, how reviving to the fainting soul is good news from the heavenly country! News of abundant pardon and plenteous redemption, to the most abject slaves, the greatest offenders.

But this good news did not reach the ear of this venerable matron till she was bereaved of her husband and sons, and left in a state of desolate widowhood ; neither does the news from heaven, in common, arrive, till all the springs of creature comfort are dried up ; consequently, believers ought not to think it strange, if they see the Almighty to be stripping daily of their delights.

Having heard this good news from her own country, this holy woman "Went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her." She was in Moab, a place of vanity, therefore an unsuitable dwelling for a mother in Israel, and especially one stripped of her all upon earth. "What fellowship can light have with darkness, or what communion hath Christ with Belial ? This whole world is a place of vanity ; and vanity is as much to be deprecated as hell itself, seeing the latter is only the end to which the former naturally and infallibly leads its deluded subjects. To die in a state of sin and vanity, is infinitely worse than to die in a ditch, or on a scaffold ; for such a death has no manner of influence upon the concerns of the immortal soul ; but vanity stamps everlasting infamy upon its slave, were he even to die upon a bed of state, and under a silver canopy. Surely, it must be awful to live in a state or place in which you are afraid to die ; and yet this but too frequently is the case, even among Gospel hearers. But if you would not wish to die in Moab, or to perish with the world, the word is unto you, "Arise, depart, this is not your rest, for it is polluted."

"She went forth, she and her two daughters-in-law with her, on their way to return to the land of Judah." Orpah had not as yet discovered any inclination to continue in the land of Moab ; therefore, her mother had no just reason to call her sincerity in question.

Difficulties you may, you must, you shall meet on your way ; for it is through much tribulation that we must enter the kingdom ; but an entrance once administered into the holiest of all, will amply reward your toil and suffering, and cause your present affliction to appear as waters which have passed away. Remember, it is the Spirit of the Lord which discovers the emptiness of Moab, and the insufficiency of all creature enjoyments.

THE salvation of God delivers a man not only from the guilt, but also from the dominion, of sin, and brings him into fellowship with God.—*R. C. Chapman.*

THOUGH the habits of grace be not lost, yet the acts of grace may be intercepted (2 Sam. xii. 31) ; the degrees of grace may be remitted (Rev. iii. 3) ; the evidences of grace may be clouded, and consequently the comforts of grace may be suspended (Isaiah l. 10) ; and the least of these is such a loss as all the treasures of the earth cannot repair. Well, therefore, may declining Christians challenge the first place among all the mourners in the world.—*John Flavel.*

"TO THE HILLS."

LIFT up thy face to God,
 I know what pleas are there :
 The flush with rush of pain,
 The wrinkles born of care ;
 Feeble may be thy knee,
 Thy hand lie like a clod ;
 Thy soul is in thine eye ;
 Lift up thy face to God.

He—as no other—knows
 The anguish and the bliss ;—
 What joy is sin forgiven,
 What pain is sinfulness—
 The glory where He waits,
 The sorrow when He stays ;
 Lift up thy face to God ;
 He will explain His ways.

Not now, perhaps ; not yet ;
 Jacob was very old
 Ere God's triumphant plan
 Before him was unrolled ;
 The waiting had been long,
 The journey had been rough,
 But Jacob in the end
 Could say, "It is enough."

So shall my worn friend say,
 When pain has done its worst ;
 When at Christ's beckoning,
 Spirit from clay shall burst ;
 Somebody here shall weep
 Above the graveyard sod,
 But thou shalt gloriously
 Lift up thy face to God.

Not to a stranger God
 Shalt thou lift up thy face ;
 He who awaits thee there
 Has known thee all thy days ;
 The mightiest surprise
 At glory's dawn shall be,
 That such an one as *He*
 Was crucified for *thee*.

THE WONDERFUL CONSTRUCTION OF THE EAR.

ALTHOUGH the ear, in point of beauty, must give place to the eye, it is nevertheless perfectly adapted to its use, and no less a masterpiece of the Creator's hand. In the first place, its position shows much wisdom; it is placed in the most convenient part of the human machine, near the brain, the common seat of all senses. The *external* structure form of the ear deserves our admiration; it nearly resembles a muscle, but it has neither the softness of mere flesh, nor the hardness of bone. Were it flesh only, the upper part would fall down over the orifice, and prevent the communication of sounds. If, on the other hand, it were provided with solid bones, we should feel much pain and many inconveniences, when we lay on either side. On this account, the Creator has chosen a cartilaginous substance for the outward part of the ear; which has that degree of firmness, that polish and folding, which are most proper to reflect sounds; for the whole use of the external part is to collect the undulations of the air, and convey them into the orifice of the ear.

The *internal* structure of this organ is still more proper to excite our surprise. Within the ear there is an opening, which is called the *Meatus Auditorius*, or *Auditory Canal*, the entrance of which is defended with small hairs, to prevent insects from penetrating into it, and it is for the same purpose that it is always moistened with a sort of bitter glutinous humour, called the *ear-wax*, which is separated from its glands. The *Tympanum*, or *Drum*, is placed obliquely in the Auditory Canal. This part of the ear has really a resemblance to a drum; for first there is a sort of bony ring in the cavity of the auditory canal, over which a round, thin, dry membrane is stretched. Secondly, there is a muscle tightly connected with the *Malleus*, which answers the same end here that the catgut string does to the drum: it increases vibrations of the membrane, and serves sometimes to tighten and sometimes to relax it. In the cavity, under the drum, there are some very small, but very remarkable bones, called *Auditory Bones*. They are distinguished by these names: *Malleus*, the *Hammer*; *Incus*, the *Anvil*; *Os Orbiculare*, the *Orbicular Bone*; and the *Stapes*, or *Stirrup*. Their use is to contribute to the vibrations and extension of the tympanum. Behind the cavity of the drum there is another opening, called the *Eustachian Tube*, which leads to the palate. This passage lets the air in and out from the funnel of the ear, to make the membrane vibrate the better. Sounds received through the mouth are heard by means of this passage when the outward orifice of the ear is closed up. Next comes the *Cochlea*, which rises in a spiral line, similar to a winding staircase; and finally, behind this, the *Auditory Nerve* terminates in the brain. Therefore, the essential requisite of hearing consists in the aforesaid *Tympanum*, or *Drum*, and the *Auditory Nerve*, the external parts serving only to collect the sound or undulations of the air, in order to strengthen the sense of hearing.

Hearing is a thing in itself highly worthy of admiration. By a

portion of air extremely small, which we put in motion we know not how, we can in an instant make our thoughts, desires, and conceptions known to another; and that as perfectly as if his soul could see into ours. But to make the action of the air in the propagation of sounds more easy to be understood, let us remember that the air is not a solid but a fluid body. Throw a stone into calm water, and it will occasion undulations, which will extend more or less according to the degree of force with which the stone was cast in. Let us now suppose that a word spoken produces the same effect in the air which the stone does in the water; while the speaker pronounces the word, he expels with more or less force a quantity of air out of his mouth. This air communicates an undulatory motion on the external air, and the air thus put in motion communicates its vibrations to the *Tympanum* or drum; by the drum the air contained in the cavity of the ear is agitated; by these agitations the *Hammer* is shaken; the hammer in its turn shakes the *Anvil* and the *Os Orbiculare*; and the *Stirrup* transmits to the nerves through the *Fenestra Ovalis* or Oval Orifice the motion it has received, and these vibrate like the strings of a harpsichord. This motion of the air gains strength by agitating the fluid contained in the labyrinth and cochlea, and communicates itself to what is properly called the *Auditory Nerve*. The soul then feels a sensation, proportioned to the strength or weakness of the impressions received, and by virtue of a mysterious law of the Creator forms to itself representations of objects and of truths.

What joy should we feel in being capable of distinguishing sounds! How deplorable would our case be were we denied the faculty of hearing! In certain respects privation of hearing would be worse than the loss of sight. Through the eye, only sensible and corporeal ideas can enter the soul; but by the ear we may form ideas of invisible and spiritual subjects. Consequently, had we been born deaf, it would have been extremely difficult for us to have received any instructions concerning religion, God, the nature of the soul, or salvation. We could not have acquired knowledge sufficient for any art or science whatever. In order to make His goodness still more manifest to different generations of men, God permits now and then a person to be born deaf. Let us never look on any of those poor, helpless persons, without endeavouring to estimate better the worth of the sense of which they are deprived, and that goodness of God which has granted it to us. And let us ever remember that to make a proper use of our hearing is the best method of testifying our gratitude to God for so great a gift.—*Extract from Reflections by Christopher Christian Sturm.*

No gifts of God are evil in themselves; it is the abuse of them which constitutes the evil.

THE death of the Son of God proceeded from without Him. The sinner's death comes from within him.—*R. C. Chapman.*

"RIGHTEOUSNESS"—IMPUTED OR IMPARTED :

WITH SOME SCRIPTURES THEREON.

"IMPUTED"—"IMPARTED." These two words have at first sight somewhat of a resemblance, but upon a closer examination we find that they have a totally different meaning.

To impute means "freely to account or ascribe to a person that which he himself has not, or did not," or "to lay to one's charge."

To impart means "to give away actually," to "grant as a partaker," or "to communicate." Therefore, "To the Law and to the Testimony" (Isa. viii. 20). Let us, then, first look at the following Scriptures, and by them we shall most clearly see that the righteousness we are now considering is imputed and not (as some assert) imparted.

The prophet Isaiah (lxiv. 6) says, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." How blessedly, therefore, do the inspired words of Jeremiah (xxiii. 6) fall on the anxious seeker's ears. He says: "This is the name whereby He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness"; and again (Jer. xxxiii. 16), "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith *she* shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." And yet again, in the New Testament, the Holy Ghost, speaking by the Apostle Paul says, "Even as David also described the blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works," saying, "Blessed are they whose iniquities," etc. (Rom. iv. 6, 7, 8). What, then, will He impute but the opposite of sin? viz., righteousness. Again (Rom. iv. 21-25) we read that "Abraham being fully," etc. "For if (Rom. v. 17, 18) by *one* man's offence death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Christ Jesus. Wherefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life, for as by one man's (Adam the first) disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One (the 'Last Adam,' the Lord from heaven) shall many be made righteous, as it is written, 'The wages of sin,' " etc. (Rom. vi. 23). "For the Lord hath made Him to be sin for us (Him) Who knew no sin," "neither was guile found in His mouth" (1 Peter ii. 22), that we (sinners) might be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. v. 21). Oh, this divine mystery, the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh—to save saints? No, sinners, for "not the righteous, sinners Jesus came to save." For we also read (2 Cor. v. 18) that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

Therefore it is abundantly evident from the above (as well as from many other passages we could mention) that this righteousness alone is Christ, and is in Him for and from all eternity. Read Proverbs viii., where, after declaring that He is wisdom, it is said, "His delights were with the sons of men." So thus God accepts the righteousness of His

own dear Son, viz., the substitution of Christ's own righteousness (Col. i. 19; and ii. 9) in place of that of the sinner, which is only "a filthy rag," and no righteousness at all, and we ask how could a holy and righteous God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, accept that? Let the advocates of "imparted righteousness" and "sinless perfection," or "perfection in the flesh," answer this question if they can, or for very shame be silent, and say, "It is truth" (Isa. xliii. 9). "Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord" (Isa. xliii. 10).

Then again, supposing (and supposing only) the righteousness of Christ to be imparted, it would of necessity, and according to the meaning of the word, be out of, or away from Christ's own keeping, and, therefore, in the sinner's keeping! Oh, to what does error lead! We may well exclaim, What a poor place of insecurity that would be. Well might Paul say, "I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him" (2 Tim. i. 12).

Then further, if imparted, the responsibility (oh, this doctrine of the creature's responsibility!) of the sinner's final salvation would rest with the sinner, who would thus be his own saviour (perish the thought) and not with our glorious Christ, Whose work would have been entirely unnecessary, and we should want a fresh Bible and a fresh Gospel were this true. Here "Adam the first" failed utterly, but thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift of gifts, the Lord from Heaven, the "Last Adam."

Or, to concede even by this latter view of imparted righteousness that Christ Jesus would still be the "Author," still, then He would not be the "Finisher of our faith" as He is (Heb. xii. 2), and this would rob Him of His glory as a complete Saviour and the accomplishing of His finished work (John xvii. 4): "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do."

This deadly error, then, of imparted righteousness, once admitted, would throw everything in the Word of God out of line and harmony, and make out the devil's lie to be truth, and God's own truth a lie. Oh, thou spirit of error, what blasphemy is this! But Christ is all, and without Him (as He said) we can do nothing (John xv. 8). For He of God (by God) is made unto (or "for") us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption (1 Cor. i. 30).

And again, "Their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord" (Isa. liv. 17). These Scriptures, then, by themselves give the "lie direct" to the false doctrine of imparted righteousness, and prove that righteousness is imputed, or that God accepts or imputes the righteousness of Christ (in Whom He is well pleased) for the robe or covering of the truly penitent and now forgiven sinner, and therefore so gives His Son as the sinner's only responsible Surety, Substitute, Mediator, and Saviour. May the Lord bless His own truth, and to Him be all praise now and for ever. Amen.

PREDESTINATION.

BY WILLIAM TUCKER (1821).

GOD ever saw in one capacious thought
Worlds upon worlds to full existence brought,
And fixed the end, ere time its race began,
Of seraphim, of reptiles, and of man.

He saw, long ere yon brilliant arch was spread,
The sons of Adam, fallen in their head,
He saw—and sovereign-willed the dire event
A means to prosecute His wise intent.

He saw, He willed, but no incitement gave ;
The sin was man's ; but His the grace to save.
Man's will was free, and strength was given with all,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.

Not free ! he had not sinnèd when he fell,
Nor trial had, if made impeccable.
Not free ! what test of his obedience, then ?
As well might torpid stones obey, as men.

Man in obeying, and in sin was free ;
His crime, no impulse had from Deity ;
Though IN the act the Sovereign him upheld,
Yet TO the act was by no power impelled.

Sin was man's, but God's the power to perpetrate
From whom no creature acteth separate ;
'Tis He supports Thy soul, while sinning now ;
Yet hates thy sin, and threatens vengeance too.
Permits its reign, by His determinate will,
And His wise counsels do thereby fulfil.

Prevent, He could, if wisdom had seen fit,
But wisdom saw it wiser to permit :
But the permission was no active cause,
Though man without it ne'er had broke the laws.

When Sol withholds its rays, black shades arise,
And sable gloom its dazzling beams supplies ;
But who dare say, this splendid orb of light,
Producing darkness, generates the night ?

That life's death's cause, we may as justly cry,
For who ne'er lives, can ne'er be said to die.
Can we the law, with justice, blame for sin,
Though without law, transgression ne'er had been ?
So the permission causes not the woe,
Though unpermitted it had ne'er been so.

PRECIOUS PROMISES.

BY THE LATE "GOSPEL COTTAGE LECTURER."

"All the promises of God in Him are Yea, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God by us."—2 CORINTHIANS i. 20.

"I AM the true Vine" . . . "Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in Me. I am the Vine: ye are the branches, he that abideth in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. For without (or, severed from) Me, ye can do nothing (John xv. 1-5)." Am I *truly* abiding in the vine? Oh, solemn enquiry!

"How stands the case, my soul with thee?
For heaven are thy credentials clear?
Is Jesus' blood thy only plea?
Is He thy great Forerunner there?"

What answer can a poor sinner give in the midst of darkness that is felt indeed? Perhaps pressed down by a mountain of temporal difficulties, groaning beneath a sense of indwelling sins, which are struggling moment by moment to break loose, and buffeted by a crafty enemy, who would—yea, who is *ever seeking*—to fan every smouldering ember of lust and rebellion into a flame, that he may turn accuser. But here let us for a moment, even though the scathed and blighted heart may be bursting with sorrow, catch one drop of honey from the thought that, although our great enemy be ever ready to accuse the brethren, yet blessed be our God and King, He will never accept him as "King's evidence," for the Lord has pronounced him to have been "a liar from the beginning"; and we know, from daily painful experience, that he is a robber. But through the midst of all, what can we answer to the great inquiry, Am I in Christ?

The Lord help us to come simply to the question; no profound research, no great wisdom, is needed here.

"The simplest Christian shall not err,
Nor be deceived, nor die."

And why? The Lord the Spirit is his teacher, and every lesson taught by that infallible Guide contains the wisdom of God, although it be in a mystery.

"By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. vii. 20). What fruits? Moral fruits? No; they are not the *grapes* which grow upon the vine; moral fruits flourish, undisturbed by *foxes*, or devils either, on many a stout thornbush and thistle too, but grapes grow only on the vine; nevertheless, it is impossible to be in union with the vine without having our "fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life" (Rom. vi. 22). The Lord enable every enquirer to distinguish between *spiritual* grapes and *moral* fruit. More than half the misery which

the dear children of God suffer from day to day during their earlier teaching seems to arise out of the mistake they make respecting the fruit. The moment, as branches, they become truly and spiritually united to Christ, the living vine, a standard of perfection is set up in their souls, which is more or less clearly discovered according to the growth in grace. To this standard they henceforward bring all their works, and to their dismay, find every piece of money they carry up to buy food with returned in their sack's mouth stamped with Solomon's badge, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity"; and long it is before one who is truly honest in heart can understand the Lord's wonderful mode of dealing: "Without money and without price." Indeed it is a measure of the knowledge of this "liberal device" (Isaiah xxxii. 8) which brings forth the "first-ripe fruit"; but fruit has to grow before it is ripe, and grapes are still grapes although they are not ripe.

But a branch may be alive and possess undoubted evidence of union to the vine before grapes appear. Tendrils are as much evidences of life as the richest cluster. Job was as manifestly alive when he cried out, "Though He slay me yet will I trust in Him," as when he bore that cluster of blessedness—"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and although after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my (own) flesh shall I see (my own) God. Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another . . . seeing the root of the matter is found in me" (Job xix. 25, 28). Therefore, as some of us may not be able to answer the great question of "Am I in Christ?" by pointing to an "Eshcol" (Num. xiii. 24), yet may we have many little green *tendrils* by which we may prove that we truly "cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart"; nor let us despise the little tendril—indeed we shall need it when the winds blow and the storms come, especially if we are "fruitful boughs."

What, then, shall we call the first tendril? *The fear of the Lord?* Methinks we hear some little one exclaim, "Bless the Lord, I do hope I have that evidence, for we read, 'The fear of the Lord is to hate evil,' and I can truly say there is nothing in the world gives me such continual sorrow, nor is there anything I hate so much as the continual stream of evils which seems to run through my heart. Hate it! Such are my hourly strivings against it, and hatred to it, that it seems as if the Lord were to do no more than set me free from this load, I should enjoy a heaven beyond expression indeed." Ah, beloved, an emperor's diadem would be a poor, nay, contemptible exchange for thy little tendril. The Psalmist says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Psalm iii. 10), and Solomon begins his book of wisdom by saying "It is the beginning (or, margin, principal part) of knowledge" (Proverbs i. 7); and the reason why you feel such a constant flowing of corruption through the old part, or old Adam-self, is, because this blessed tendril, this little weakling, which has sprung out of the newly manifested living branch, is so *clean* that, in its tenderness and sensitiveness, every speck invisible to the *natural* eye

affects it, for "the fear of the Lord is clean" (Prov. xix. 9), yea, so clean that it can never wink at sin, but, like a little champion for the Lord, stands in the breach, let what will be going on; and with the alarm trumpet to its mouth, continues to exclaim, "*I give not my consent.*" Poor tempted one, dost thou know the solemn power of this unyielding one in the midst of thy warfare? Thy billows of death shall never drown him, nor will he leave thee in Satan's net; for "the fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death" (Prov. xiv. 27).

Further, what does this little tendril reach after? What does it hang upon? Does it hang upon *self*? No. It may cling to another branch, but why? Simply because that other branch is more manifestly hanging on the vine itself; but its chief feeling is after the grand stem of life. "The fear of the Lord tendeth to life," and Christ said, "I am the life," and "I am the true vine"; and dear Hart's blessed hymn sweetly sums up all we desire to say on this precious spiritual tendril:—

"The fear of the Lord is clean and approved,
Makes Satan abhorred, and Jesus beloved;
It conquers by weakness, is proof against strife,
A cordial in sickness, a fountain of life.
They only that fear Him the truth can discern,
For living so near Him, His secrets they learn;
The deeper it reaches the more the soul thrives,
It gives what it teaches, and guards what it gives;
Then cry we to heaven with one loud accord,
That to us be given the fear of the Lord."

Beloved, hast thou this treasure in thy earthen vessel? The Lord says it is peculiarly "His treasure" (Isa. xxxiii. 6). Is it thine? If so, thou hast the first mark that thou art abiding in the vine, and if in Christ—blessed thought—although only hanging by a trembling tendril now, "once *in Christ*, in Christ for ever"; and all the precious promises are *in Him*, Yea, and *in Him* Amen, to every one thus cleaving to the Lord.

THE difficulty is not in knowing how God can condemn a sinner, but how, consistently with His justice, He can save any.

WHILE there is much affectation of thankfulness in the world, the motto which might be stamped upon every carnal man is "Unthankful, unholy."

How deep that fall will be when a man drops from the summit of ease and wealth to the indigence and misery of the bottomless pit; language fails me to describe, nor can I even imagine it!

WHATEVER our outward calling and circumstances may be, let us take heed to follow His communications, walking ever in the Spirit.
—R. C. Chapman.

AGED PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY.

HORNSEY RISE ASYLUM ANNIVERSARY.

(From "The English Churchman," July 12.)

THE thirty-fifth anniversary of the Hornsey Rise Homes of the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society again provided "a feast of fat things." With unflinching regularity, the friends of the Institution repair to this rendezvous on the first Friday in July, not for propagandist work, nor that there is any need to stir up their hearts "by way of remembrance." The minds of these friends and supporters—truly representative of the whole body scattered up and down—are constantly set upon the needs of the Lord's aged poor. They come on this day to see their beneficiaries in their own pleasant cottage homes, by purchases also of the useful goods displayed for sale to help the Benevolent Fund of the Homes, by which some special needs of the inmates are met, and, best of all, to share the refreshment and blessing which, as the Lord wills, attend the services which are an inseparable part of the Anniversary proceedings.

Friday, July 6th, was providentially fine, and from an early hour there was an excellent attendance. The inmates vied with one another to make their habitations attractive for the visits of their kith and kin, as well as others who might make a call upon them, and the nicely kept lawns and flower-beds looked their best. The sale of work for the replenishment of the Fund, which provides medical attendance, nursing, and extra comforts for those in sickness, commenced at 2 o'clock, and an hour later the first service of the day was held in the Asylum Chapel, which was quite filled. The Rev. James Ormiston, Rector of St. Mary-le-Port, Bristol, was the preacher, and members of the Board of the Society, with Mr. A. Hayles (Treasurer), and Mr. Hazelton, the Secretary, were present. The Rev. W. Sinden read Psalms xci. and xcii. and offered prayer.

The text was Matt. xiv. 18, "He said, Bring them hither to Me." Turning to the context, the Preacher reminded his hearers of the occasion on which Jesus uttered these significant words. In the twelfth verse of the chapter, they would see how the disciples of John the Baptist, on the occasion of his martyrdom, took up the headless body, and having buried it, went and told Jesus. Upon this report being delivered, Jesus departed by ship and went into a desert place apart. His soul was filled with sorrow. Mr. Ormiston dwelt on the sorrows of Jesus, and showed how, amongst other instances, He mourned at Bethany with Mary and Martha on the death of their brother. On this occasion John the Baptist had sealed his testimony with his blood. They did not read that Jesus wept. There were some sorrows too deep for tears, and though there may have been no tears, they could not doubt the depth of His sorrow. The Lord went into a desert place apart, but He was not alone, for His Father was with Him, and Jesus poured His heart into the ears of His Father. John occupied a unique position. The prophecy in Isaiah speaks of the

"Voice of one crying in the wilderness"; he had no predecessor and no successor. When his friends questioned John as to whether he were the Messiah, he replied that he was not, but was the friend of the Bridegroom. So when John the Baptist sealed his testimony with his martyr-blood, Jesus lost a friend, and his sorrow was peculiar, distinctive, unique. When the people heard of the death of John, they followed Christ, possibly out of sympathy and as sharing with Him His deep distress; for the narrative states that when they "heard thereof" they followed Him out of many cities into the desert. There was always a power of attractiveness in Jesus, whether in the cities or in the untrodden paths of the wilderness; an attractiveness that drew the poor, the needy, the helpless, and those in distress. Accordingly they read here of the people bringing their sick and afflicted ones with them.

Great multitudes always seemed to affect the heart of Jesus. Three times "multitudes" are mentioned in this Gospel, and on each occasion it is said that He had "compassion." He could see into the hearts of all this numerous company of people. He totalled up their distresses, their sorrows, and their needs. When He beheld a great multitude, He saw also its great necessities, and noted the many falling tears. But when "He saw this great multitude, He was moved with compassion towards them, and healed their sick." His was not a sentimental, but a practical compassion. And as in time past, so to-day, His heart and His eyes are upon His people, considering them, noting their burdens, cares, sorrows, conflicts, weariness, and manifold infirmities. The heart of Jesus was set upon them; the eye of His favour was towards them, and His compassion was moved.

Pursuing the narrative, they would observe that when evening drew on, His disciples came to Him, reminding Him that they were in a desert place, that the time was past, and that He ought to send the multitude away, that they might go into the villages to buy themselves food. That manifestly went home to the heart of the Lord. As when the Syrophenician woman, who had an afflicted daughter, cried after the Lord, and the disciples desired to send her away, the Lord did not hearken, so it was on this occasion. In answer to their request that the people should be sent away, He said, "They need not depart." Though they were in a desert place, they need not depart, for the great truth held good—"He was there," and it is no desert where He is. To the suggestion of the disciples that the people should be counselled to go to the villages and buy victuals, Jesus replied in effect, "I am here!" What a rebuke that was! The disciples regarded the whole matter from a human standpoint. He (the preacher) exhorted his hearers to look at life from the standpoint of their blessed Lord.

"They need not depart; give ye them to eat." This was putting the disciples to the test. The Lord knew what He would do, but He desired to test the resources of nature to the last grain. In reply to this command, the disciples said that there was nothing available

but five loaves and two fishes. This indeed brought them to an end of their own resources, and how small they were! But the Lord did not despise them because they were so small. On the contrary, He said, "Bring them hither to Me." It is not a question with Him of few or many. He does not despise small things, but greatly honours "things that are not" and "base things." These the Lord delights to take in hand for His people and bless. Had his hearers, said Mr. Ormiston, any small things, either temporal or spiritual? In spiritual things, certainly, their possessions were always very small. "Bring them hither to Me. I will not despise them." So when the disciples brought the loaves and fishes to Jesus, He caused the multitude to sit down, and thus roused their expectation of a wonder of some kind that He was about to perform. Jesus looked up, signifying that all mercies, large or small, come from above. He looked up and thanked his heavenly Father for the five loaves and two fishes; from which they ought to learn the secret of seeing their heavenly Father's hand in all things. Then, too, when all had eaten, the disciples gathered twelve large baskets full of the remains. Our faith might be little faith, but the Lord Jesus Christ bade us bring it to Him, and as He increased the bread and the fishes, so He would increase our faith. Though He wrought the miracle for the benefit of the thousands there present, yet the end in view was His own glory and the profit of His people in all after-times. And so He had it put into the Book for their encouragement and instruction. The Lord is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. He always has His people in His thoughts, and though they may be forgetful of His love, yet "He abideth faithful." He can do wonders with a little crumb of mercy. "His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him." He will multiply mercies by our coming to Him. He will increase our love and deepen our affection. Had we only poverty and leanness, yet the Lord said, "Bring them hither to Me." He never forsook the soul that hoped in His mercy. Those whom He had made His people might well say with Paul, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is Christ Jesus our Lord."

At the close of the service, there was an interval for the benefit of the Sale of Work, and at 5 o'clock tea was provided in the Asylum Hall, in which a large number of friends joined. In the evening a second service was held in the chapel, when the Rev. M. J. Tryon, of Stamford, preached an excellent sermon from 1 Pet. i. 21, "That your faith and hope might be in God."

While no appeal for the general wants of the Institution is made in connection with this anniversary, it will not be out of place to remind our readers that 1906-7 is the centenary year of the Institution. In view of this most auspicious event, a Million Shilling Fund has been inaugurated, for the excellent purpose of making the four Homes of

the Institution entirely self-supporting. Thus, all future contributions will be freed to be used for the exclusive purpose of consolidating and developing the Pensions. There are now 1640 Pensioners on the books, and contributions, either for the Million Shilling Fund or for the general work of the Institution, should be sent to Mr. J. E. Hazelton, at the office of the Society, 83, Finsbury Pavement, E.C.

“GOD DEALETH WITH YOU AS WITH SONS.”

(HEB. xii. 7.)

CHASTENED! Thrice blessed is the way He taketh
 To make us sharers of His holiness.
 Humbled! yet knowing that HE ne'er forsaketh
 The saints for whom HE died, Who lives to bless.
 Sorrowing! and yet rejoicing in His favour,
 Who stooped to be with all our griefs acquainted.
 Cast down! yet calling Him our own for ever,
 Who bore our sins, Himself by sin untainted.
 Bereavèd! yet the path with glory streaming,
 And all things ours, whether we wake or sleep.
 Weeping! with smiles through tears of sorrow beaming,
 Soon shall the mourners His bright harvest reap.
 Bruisèd! yet never shall the reed be broken
 By His dear hand, though shaken with the wind.
 Dying! yet living, He Himself the token
 That we have left the power of death behind.
 Wearied! but patient on His arm reclining,
 Quitting the wilderness with all its woe.
 Fainting! yet never at His will repining,
 Who gently weans us from all things below.
 Agèd! yet life untouched, all fresh, and glowing
 With dew of youth, springs up for evermore.
 Helpless! still strength from God's resources flowing,
 Gives power and joy, although despised and poor.
 Chastened! yet killed not;—not like man He woundeth,
 Healthful His strokes, heart-strengthening His rebuke.
 Cling to His arm, Who all our steps surroundeth
 With light from Heaven that we on Him may look.
 Chastened! yea, scourged, that with the glad reception
 Of sons and daughters we might welcome be
 In that bright circle where no heart's deception,
 Or fleshly will, can keep us, Lord, from THEE!

THE LATE JOHN JEWELL PENSTONE.

Protestant Beacon.

THE AFFLICTIONS AND TRIUMPHS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

A LECTURE, DELIVERED ON THE 4TH OF OCTOBER, 1835 (THE THIRD CENTENARY OF THE ENGLISH REFORMATION), BY THE LATE REV. THOMAS HARTWELL HORNE, B.D.

“Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say : Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth : yet they have not prevailed against me.”—PSALM CXXIX. 1, 2.

THE Psalm whence these words are taken consists of two parts. In the first, which is historical, the Psalmist exhorts the Israelitish Church to call to mind the afflictions which she had experienced ; and in the second part, which is prophetic, he announces the judgments that will ultimately fall on the impenitent enemies of the Church.

“Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say : Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth : yet they have not prevailed against me.”

This repetition of the same words is not uncommon among the sacred poets in order to express with the greater energy the subject of which they are treating. Concerning the import of this term, viz., the youth of Israel, there is a difference of opinion among commentators ; some referring it to the wanderings, and other trials, to which the patriarchs and their immediate descendants were exposed : while others, with more propriety, apply it to the time when the children of Israel first formed into a distinct nation in Egypt, where their “lives were made bitter with hard bondage.” In this latter sense the term is employed by Hosea (ii. 15), when, foretelling the yet future restoration of Israel, he says, “She shall sing as in the days of her youth, and as in the days when she came up out of Egypt.” In which prediction the “days of youth,” and the period during which the Israelites resided in Egypt, are constructively parallel terms : and similar expressions occur in the writings of other prophets,* who flourished both before and after the captivity. It is, then, from the residence of the Israelites in Egypt, until after their return from captivity, that the ancient Church might say that she had been afflicted by her enemies, but had been preserved and supported by the arm of Omnipotence. But if Israel could justly adopt this language, with equal propriety may we apply this psalm, but in a much higher sense, to the Church of Christ (of which Israel was a type), and address to her the Psalmist’s exclamation, “Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, yet they have not prevailed against me.”

The afflictions and triumphs of the Church of Christ, from her first origin, and the impressions which the consideration of those afflictions and triumphs ought to produce on our minds, are the important and

* See particularly Jer. ii. 2 ; and Ezek. xvi. 22, 60 ; xviii. 3, 8, 19.

deeply interesting topics which I would this evening offer to your consideration; guided by the return of this centenary, on which we commemorate the deliverance of our forefathers from the tyranny of human authority, superstition, and vain traditions, and our restoration to the full possession, and to the free use and study, of the unadulterated Word of God, in our native tongue. This subject will necessarily lead us into some historical details, which are not ordinarily introduced into the pulpit: but it is profitable sometimes to derive instruction from the great events which have taken place in the world, and by which God designs to teach men. Give me, then, brethren, your candid and serious attention, and, above all, "lift up your hearts to the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who spake by the prophets," for the confirmation of our faith, while—

I. We attempt in the first place to investigate the afflictions and triumphs of the Church of Christ.

Scarcely was the Church organized, after our divine Redeemer's ascension into heaven, when she was assailed by three descriptions of enemies, either all at once, or consecutively, viz., the prejudices of authority and human wisdom—the violence of persecution—and the errors and heresies of false teachers. In all these respects, the Church has been afflicted from her youth, yet her enemies have not prevailed against her.

1. The Church of Christ has been assailed by the prejudices of authority and human wisdom.

From its very origin, the Gospel was a "stumbling-block to the Jews, and to the Greeks foolishness."

(i) The Jews had, for many ages, been distinguished, as the depositories of the Oracles of God, who had honoured them by admitting them into covenant with Himself: but the Gospel expressly announced—what indeed the prophets had foretold—that this distinction, so flattering to their national vanity, would cease, together with the Mosaic ritual and discipline. Instead of studying the true sense of those predictions, which described the person, offices, and triumphs of the Messiah, their minds were filled with notions of a temporal deliverer, victorious over his and their enemies; and the apostles "preached Christ," who suffered the ignominious death of the cross, "the just for the unjust;" who "loved us and gave Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice unto God"; and who is the "one Mediator between God and man." They preached "Christ crucified,—to them that perish, foolishness; but the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." A doctrine like this, so humiliating to the pride of fallen man, naturally produced opposition: and the high priest, scribes, and elders, after having unjustly condemned the Master (Matt. xxvi. 66; John xix. 7) declared themselves the avowed enemies of His disciples.

(ii) Equally strong were the prejudices opposed by paganism to the Church of Christ.

Pagan idolatry could trace its origin to remote antiquity. The

most imposing pomp and splendour entered into all its ceremonies. The Greeks had added to that religion, which they had received from the Egyptians; and the Romans had made further additions to the deities of the Greeks. The successes which had attended all their undertakings, and the exalted rank in the scale of nations to which the Romans had attained, were powerful reasons for attaching them the more firmly to the tutelary deities which they adored. Hence, magistrates and governors were not tardy in manifesting their bitter hostility against Christians; while philosophers, on the other hand, vain of their imaginary knowledge, and accustomed only to speculative and abstract reasonings, destitute of all moral influence, found in the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel everything that could offend the pride of intellect. Hence that ridicule to which St. Paul was exposed at Athens. Yet all these efforts could not prevail against the Church of Christ. "Destitute of all human advantages, protected by no authority, assisted by no art, not recommended by the reputation of its author, nor enforced by eloquence in its advocates, 'the Word of God grew mightily and prevailed.' We behold twelve men—poor, artless, illiterate, and uneducated—triumphing over the fiercest opposition, over the tyranny of the magistrate and the subtleties of the philosopher, over the prejudices of the Gentile and the bigotry of the Jew." And in the course of a very few years, great multitudes of intelligent persons, of every rank, renounced their former prejudices, and became the zealous and exemplary followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Further, the Church of Christ has been afflicted from her youth by the violence of persecutions.

The "raging heathen" formed schemes against her. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers took counsel, against the Lord and his Messiah." Saul of Tarsus, before his conversion, "breathed out" only "threatening and slaughter"; fortified by the authority of the great synagogue at Jerusalem, he pursued the followers of Christ from city to city. Herod Agrippa renewed the persecution in order to gratify the Jews. The Apostle James was the first victim of his false zeal, and he destined a similar violent death for Peter, who was miraculously rescued from his grasp. But these persecutions were mild, not to say trifling, in comparison of those experienced in succeeding ages. Ecclesiastical History has recorded ten successive persecutions, between the second and fourth centuries, in which every refinement of cruelty was developed against the professors of the Christian faith. During these persecutions, and especially during the last, which was inflicted upon the Church by the emperors Dioclesian and Maximian, almost the whole of the then known world was dyed with the blood of the martyrs, which nevertheless continued to prove the seed of the Church. No previous war, however sanguinary, had caused such a desolation as this persecution. During the same (that is, the fourth) century, after a short interval of repose under Constantine, the Church was again assailed, not only by the insidious artifices of

the apostate, Julian, but also by some of the emperors, his successors, who, being the avowed protectors of a heresy that denied the deity of our Saviour, employed open force against her. Yet, notwithstanding these sanguinary and successive persecutions, the Church of Christ triumphed over all her enemies, supported by the mighty arm of God : and still may she adopt the language of the devout Psalmist, and say, "Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth : yet they have not prevailed against me."

3. Once more : The Church has been assailed by the errors and heresies of false teachers.

No one who has attentively perused the New Testament can be ignorant that, from the very commencement of Christianity, the Church has been torn by intestine divisions, and agitated by disturbances, caused by many who "profess to know God, but in their works deny Him." While some denied the doctrine of the resurrection, and drew from the pen of St. Paul the admirable defence and demonstration of that fundamental and most consolatory truth, which we have in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, various other false teachers assailed the purity of the precepts of the Gospel, and (as the apostles Peter and Jude had respectively foretold) endeavoured to seduce Christians to "turn the grace of God into lasciviousness." While some endeavoured to rob Jesus Christ of His divinity as the Son of God, others attempted to annihilate His incarnation : against both these classes of false teachers St. John contends in his first Epistle. Meanwhile, the first Hebrew converts to the Christian faith aimed at uniting the Law with the Gospel, endeavouring to subjugate believers to the yoke of the Mosaic ceremonies, and persuading them to consider certain practices of the Mosaic Law as concurring with faith to obtain for them the pardon of their sins. This error St. Paul confutes in the whole of his Epistle to the Galatians ; declaring that "Christ is become of no effect" unto those who are desirous of "being justified by the law," and that they are "fallen from grace." The former part of his Epistle to the Romans is equally directed against this error ; and the Apostle has there most clearly and fully established the doctrine that we are "justified freely by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (iii. 24). In all his epistles, indeed, he insists upon this fundamental truth : and the first council of the Christian Church (which, as we read in Acts xv., was convened for the determination of this very point) sanctioned, by the mouth of St. Peter, the doctrine, "that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved."

Notwithstanding these explicit declarations, in proportion as we recede from the time of the apostles we behold the Gospel fall into oblivion, in certain points, and gradually give place to opinions and practices which are directly contrary to its spirit. Thus, martyrdom, the most striking proof of the fidelity of the first Christians, was regarded as the means of obtaining salvation by many, who ran to it because they hoped thereby to efface their sins, and become reconciled

to God. In many places, divine worship was performed, and the sacraments of the Church were administered, on the tombs of the martyrs, to whom an extraordinary degree of merit was attributed, and honours were paid to their mortal remains. Hence originated the notion, that the rank which they held in the heavenly kingdom gave them the power of succouring the infirmities of sinful mortals; and Christ, the only Saviour, the "one Mediator between God and man," was forgotten. Very early, also, the sacraments of the Church were considered as mysterious acts, which conferred upon those who celebrated them a right to the pardon of their sins;* and the Lord's Supper was regarded as a sacrifice which possessed an inherent expiatory power. And finally, in those early times, a life spent in the solitude of a desert, in fasting and self-mortification, was reputed to acquire for those who devoted themselves to it a merit which counterbalanced, or even expiated, their sins. Thus, pressed on the one hand by their consciousness of their need of pardon, while on the other hand they forgot the Gospel—those glad tidings of great joy, of forgiveness of all sins graciously and freely granted to every one that "believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ with the heart unto righteousness"—men proceeded to ask pardon of their fellow sinners, and to seek it in a mode of life, and in the performance of ceremonies, which were utterly destitute of any atoning virtue or efficacy. But this was only the germ of those errors which the Church subsequently had to deplore, and which developed themselves under the influence of another error, the most fatal of those to which the human mind was led by forgetfulness of the Gospel: I mean, the power which the nations of Europe for many ages agreed, with astonishing unanimity, to attribute to the bishop of Rome.

It is by no means difficult to conceive the origin of the pretensions of the Roman pontiffs to rank and authority above their fellow bishops. At the head of the Church of the metropolis of the world, it seemed but natural that, as Rome temporal reigned over the empire, so spiritual Rome should exercise the same preponderance over all Christian churches. Accordingly, ecclesiastical history records that, so early as the second century, in order to determine a dispute, a bishop of Rome endeavoured, but in vain, to exert the authority which the Roman see had begun to arrogate to itself. In the following ages, although some bishops conceded, in several points, to the bishop of Rome that supremacy to which he aspired, others strenuously contested it with him, and openly refused it to him: nor was it until the close of the seventh century that a pope dared to assert that his decisions ought to be received as if St. Peter himself had brought them from heaven. From that time, the power thus arrogated to themselves by the popes, or bishops of Rome, continued incessantly to increase. How rapidly soever the popes succeeded to the pontifical throne—though not infrequently rival infallible pontiffs fulminated

* Constantine the Great, the first Christian Emperor, delayed his baptism until the close of his life, under the persuasion that the performance of that sacrament would blot out all his sins.

excommunications against each other—yet were they all animated by one and the same spirit, that of vigilantly and incessantly extending the limits of their usurped power; and they beheld their efforts crowned with almost incredible success. Sovereigns of a small district besides the city of Rome (for the possession of which one of them, in the year 800, exhibited to the emperor Charlemagne a forged document, which, it was pretended, had been granted to them by Constantine the Great), they domineered over nations and kings; they disposed at pleasure of kingdoms and empires; they bestowed and they took away crowns; they released subjects from their oaths of allegiance to their sovereigns; and they caused to tremble upon their thrones the most powerful monarchs, who were least disposed to submit to their arbitrary will. To what sources can we attribute this tyranny, under which the Christian world succumbed for so many centuries? Briefly to these two: on the part of the people—forgetfulness of the Gospel, that “grace of God which bringeth salvation to all men”; and on the part of the popes, the most dexterous ability and address, in profiting by that forgetfulness, in order to erect themselves into the sovereign dispensers of pardon.

In fact, brethren, the supremacy arrogated by the Roman pontiffs rests on these words, which were addressed by Jesus Christ to Peter: “I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. xvi. 18). These words were addressed to Peter by our Lord, as a prediction of the priority which he was to have, in first “opening the door of faith,” in first preaching the Gospel both to Jews and Gentiles, and in first admitting the converts of both classes to the privileges of the Christian Dispensation. No authority over the rest of the apostles was given to Peter (for our Lord afterwards gave a similar power to all of them, as related in Matt. xviii. 18, and especially after His resurrection, when He said—“Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained”). Nor was any right conveyed to Peter, which could descend from him to his successor in any see. “The promise,” related in the 18th verse of the xvth chapter of St. Matthew’s gospel, “was simply a prediction, that he would be selected to be the first instrument in a great work of Providence, which was of such a nature as to be done once for all; and, being done, it cannot be repeated. The great apostle fulfilled his commission in his lifetime. He applied his key—he turned back the lock—he loosed, and he bound. The gates of the kingdom of heaven are thrown open—the ceremonial law is abrogated—the moral is confirmed, and the successor of St. Peter can give neither furtherance nor obstruction to the business.”* This interpretation of the privilege of priority—not supremacy—conferred upon the Apostle Peter, as the reward of his enlightened confession that “Jesus Christ was the Son

* Bp. Horsley’s Sermons, p. 153 (London, 1827, 8vo).

of the living God," is not peculiar to the Protestant Churches; nor is it adopted in order to meet the exigencies of a system. It accords with historic fact, and is confirmed by the interpretations of several ancient Fathers of the Christian Church, which (I regret) your time will not now admit of being cited. Yet have the bishops or popes of Rome (who call themselves the successors of the apostles and the vicars of Jesus Christ) falsely applied to themselves our Lord's address to Peter, and have pretended—as they still pretend—that they possess exclusively the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and that to them alone belongs the power of opening or shutting it—of admitting men into it or of shutting them out of it. Now, if the Gospel had not almost entirely fallen into oblivion at the period referred to, the popes never could have caused their pretensions to become prevalent throughout Western Europe: the vanity of such pretensions would have soon been detected, because the Gospel explicitly asserts it to be the prerogative of God alone to forgive sins, and to show mercy. But when men no longer heard the mercies of God in Christ proclaimed, while they continued to feel their need of pardon, they seized with avidity the new means of salvation offered to them, and they yielded to the word of the Roman pontiffs that entire faith and confidence which are due only to the infallible Word of God. Their dictates were reputed to be the infallible declarations of God Himself; the sentences of condemnation pronounced by them were irremissible; and the absolutions which they pretended to grant to the sinner were the most assured pledge of impunity, and of the possession of eternal felicity. In short, men felt their need of a Gospel; and, rejecting the Gospel of God our Saviour, they accepted that of the popes. This circumstance it was which caused their power to strike so deep a root, and for so many ages established it on an immovable basis. In possession of the faith of the world, the Roman pontiffs penetrated and moved whole nations at their pleasure. Though they had at their disposal only a trifling material force, they were able to conflict with the most powerful empires. A single word from their lips armed thousands in their cause: and though they sometimes appeared to be crushed, yet they soon reappeared more vigorous and powerful than before, and prostrated their adversaries. How did they succeed, during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, in pouring into the East those innumerable hosts which went to bury themselves in the sands of the desert? By promising absolution and pardon of sins to all those who should embark in their gigantic undertakings. How did they effect the mastery over sovereign princes who presumed to resist them? By fulminating excommunications against them, and denouncing sentence of condemnation against all who should take up arms in their defence. Absolution and anathemas were the omnipotent weapons of which they made use in order to govern the world: but these were indebted for their force solely to the oblivion into which the Gospel had fallen.

[*To be continued.*]

THE REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON CHURCH
DISORDERS.

THE following Resolution was proposed last month by the Council of the Church Association on the Report of the Royal Commission :—

“The Council of the Church Association have given that careful consideration to the Report of the Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline which the high position of the Commissioners entitles them to. The Council observe with much satisfaction that the evidence given by witnesses was ‘trustworthy,’ and that none of the figures as to illegal practices relied upon by the Church Association in the past have in any way been contradicted or shown to be exaggerated. The figures relate to England and Wales, and are those laid before the Commissioners, as follows : Romish vestments in use in 1504 churches, incense in use in 256 churches, lighted candles when not required for the purpose of giving light, 3913 churches; ‘mixing water with the wine, 3687 churches; hiding the manual acts, 5731 churches.

“These figures were made up in 1901, and the Secretary of the English Church Union stated before the Commission that if the figures were taken again now he believed they would show a considerable increase; and the Commissioners themselves add: ‘There is a great volume of evidence showing a large development of such practices.’

“The Council are greatly surprised that after the Commissioners had refused to hear evidence with regard to a large number of churches which was tendered to them (364 such cases having been returned to the Church Association in one batch, and other Societies had similar experience) they should at the end of their Report make the astounding statement that ‘the complaints made to us relate to a small proportion of the 14,242 churches in England and Wales.’ If the Commissioners had not stopped the evidence, illegal practices might have been proved in nearly 5000 churches instead of the 559 about which the Commissioners chose to listen.

“The Council are gratified to find that the matters which they have been in the habit of describing as illegal are admitted by the Commissioners to be so, and that a further large number of practices and services which had not been before any Court, but of which the Council had complained, are also admitted by the Commissioners to be illegal.

“The Council are pleased to notice that the injustice of the Bishops’ Veto and the undesirableness of imprisonment in ecclesiastical cases, both which points the Association contended for in the Church Discipline Bill of 1903, have at last been conceded.

“The Council are amazed that the Commissioners offer no immediate remedy for the disgraceful state of lawlessness in the National Church, but, on the contrary, propose to alter the existing law by a new Rubric to be devised by the two Convocations, nearly one half of whose members are either members of Ritualistic Societies or appear from

the *Tourist's Church Guide* to be themselves violaters of the law, and who at best only represent the priest-party. Years must elapse before the House of Commons and the two Convocations could jointly agree upon any such Rubric. If the Ritualists will not obey the present Rubrics, what ground have the Commissioners for supposing that a new Rubric to be submitted to the present House of Commons would prove any more acceptable to the Romanizing party?

"The suggestion that in the twentieth century we should go back to the Middle Ages and set up anew Clerical Courts for the trial of clerical offences is a preposterous anachronism. Nor is the suggestion that more power should be given to the Bishops, whose neglect is demonstrated in the Report itself, and some of whom have been the principal ringleaders in the Romeward movement, one whit more reasonable. The Commissioners themselves point out that not a single English Bishop has required the use of illegal Romish vestments to be relinquished.

"The Council gladly recognize a really valuable suggestion made by the Commissioners—viz., that certain practices should receive no toleration; and that if Episcopal directions for their prevention or repression are not complied with, the Bishops should take or permit coercive disciplinary action in the Church Courts for that purpose. 'It is in our opinion unnecessary and undesirable to postpone proceedings until the reforms which we have recommended . . . can be carried into effect.' This principle is surely applicable to all illegalities whatsoever. The Protestant laity of the country are weary of seeking redress which never comes; Bishops, Law Courts, Royal Commissions, alike fail; and the time has now come when a great appeal must go up from the country to the House of Commons for such legislation in the next Session of Parliament as shall at once sweep from the Church of England all those outrageous Romish practices to which the Royal Commissioners refer in their Report, and bring the Church of England back again to her Reformation principles. We appeal now to the people and the House of Commons."

The Church Association has issued the following statement with regard to "The Ecclesiastical Disorders Bill," which was introduced into the House of Commons last month by Sir George Kekewich:—The existing laws relating to Public Worship and Discipline in the Church of England are dilatory, cumbersome, and expensive. Under these laws, illegal (Romish) practices are now to be found in thousands of the churches of the Establishment. These laws are based upon a wrong principle, viz., that of throwing the onus of keeping order in the National Church upon individual laymen. The Ecclesiastical Disorders Bill proceeds upon the assumption, that order in an Established Church must be maintained by the Government or by public authority. Commissioners are to be appointed by the Lord Chancellor, with whom the Bishop may associate himself in all cases within his own diocese. The scope of the Bill is limited to the series of practices and ornaments enumerated in the Schedule, none of which

have any legitimate place in the Church of England, and ALL of which have already been adjudicated upon and declared by the King's Ecclesiastical Courts to be illegal, and are nearly all condemned by the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline. The Commissioners have power to visit all churches. They are required to send Articles of Inquiry as to the existence of the practices enumerated in the Schedule to the Bill. These articles are to be answered by both incumbent and churchwardens by affidavit, and within a limit of time, under penalty of a fine. If any, or all, of the practices are alleged to be in use, the Commissioners send an Assistant-Commissioner to hold an enquiry on the spot, and if he confirms the report, the Bishop is notified with a view to his taking order, but failing that, the incumbent is to be suspended by the Commissioners, unless he promises in writing to discontinue the illegal practices; but, if after the prescribed interval of time no such promise has been made, the incumbent is then to be deprived of his living. Similar procedure is provided for in the matter of ornaments, and in the event of the incumbent not removing them the Commissioners have power to do so. The Commissioners have the necessary powers conferred upon them for carrying out the above provisions. The expenses of the Commission are to be defrayed out of the Ecclesiastical Commission Common Fund. This Bill provides a temporary remedy for the present distress; it does not supersede the existing Ecclesiastical law, nor does it in any way diminish the existing powers of the Bishops. Under this Bill, there are no frivolous suits, no Bishops' vetoes, no "new" offences, no imprisonment.

MULTUM IN PARVO.

It is stated that a committee of London Roman Catholics has been formed to place a tablet in the Carmelite Church at Kensington, where the Queen of Spain "heard Mass" on the morning of her departure for her marriage, in thanksgiving for her Majesty's escape in Madrid. The Duchess of Norfolk was the first to subscribe.—The Scottish *Bulwark* for July, referring to the death of the Rev. Dr. Thomas Smith, says "He died last month in the ripeness of an honourable life. He was one whom the *Bulwark* held in reverence. For several years he was Editor of this journal. A good student of the Romish controversy, well informed in Church and general history, well read, and richly endowed by the experience of a long Indian service, equally at home in the pastorate of a poor congregation or the calm dignity of a professor's chair, Dr. Smith made these columns when under his care, a reflex of his scholarly culture. The present Editor has pleasant recollections of the first meeting he, then but a college student, had with the kindly old gentleman whose unaffected simplicity of character was so striking. Long years have passed since then, during which Dr. Smith became a greater friend without seeming to grow an older man. But even his life, lengthened beyond the

usual span, has closed in rest, and the *Bulwark* does homage to his memory."—The *Frankfurt Gazette* publishes some interesting statistics relating to Jews in Russia, which have been compiled by the Jewish statistical bureau in Berlin at the instance of the Zionist executive committee. Since 1880 Jewish emigrants from Russia have numbered $1\frac{1}{4}$ million, and as the total number of Jews in Russia according to the census of 1897 was $5\frac{1}{4}$ millions, it would appear that over one-fifth of the Russian Jewish population have during the last quarter of a century sought homes in foreign lands. The emigrants in the year ended with June, 1905, numbered 92,000. The flow of emigration is believed to have been stimulated by the "May Laws" of 1881, by which the Jews were cooped up in the towns and were prevented from moving from place to place in Russia. As the Jewish population shows a considerable natural tendency to increase, the birth-rate being fairly high and the death-rate low, this limitation on the power of expansion in Russia itself might be expected to quicken the tendency to emigrate to other countries. From the statistics of occupations, it appears that, although Russia is an agricultural country, the great majority of the Jewish population are engaged in trade or industrial pursuits, and that only a little over 3 per cent gain their livelihood from the soil.—The Bishop of Worcester says, in reference to the holidays of his clergy, that it is of the utmost importance that great care should be taken in accepting ministrations from unknown clergy. He would be glad to make a reasonable holiday more possible by giving leave for fewer services, and even by allowing a licensed layman of position and education to conduct a service approved by himself.—The issue of the Report of the Royal Commission has produced no effect, so far, on the action of the Bishops in whose dioceses gross illegalities in ritual are being perpetrated by the Romanizing clergy.

THERE can be no communion, either with God or His saints, without union to Christ.—*Rev. W. Burrows.*

MAN'S religion always makes God's justice to bend to His mercy; while God's justice made a channel for His mercy by not sparing the Son of His love.—*R. C. Chapman.*

PRECIOUS is Christ as a Friend—the Friend Whose love is infinite and boundless, changing not with circumstances, chilling not with indifference, nor wearying with lapse of years—a Friend Who showeth Himself friendly, Who loveth at all times.—*Dr. O. Winlow.*

Is saving grace gold? Yea, infinitely more precious than gold. Then surely declining Christians are great losers, and have cause to be great mourners. The remission of the least degree of grace is more to be lamented than the loss of the greatest sum of gold.—*John Flavel.*

Passing Events.

A MONTHLY RECORD.

THE Report of the Royal Commission on Church Disorders has, at last, been published. It is an authorised record of deplorable illegalities in the National Church, tolerated by the Bishops. The remedies suggested by the Commissioners are of a complex character, and afford but small prospect of such a reformation being effected as would purge out the teachers of Roman Catholic doctrine and the perpetrators of idolatry which alone would secure the blessing of an offended God.

The terrible Dreyfus case, observes a contemporary, which once seemed likely to be interminable, is ended at last, and the next French Army List will contain the name of Major Dreyfus, Chevalier of the Legion of Honour. Had Captain Dreyfus been made a Marshal of France with a pension of a million francs a year, a good deal less than bare justice would have been done. The annals of the world, stained as they are with tragedy and injustice, record no more atrocious crime than the condemnation of this good soldier and honest gentleman; and the worst feature of it all is that ninety-nine Frenchmen out of every hundred long believed firmly in the justice of a condemnation which distant observers saw from the beginning to be absolutely unjustifiable. It has been suggested that Major Dreyfus should be ceremoniously re-instated in the Army, and we trust that the suggestion will be adopted. He was drummed out ceremoniously, in circumstances which can never be forgotten, and it would be right that unjust degradation should be followed by an "object-lesson" of another kind. We regret that the Jesuit and other creatures who aided in the crime, before or after the fact, cannot be dealt with according to their deserts.

Affairs in Russia grow worse. The St. Petersburg newspapers state that the Minister of War has ordered a Commission, under the Presidency of General Pavloff, to inquire exhaustively into the causes of the disaffection existing in numerous regiments. The papers give what they describe as an incomplete list of these regiments. They include six Guards regiments, the Preobrazhensky Regiment, the Pavlovsky Regiment, the Finnish Regiment, the Grenadiers, the Uhlans, and the Cuirassiers; thirty regiments of the Line, two Cavalry regiments, four Cossack regiments, and five companies of Engineers. The Commission is also instructed to inquire into the *morale* of several of the garrisons. It is stated in revolutionary circles that the three battalions of the Preobajensky Regiment will demand that the officers and men who

were recently sent to Medvet shall be allowed to return, and that their arrested comrades shall be released. Two officers and seventy-six men of the 7th Reserve Cavalry Regiment, which recently mutinied, have been brought to St. Petersburg from Tamboff.

With sincere regret we announce the death of the Rev. Lewis Price, for thirty years Rector of Pakefield, Suffolk, and founder of the well-known Evangelical "Pakefield Conference." Mr. Price, who was a Scholar of Lampeter College, was ordained by the then Bishop of Hereford (for the Bishop of St. David's) in 1842. He became Rector of Pakefield in 1871, and retired, advanced in years, in 1902. For some time subsequently he resided at Reading. His death took place at Stapleton Fitzpaine Rectory, on Sunday, July 15th. He was a man of deep personal piety, an uncompromising defender of the Holy Scriptures, an able advocate of Reformation principles, and a "lover of good men." We mourn the loss of a personal friend and a true fellow-labourer in faithful "Mr. Price, of Pakefield."

The Christian Literature Society for China has issued its Annual Report, which shows that there has been a slight improvement in the receipts, the total amount received being £1,198 11s. 7d., as compared with £1130 8s. 10d. in the previous year.

A number of ladies from the Hampstead district assembled by invitation at the Hall of Holy Trinity Church, Finchley Road, on Tuesday, July 3rd, to meet the Hon. Gertrude Kinnaird and hear what she had to tell of her visit to India. The Rev. S. A. Selwyn was to have taken the Chair, but sent a message expressing regret that he was unable to do so. Miss Overton took his place, and opened with a few observations on the advantage of hearing how the work of the Lord was prospering in India. Miss Kinnaird was listened to with great interest, and Miss Agnes de Selincourt, who followed, drew attention to the pathetic fact that the Hindoo woman had no girlhood, but went straight from childhood to the cares and sorrows of a woman's life. Miss Overton, in conclusion, asked for a Secretary for the Finchley district, and begged all present to do what they could—by children's gatherings, drawing-room meetings, study bands, or in any other way—to aid the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission.

At a meeting of the General Committee of the C.M.S. held last month the following recently accepted missionaries of the Society were

viewed and addressed by the Hon. Secretary (Prebendary Fox), Messrs. T. C. Ibbotson, G. W. Tyndale-Biscoe, C. W. Wakeman (Accountant), the Misses E. C. H. Cooke, W. L. Coombs, E. C. Cooney, B. Davies, A. W. Elwin, M. P. Estridge, E. F. Fox, M. Holmes, R. Hudson, M. A. Onyon, I. Schellenberg, E. B. Sparrow, E. T. Stevens, B.A., A. M. Tisdall, F. M. Wakefield, M.B., Ch.B., A. J. Welsh, M. W. Williams, and C. Wood.

A telegram from Hong Kong says it is reported that the leaders of the pirates who attacked the British steamer *Sainam*, killed the Rev. Dr. Macdonald, and seriously wounded the captain, had been apprised of a Government shipment of 98,000 rounds of ammunition and a quantity of rifles. It is supposed that they carried off these, but no definite information on the subject is obtainable. H.M. river service steamer *Robin* has been despatched to investigate.

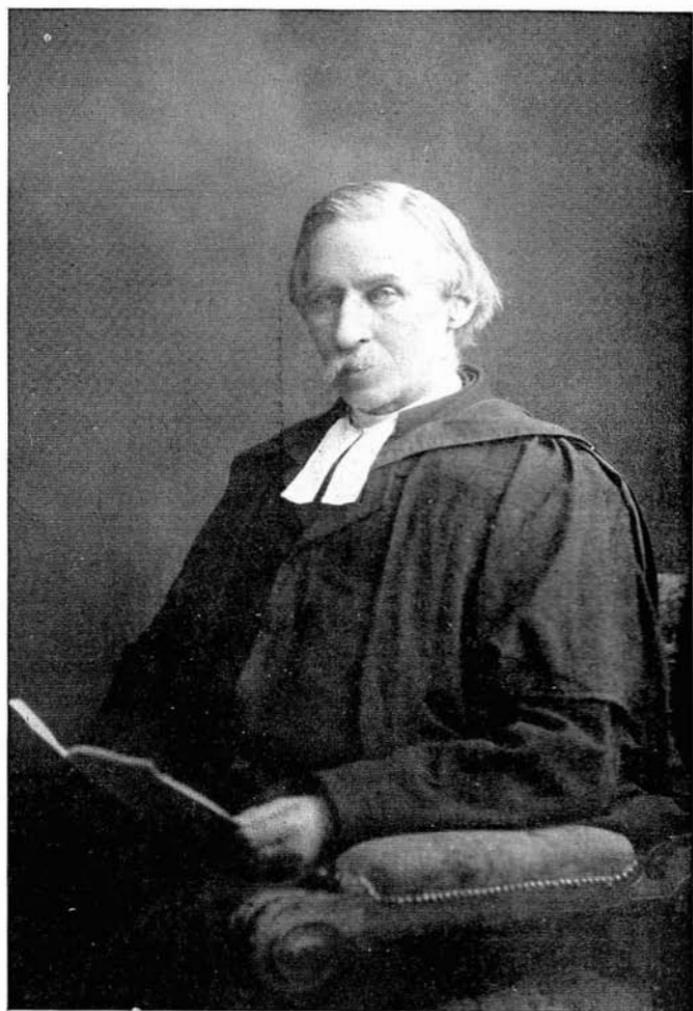
Three chiefs of Indian tribes in British Columbia have arrived at Ottawa *en route* for England to see King Edward and lay before his Majesty a complaint concerning the encroachment of the white men. They have been furnished with a letter of introduction to Lord Strathcona, who will look after them in London.

A telegram from Aix la Chapelle recently stated that the sarcophagus of Charlemagne in the treasury of the cathedral there had been opened in the presence of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, and "two costly vestments of great artistic and historical value" were temporarily removed and sent to Berlin to be photographed. It is announced that the Emperor William has warmly approved the removal of the vestments.

There is at present a vacant house in the Turnor Hospital (Guest House), Wragby, Lincolnshire, to which the widow of any clergyman of the Church of England is admissible. Applications should be addressed to the Chaplain.

It is one thing to be concerned for the things of this life, and another to be entangled thereby.

THE apostle Paul could be in every state content; but that you may not think he was able to do this of himself, he tells you that though he could want, and abound, and do all things, yet it was through Christ strengthening him (Phil. iv. 13). It is the child that writes, but it is the teacher guides his hand.—*Watson*, 1653.



THE REV. CANON R. BRUCE, D.D.

(Rector of Little Dean, Gloucestershire.)

*From a Photograph by JAMES BACON & SONS,
Newcastle-on-Tyne.*