

Vol. 20 No. 1

JANUARY, 1943

Fourpence

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TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH—

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come to "all people," and they find access to Him.

—1. Cor. 3; 16, 17. Eph. 2; 20-22. Gen. 28; 14. Gal. 3; 29.

That meantime the chiselling, shaping and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these "living stones," elect and precious, shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with His glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.

—Rev. 15; 5-8.

That the basis of hope, for the Church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."

Heb. 2; 9. Jno. 1; 9. 1 Tim. 2; 5-6.

That the hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see Him as He is," "be partaker of the Divine nature," and share His glory as His joint-heir.

—1. Jno. 3; 2. Jno. 17; 24. Rom. 8; 17. 2 Pet. 1; 4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be "kings and priests" in the next Age.

Eph. 4; 12. Matt. 24; 14. Rev. 1; 6; 20; 6.

That the hope of the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and His glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.

Acts 3; 19-23. Isa. 35.

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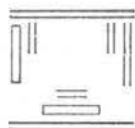
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INTO THE SANCTUARY OF GOD

— A.O.H. —



A plea for
beauty in
worship



Our God loves things of beauty and dignity. He has ordained His creation to be majestic and awe-inspiring; on this our earth He has devised Nature, fair and pleasing in her outward aspect, so that men may find pleasure and happiness in their allotted sphere. To man He has given attributes and powers which render them capable of appreciating the dignified and the sublime, and drawing inspiration and enlightenment from the solemn and the serious, as well as gaiety and happiness from the light and pleasant. Therefore, we ought to say that in our worship and devotion we should surround ourselves with that which is beautiful and dignified, that the thoughts and prayers of our hearts may find a suitable setting in the sights and sounds which our senses are conveying to us.

The lack of beauty and dignity in worship is a great loss. To a fellowship such as ours, accustomed to meet in secular halls and rooms oft-times inadequately or even quite inappropriately furnished for Christian devotion, custom has begotten indifference, and we do not realise how great is the loss. In the reaction from the empty formalism and excessive ceremonial of the established systems we have gone to the other extreme—quite a natural thing to do—and have forgotten what a stimulus there is to prayer and praise when offered to the Father in surroundings that remind us of Him.

So does our appreciation of the value of worship wax dim. We tend to look upon our meetings as times for the study or exposition of theology, or for listening to words of exhortation laid upon the heart, with union in praise and prayer merely to mark the beginning and the ending of the session. Thus, a great power for Christian growth and development—the power which resides in corporate worship—lies unused. Perhaps that is why we fail so often to recognise our relationship to each other as fellow-members of a mystic Body, and cast away so many golden hours “disputing about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.” Perhaps, after

all, there is more than a modicum of truth in the old gibe that we have become “all head and no heart,” because we have failed to give Divine Worship its rightful place in our assemblies.

Those ancient exemplars of ours, the “great cloud of witnesses” (Heb. 12; 1), knew full well the value of beauty and dignity in their surroundings when they came together to worship. They were well taught by God Himself by means of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness—a simple and dignified, yet withal beauteous structure that enshrined in its snowy curtains, its play of colour, the sheen of gold and silver and polished copper, this immortal truth that God loves beauty. It would have been so easy to make the Tabernacle plain and squat and ugly—instead it must have formed a wondrous sight set in its quiet beauty amid the rugged grandeur of Shiloh, and, in the earlier days, amidst the mountains and deserts of Sinai and the road of the wanderings.

Then, when Israel's first wildness had been tamed, and as a united nation they came together to worship their God, with what pride must they have viewed the marvellous edifice built by Solomon. Not the beauty of simplicity which they had seen in the Tabernacle, but the majesty and dignity of a House which should fitly be for the dwelling of the Most High. “The Lord hath said that He would dwell in the thick darkness; but I have built an house of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling for ever” (II Chron. 6; 1).

In prophetic mood the sweet singer of Israel caught up the strain when he looked on the City of Peace, as yet uncrowned with its loveliest jewel, the Temple, and declaimed: “Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the City of the Great King” (Psa. 48; 2). That is how it must have appeared to Jesus on those occasions when, rounding the bend in the road from Bethany, and looking down, before His eyes:—

“Like a fair vision in the morning light
Lay the proud city of Jerusalem,

In all the beauty of its soaring towers,
And flashing domes, and marble palaces,
A diadem on Zion's holy hill.

*The glorious Temple in its splendour shone
With sheen of gold, and pinnacles of
snow."*

What wonder that the Psalmist felt constrained to cry out in exultation: "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion; and unto thee shall the vow be performed" (Psa. 65; 1). That glorious city, and in later days its still more glorious Temple, was the visible embodiment of Israel's worship, and pulses were quickened, and hearts beat faster, as men lifted up their eyes to the city wherein God had set His Name.

And who shall say that some lives were not inspired and quickened to more devoted service, and some timid hearts were not encouraged to greater deeds of heroism and sacrifice, after the outward sight of Jerusalem the Holy had been translated into a vision that illumined their inmost souls and remained with them for ever?

But Solomon knew that his beautiful Temple was but a shell, a casket which was of no value except it held the precious jewel. That dead building must be the repository of a living faith and a centre of living worship. "Will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house that I have built" (II Chron. 6; 18). So he prayed that this house might become a house of prayer. How clear it is that he expected his Temple to become an inspiration to sincere prayer and devotion for all Israel. Its gold and silver vessels and furnishings, sculptured palm trees and pomegranates, its tapestries and apartments, its ceremonial and ritual, all meant nothing, and less than nothing, except they were conducive to a deeper and more spiritual understanding of God, and to more reverent and soul-satisfying worship on the part of the people. That was his desire.

That he had interpreted aright the needs of Israel is clear from the songs of David. Yearning after just such a place where God could be worshipped in spirit and in truth, the man after God's own heart had sung: "I was glad when they said unto me 'Let us go into the house of the Lord'" (Psa. 122; 1). He was glad! Have you ever felt that quickening of the pulse, that eager anticipation, as you enter the place where your fellows are

gathered together to worship the Father in sincerity and reverence? I have sometimes found myself in a strange town where the surroundings seemed alien and unfriendly, and have come upon a church, standing silent and serene, and felt a strange little surge of emotion, as though that building were the one place in all that town into which I had a right to enter; for it represented the things of God, and "this is none other but the House of God, and this is the gate of Heaven" (Gen. 28; 17); and if perchance one should enter in and become at one with the atmosphere of the place—the quietness, the dignity of ancient things, the soft light stealing through stained glass windows, the great Bible on the reading desk—how easy to come into tune with those fervent words of three thousand years ago: "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts. My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God" (Psa. 84; 1-2). That is the true spirit of worship—the intense, deep longing to be in the House of God and engaged in His business. That is our place, our home, and there it is that we shall find rest to our souls. The more that we can take to ourselves the restful spirit of a place of worship, the more shall we enter into communion with our Father.

Do we not well, therefore, to seek the promotion of this spirit of worship by every means within our power, and if our surroundings can be made more conducive to satisfying and restful worship, do we not well to use our Divinely given instinct for beauty and dignity to that end? When the inspired writer voiced those beautiful words in which he exhorted his hearers to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness there can be little doubt that the magnificent setting of the Temple was in his mind. "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name," he cries. "Bring an offering, **and come into his courts.** O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; fear before him, all the earth" (Psa. 96; 8-9). Behold the stately progression of worship! Acknowledge God first, the One Who is worthy of all praise and worship; then prepare thine offering. With that offering in thine hand, enter into the House of God, the place that is set apart to Him for worship and devotion. In that setting, and in a spirit of reverence, and with a consciousness of sincerity of heart; trusting in the justification which is by faith; rejoicing in hope of His glory; in such holi-

ness, within and around, "come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker" (Psa. 95: 6); and in that solemn atmosphere we shall hear the voice that speaketh from Heaven as we have never heard it before.

Having then made our House of God, humble though it may be, as outwardly fitting and appropriate to our worship as circumstances may permit, let us come into it as though the Father Himself waits there to receive us—as indeed He does. That grand old sixteenth-century Danish astronomer, Tycho Brahe, to whom the world owes so much of astronomical knowledge, declared: "I always put on my court robes when I enter my observatory, because when I study the stars I stand in the Court of the King of Kings." What a grandeur of simple dignity. Who shall say that the Father of all men did not take notice of that act of worship performed by a courtly old man who realised, as David of old, that the sublime majesty of the heavens speak indeed of the eternal presence of God. Grievous loss it is that in these more hurried and less dignified days even some ministers of God tend to forget the solemnity of the task they undertake week by week. The Rev. Leslie Weatherhead, in his book "How can I find God?" speaking of typical Sunday services he has known, says of the minister, "one cannot help feeling that he would collect himself with greater care in order to enter the presence of his doctor." How often do we all fail after the same manner!

The finest example of the value of beauty and dignity in worship and of ritual and ceremonial in preparing the heart for personal

communion with God is given us in the vision of Ezekiel's Temple. There we have depicted the worship of the Millennial Age, and although it may be urged that the descriptions in those last chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy are symbolic expressions of spiritual truths—as indeed they are—yet there can be none amongst us who do not form a mental image of a wonderful edifice with its River of Life flowing outwards to the Dead Sea and the Trees of Life on the banks thereof, and look to that as a kind of central feature of the new world that is to be. The Word tells us that all men will go up to Jerusalem to worship—a formal although spontaneous expression of love and loyalty to the Father of all; and is it not reasonable to conclude that there is much in Ezekiel's vision that will become translated into literal reality, and that, "in days that are yet to be," away there in the heart of the Promised Land, in surroundings of incomparable grandeur and dignity, there will be worship which shall lift the hearts of the worshippers to true communion with God the Father of all. At long last the purposes of God will have been achieved, and there upon Zion's hill, resplendent in beauty and glory, will stand that majestic meeting place which shall visibly symbolise that the dwelling place of God is with men, and they shall have become His people, and He shall have become their God, and He Himself shall have wiped away all tears from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither sorrow nor crying, nor any more pain, because the glorious Mediatorial work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ shall have made "all things new."

THINGS THAT ABIDE

+ A.S. +

A discourse
on eternal
things

That we are living in the days of world revolution is clearly seen by all thinking people, and the question is frequently asked, even by those with a knowledge of the truth: "How will it all end?" In answering this question our minds instinctively turn to those prophecies relating to the Day of Jehovah. From a study of these we learn that there are many aspects of this great event, and many phases yet to be developed before the final

blessings come to all mankind, so we turn our attention just now to those which refer to the "shaking of all things," and the fire of God's jealousy, evidences of which are seen in the earth at the present time.

Joel 3: 16 says: "The Lord shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake."

In Haggai 2: 6 we find much the same events foretold, but we find a very interesting com-

ment upon this passage in Hebrews 12 : 27 (Weymouth) : **"Yet again I will, once for all, cause not only the earth to tremble, but heaven also."** Here the words "yet again once for all" denote the removal of the things which can be shaken—created things—in order that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.

It is not our purpose here to consider the shaking processes which will remove the things which can be shaken, but rather to note the contrast drawn between the "created things" (man-made) which can be shaken, and the things which will survive the present upheaval—the things which abide.

As far as we, the Church, are concerned, the sense of values which the Apostle Paul reveals in II Cor. 4 : 18 (Moffatt) enables us to rightly assess the value of these contrasting elements. He says : **"The slight trouble of the passing hour results in a solid glory past all comparison, for those of us whose eyes are on the unseen, not on the seen ; for the seen is TRANSIENT, the unseen ETERNAL."** Thus we see the great advantage which we have over those who as yet can only behold the "seen" things, an advantage for which we should render humble and grateful thanks to Him who has privileged us to see so much of His plan of salvation and deliverance.

In I Pet. 1 : 24 and 25 (Weymouth) we find another contrast : **"All mankind resemble the herbage, and all their beauty is like its flowers. The herbage dries up, and its flowers drop off ; but the word of the Lord remains FOREVER."** We have every evidence, at this time, of the aptness of the first part of the verse ; even as in Palestine the herbage withers and the flowers fade in the fierce heat of the summer sun, so in these days, when the fire of God's jealousy is burning in the earth, the hopes, the aims and ambitions of men, all the fruits of their life-long labours wilt and die overnight, and they are left desolate and disillusioned. But this "word of the Lord which remains forever" is a source of sustenance and assurance to those whose eyes can "see." But the word of the Lord is more than the mere written word, it is rather that living, vital force by which we have been begotten anew, for, as we read in I Pet. 1 : 23 (Weymouth), **"For you have been begotten again by God's ever-living and enduring word, from a germ not of perishable, but of imperishable life."** This surely is the fulfilment of that wonderful promise of Jesus recorded in John 7 : 38. The

crude wording in the Authorised Version completely spoils the sense of this truly wonderful statement, but Weymouth renders it thus : **"He who believes in me, from within him—as the Scripture hath said—rivers of living water shall flow."** Again, in John 4 : 14 (Weymouth) : **"But the water which I shall give him will become a fountain within him of water springing up for the Life of the Ages."** So, in these days of shaking, when nature's streams are dried, when all external means of sustenance fail, this living word is as a fountain springing up from within, an abiding source of strength to all who have been "begotten anew."

We have purposely only partly quoted the passages from Joel and Haggai so that emphasis may be placed on the latter part of each verse. In Joel 3 : 16, after foretelling the shaking of all things, the prophet continues : **"but the Lord will be the hope (place of repair, or harbour) of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel."** Thus, while all around us we see men unable to find shelter from the stormy blast, when all their safeguarding institutions are being wrecked in the great upheaval, we have an abiding harbour, or place of refuge in which we can safely abide (Psalm 91 : 1).

Haggai 2 : 6-7 reads : **"For thus saith the Lord of hosts, yet once it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land ; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come."** If we consider the verse in its context we find that the latter part is capable of rather a different translation than is usually placed upon it. These words were spoken by the prophet to Zerubbabel after he had been commissioned to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem replacing the one originally erected by Solomon ; and in verse 9 the message continues : **"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts, and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts."** This Temple, built by Zerubbabel, was smaller and less sumptuous than that of Solomon, neither did Israel find peace therein. So then, these words must refer prophetically to some future house, or dwelling place, of God, and we believe they refer to that great spiritual Temple which Christ, the anti-typical Zerubbabel, is building in preparation for the future, and which, unlike all previous buildings, will abide.

Rotherham translates this passage : **"And**

the delight of all the nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory"; and in a footnote suggests that the "desirable, precious THINGS of all nations" is referred to. Leeser translates as follows: "And the precious things of all nations shall come hither; and I will fill this house with glory." Now, in the time of shaking, all the desirable, precious things of all nations—all the mineral wealth, all the results of the research and study of the highest intellects, all the best manhood of the race, and all the efforts of the workers are being expended in an effort to sustain the things which can be shaken—but which, being "created things," must necessarily come tumbling down. For example, the voice of Labour says: "We must march through victory to the international and democratic Socialist Commonwealth." A Liberal spokesman says: "I can see the foundations of a new world only in a partnership of purpose and power between the British Commonwealth of Nations and the United States"; whilst the Conservatives assert: "Only our victory can restore, both to Europe and the world, that freedom which is our heritage from centuries of Christian civilisation, and that security which alone can make possible the betterment of man's lot on earth." On the other hand, we see a "New Order," already spread over the greater part of Europe, and casting its tentacles over the eastern hemisphere, which, according to its creators, will bring peace and prosperity to mankind.

According to our understanding, all the propositions here outlined are among the "created things" which are to be shaken, and finally destroyed. What, then, are we to expect to take their place?

We look for that "new heaven and new earth" which will take the place of all existing governments and kingdoms, pictured in the symbols of Revelation 21 and 22. In the walls of this great city are twelve gates, three on each aspect, open ready to receive, first Israel restored, then the world, reconciled to God. Then their kings will bring their honour and glory into it, and the nations will do likewise (Rev. 21; 24-26). Thus, as foretold so long ago by Haggai, after the shaking is over, the desirable precious things of all nations, now being poured out to destruction, shall be brought to "this house in which I will give peace." This implies a oneness among mankind which has been the dream and constant aim of those who have worked for peace on

earth, but until now all efforts to accomplish this have failed completely. Before this can be accomplished the real brotherhood of man must be established. Brotherhood pre-supposes a Father, and there is only one who can and will, in the fullness of time, unite all men in one great family—Christ the **Everlasting** Father. This may take a long time as men judge the passage of time, but it will come, and will be one of the greatest of the things that will abide.

In Zeph. 3; 8 we read that "All the earth shall be devoured by the fire of my (God's) jealousy. Then will I turn to the people a pure language," or "a lip made pure." The original "pure lip" became contaminated early in the world's history, and this eventuated in the confusion of tongues, sent to prevent men building up a Godless world empire; and this confusion has continued, and will remain until He whose right it is comes to reign. Then he will remove all the barriers which have kept men apart, not necessarily the barriers of spoken language, but rather the barriers of race and custom, creed and religion, which have so completely separated men throughout the centuries.

Then, the prophet continues (Zeph. 3; 9), they will call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent. Rotherham adds a footnote suggesting that the term "one consent" should read "one shoulder"—"As men helping one another steadily strenuously." In what better way will men be able to serve God than in helping one another?

How much there will be to accomplish, in building up the great world empire which will abide for all time.

After the shaking has laid low the mountains and hills and exalted the valleys, and the stones of prejudice and falsehood which have stumbled men in the past, have been removed from the highway, men will eagerly help each other along that Highway of Holiness along which the ransomed of the Lord shall return to Zion with songs and everlasting joys. Even as men brought the sick, the lame, and the blind to Jesus at His first Advent, so then will men delight to bring the mentally, morally and spiritually sick ones to the trees which line the banks of Zion's river, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. Now men are bringing about such desolation on the earth that it is fast becoming transformed into the wilderness and the solitary place, but then men will rejoice to bring the waters of truth

to them, that they may rejoice and blossom as the rose (Isa. 35).

LEBANON, CARMEL and SHARON

The prophet Isaiah was privileged to foresee both the desolations of these times and the blessings which should follow, and he used the beauties of his own land to draw a contrast between the present conditions on earth, and those which will exist under the abiding blessings of the future.

In Isa. 33; 7-9 he says: "Behold their valiant ones shall cry without; the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly. The highways lie waste, the wayfaring can cease; he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man. The earth mourneth and languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits."

The first part of this passage surely depicts the state of the world at the present time, and the prophet likens it to Lebanon hewn down, Sharon like a wilderness, and Carmel devoid of its fruits.

Lebanon is a district noted for its fertility and its valuable cedars.

Carmel is a fruitful place, and one traveller describes it thus: "A land of trees, with colourful undergrowths; of purple thistles, mallows with blossoms like pelargoniums, golden broom, honeysuckle and convolvulus. It was the land where the rains sweeping down the valleys, lined their banks with pink masses of oleanders, and where springs, gushing freely from the limestone rocks, coloured the ground a perpetual green. It was a land of anemones and red poppies, of bees and doves, of flowers and the singing of birds."

Sharon is described as "well wooded and very fertile. Its climate is warm and never really harsh. Oranges, lemons, grapes, almonds, figs, and (on the foothills) olives all grow in rich abundance."

The devastation on the earth is also likened to briers (nettles) and thorns, springing up and choking all fruitfulness; and surely these harmful prickly plants are true pictures of the baneful influences which are abroad in the earth to-day.

However, we read (Isa. 55: 13) that "instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree; instead of the brier (nettle) the myrtle tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an EVERLASTING SIGN that shall not be cut

off."

So the glory of Lebanon, Carmel and Sharon shall return. The cedars of Lebanon, which picture that growth in holiness and righteousness which will take place in all the world when the sun of righteousness spreads out his beams over all the earth, shall flourish again (Psa. 92; 12 and 104; 16). Isa. 60; 13 speaks of the time when "the glory of Lebanon shall come to thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious."

The wilderness of Sharon, too, shall bear fruit again when the nettles and thorns are removed, for in Isa. 65; 10 we find a promise of peace and plenty. "And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in." Carmel shall no longer be barren and unfruitful, for the "Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody."

The whole picture of prosperity and fruitfulness is beautifully drawn for us by the prophet in that wonderful restitution chapter the thirty-fifth: "**The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall bloom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.**"

So we look beyond the briers and thorns, the wilderness and the solitary places of to-day, which are but transient, to the lasting peace and prosperity which is pictured by these scenes—Well wooded mountains, fertile valleys bringing forth their refreshing fruits and flowers, and verdant plains providing well watered pastures upon which all the flocks find rest and contentment.

FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

We find yet another comparison between the transient and the abiding in I Cor. 13: Prophecies, as they are fulfilled, become obsolescent; the gift of tongues was but a means to an end, and has ceased; knowledge, of itself, merely puffs up, and is superseded by further enlightenment; but faith, hope and love abide forever. These three are our very life in these days of shaking, but one day,

soon we trust, faith will give way to reality; hope, being fulfilled, will be hope no more, but love will continue unto all eternity, finding fullest expression in the mystic union of Christ and His Church.

These three, however, will surely continue on earth, for men without them would be barren indeed. Now, their faith in their own devices is being shaken; then they will put their faith in the strong arm of God as they behold the power of His might. Now they hope for peace on earth by their own planning and efforts, through the illusory dreams of politicians; then they will find hope in the Rock of Ages, and in the plan of eternal salvation provided by a wise and loving God. There is love in the world to-day, but much of it is love of power, of self, of the praise of men; love of ease and pleasure at the expense of others. Then that same power to love will be directed into other channels; men will learn

to love God supremely, and, loving Him, will not please themselves, but will love and serve their fellow-men. Then the efforts of men will be bent, not on the destruction of the property, the rights and privileges of others, but to the lasting good of all mankind, united under one head.

Then the Spirit will be poured out from on high, **"and the wilderness be a fruitful place, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places."**

Let us keep this bright vision of the future ever before us, until that which is at present "unseen," except by faith, becomes an abiding reality.

The Importance of Sound Doctrine

W.A.D.

The Scriptures uniformly declare that sound doctrine is of vital importance to the child of God and great blessing is promised in the Word to those who have the spirit of enquiry to know and do the will of God. Even the world of mankind is to come to an accurate knowledge of the truth in the Age now dawning, whereas the Lord has graciously fulfilled His promise during the Gospel Age, when He said that the Spirit of Truth "will guide you into **all** truth . . . and will show you things to come" (John 16; 13). This expresses the principle of progressive revelation in harmony with the Old Testament declaration that "the path of the just (that is, the justified) is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. 4; 18). We are living in the end of the Age when the "perfect day" is gradually dawning, and this explains why we have such a feast of truth to-day, while the light continues to shine brighter and brighter because we have not yet reached the day of perfect knowledge. The words of the Pastor still hold good—"perfection of knowledge is not a thing of the past, but of the future—the very near future, we trust; and



Be thou . . . wise
unto salvation

until we recognise this fact we are unprepared to appreciate and expect fresh unfoldings of our Father's plan" (Vol. I, page 25).

Faith is based on knowledge, and if we are to be strong in the faith we must, of necessity, have a clear understanding of the doctrine. To this agree the words of the Apostle Paul when he wrote to his son in the faith, Timothy, in these terms: "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine . . . meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee (I Tim. 4; 14-16).

THE SPIRIT OF ENQUIRY

This keen desire to know the Divine purposes is by no means limited to the Gospel Age. Daniel was greatly beloved of Jehovah, and enquired of the Lord concerning the vision, but he was told: "Go thy way, Daniel; for the words and closed up and sealed till the time of the end" (Dan. 12; 9). Solomon was blessed because he did not choose gratifi-

cation of self, but besought God for wisdom, which is knowledge rightly applied. The Apostle Peter provides even more striking testimony along this line, when he explains that the prophets enquired and searched diligently, while also the angels desired to look into the precious truths now made manifest relating, in particular, to the mystery of Christ. Holy men of old, as we know, were moved by the Spirit of God to write down many things of which they knew not the import, despite their great faith. It is not for us to question why God did not permit them to understand; all we know is that it was not the "due time" for these things to be made manifest. In the same way, it is not for us to query why "among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. 11; 11).

On the contrary, as we live in an Age of greater favour, so we should value all the more the privileges which are ours in relation to knowledge of God's purposes. If the Ancient Worthies and others had a sincere and ardent spirit of enquiry in a time when it was not God's purpose to reveal His plan—although their attitude was most pleasing to Him—how much more should we manifest an ever keener desire to understand the doctrine. It is clear, from the foregoing, that it cannot be pleasing to the Lord to evince satisfaction with an understanding of the elements only of the Divine plan. This is precisely the same as the old-time expression that "there is enough in Matthew 5 to save any man." If that be so, then why was the rest of the Word given to us, quite apart from any other considerations? It was, indeed, given for a purpose, and, in contradiction of the assertion mentioned, we read that "all Scripture" given by the inspiration of God is profitable "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3; 16-17).

Moreover, the Scriptures declare that the elements are but the "milk" of the Word, and suitable for "babes" in order that they may "grow thereby." The deeper truths, or doctrines, represent the "strong meat" for those who are mature, and thus enabled to discern between good and evil.

SANCTIFIED BY THE TRUTH

The importance of sound doctrine is emphasised when we remember our Lord's words

recorded in John 17; 17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." He also said: "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." The Master saw in the writings of the Old Testament Scriptures—"in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms"—the things concerning Him (Luke 24; 44), and this was the source of His power to overcome all the obstacles of the way until He could say "It is finished." In the same way, the truth and the truth alone can sanctify. The more truth we have, the greater our faith, and the greater our ability to stand and withstand in the evil day, for the full vision of truth is the "whole armour" whereby we are enabled to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

It is because this is the "hour of temptation" that God has so richly provided for our needs. It is for us to lay hold upon these things by the power of the Spirit, so that we hold fast and thus make not only our calling but also our election sure.

Truth, or doctrine, received into a good and honest heart brings forth an abundant fruitage. This seems to be the thought of the Psalmist when he says: "God is the Lord which hath shewed us light; bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horns of the altar" (Psalm 118; 27). What a beautiful expression of this truth! As we come to understand more and more of the light to be found in God's Word, so it makes for more faithful carrying out of the consecration vows, the sacrifice, so to speak, being bound by the cords of love more tightly to the altar of the will of God.

ABILITY TO DISCERN

Ability to understand God's truth does not depend upon mental performance. To declare otherwise is to limit the power of the Spirit of God. The Father has chosen the weak things of this world in order to confound the mighty. This explains why so many of the Lord's people, although not wise in this world's eyes, are nevertheless able to grasp the precious doctrines of the faith. They believe them, moreover, not merely as a theory, but place heart reliance thereon, shaping their lives accordingly.

CLEAR VISION

Closely related to this factor of ability to discern is the clarity of vision to-day possible for all the consecrated. In time past, the Lord's

people were in Babylon—their understanding was measurably darkened by confusion and error—but God has in the time of harvest called them out: "Come out of her, my people." The same separation is taught in other Scriptures, where it is shown that the tares are gathered out of the wheat—the essential thought is identical, but noted from another standpoint.

To-day, then, we are able to enjoy clear light if we are living up to our privileges. We know where we are dispensationally, we are not fearful of the things coming upon the earth, for we know them to be sure signs of Messiah's Kingdom, and even the separations amongst the Lord's own people we discern as harvest

siftings designed to warn us lest we also fall away. In this connection, recall how the early disciples tended to leave our Lord as the hard truths began to be declared: He then turned to His immediate followers and asked of them whether they would also go away. Back came the reassuring reply: "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." This applies with even greater force in the days in which we are privileged to live. Let us hold fast, always abounding in the work of the Lord (work in harmony with His will), so that we are counted worthy as the "alive and remain" class to enter into the marriage, ere the door is shut.

— "They took knowledge of them."

T.H.

The story of a
great day in
Christian
history

If we could roll back the wheels of time, and take our stand in old Jerusalem when the scene described in the foregoing words was enacted, it is likely we would not only have been greatly instructed by the Apostolic remarks, but also highly amused at the shock to the ruffled dignity of the pompous City Fathers, caused by the Apostle's remarks. They had just had such a castigation from Peter's inspired tongue that it left them staring around in astonishment. It was one of those occasions which sometimes do occur in history when the tongue of the illiterate can concentrate more stinging reproof into a few short words than the tutored man, with whole dictionaries at his command, can inject into his cultured reprimand. What a sight it was for angels and men to behold, as the proud phylacteried Doctors writhed under the last of the piercing words, and looked at each other too astounded to speak!

Peter and John had done a noble act the day before. A poor man who had never walked from birth was daily carried to his pitch, from which he might ask alms of the passers-by. Peter and John had bestowed on the unfortunate man such wealth as they had at their command and made him to experience the pleasure of "perfect soundness" (Acts 3: 16) in his hitherto useless limbs. The unrestrained demonstration of thankfulness and

gratitude of the poor man towards his kindly benefactors soon drew a crowd, and afforded Peter and John an opportunity to make one of their most memorable appeals to the Jewish people concerning the Name which had healed the impotent man. Standing in Solomon's Porch, Peter exhorted the crowd to repent and be converted, so that refreshing might come from the presence of the Lord, assuring them as children of Abraham and the prophets that God, having raised up Jesus, sent Him to them to bless them by "turning every one of them away from his iniquities" (Acts. 3: 26).

While they were still addressing the people, a company of Priests and Sadducees, together with the Captain of the Temple, "came upon them" and arrested them, "being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead." As it was late in the day—"now eventide"—they were lodged in prison overnight. On the morrow all the elite members of the priestly clan were gathered together for the "exposure" of these ignorant and audacious men. "Annas the High Priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the High Priest were gathered together at Jerusalem." Evidently high authority thought that its voice could now extinguish the Nazarene heresy, if it made show and display enough over it; so the entire resident kin of the High Priest were

gathered together to augment the pomp and authority of the judicial bench. Probably they thought that after a night in jail Peter and John would be somewhat cowed, and ready to recant, or at least to promise never again to desecrate the holy Temple courts with the name of Jesus, and the salvation which He offered to the people. When the pompous bench was settled at its ease, the two culprits were ushered in before it, and the questioning began.

"Now, you two men, will you please tell us by whose authority, and in whose name you were found teaching the people, and speaking of a resurrection contrary to our official creed?" Undaunted by the official robes, or the artificial solemnity of the place, Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, completely reversed the rôles each side was intended to play, and cited the official assembly to the bar of Scripture and of God.

"Ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what manner he is made whole, be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, but whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand before you whole." How skilfully Peter has turned the whole aim and intent of the judicial charge! He selects the ground upon which to reply. He ignores the point of the priestly grievance, and says not one word about having taught heresy on holy ground. He has no apology to make for his trespass upon Levitical prerogative, nor for teaching without an official diploma. He makes no excuse for openly affirming what the Sadducees denied. Pointing to the restored man, who had been cited to appear, Peter says, in effect (with legal skill such as no trained lawyer would excel): "If you would desire to know for what reason we have need to answer you at all, it is because of this poor man! From birth he has been impotent and unable to walk! He has been laid daily at the Beautiful Gate. Ye have passed him by unaided and ignored these many years. We, coming into the Temple to pray, bestowed on him such assistance as we could! We exercised the powers bestowed upon us in the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye slew, but whom God has raised from the dead. Who are we more than other men, that we could do this thing, except our statement is true that Jesus is raised from the dead, and that healing

and salvation are offered to the nation in His Name?"

Then (presumably with accusing finger pointed directly at the bench) Peter proceeds: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which has become the head of the corner." What a stinging indictment of their eminent position in Israel! Were they as they claimed, the only builders-up of Israel, why had they not taken that God-provided stone, in which was healing and true building power, and built that into the structure of the state? Here, in their midst, this former impotent man's present soundness was proof that another and greater Builder had taken the Stone, and had already made it the Head corner-stone of His building; and healing through His Name had come to this afflicted son of Israel!

Those were the undeniable facts of the situation. There should have been no sickness in Israel if they were obeying the Law of the Lord; and none knew this better than the occupants of the judicial bench! Not only did Peter press home the charge of crucifying the Lord, but he made the testimony of Moses also reveal their sin, and become their accuser. No wonder they knew not what to say in reply.

Apparently, as soon as Peter ceased, a whispered consultation among them began. "Who are these men? Where had they acquired such argumentative skill? Who had given them insight into the prophetic writings to apply Scripture so exactly to the point? Yes, they have performed a most wonderful act of healing, but who are they, anyway? They have not graduated through the schools! At best they are only illiterate and ungifted men"— "They are men of no standing at all, but they were with the Nazarene and heard him talk—that is where they got their understanding from." So reasoned among themselves the educated wisdom of this world!

"The wisdom of this world" versus "the wisdom of God"! "The wise . . . the foolish . . . the mighty . . . the weak . . . ! the 'are' . . . the 'are not' . . . ! (see 1 Cor. 1: 27-28) had met face to face in that judgment hall, and the "base things" had brought to nought the high and mighty in Israel. True, they **had** been with Jesus, and they **had** learned of Him, but more than that they were with Jesus still, and that contact accounted for it all. The power to put disordered nature right where need arose, and the power to speak with a

two-edged sword, both came from Him. With such a mentor no wonder Peter and John were bold, and had no fear of man!

It is not the great ones of the earth to-day who understand the Will and Way of God, any more than the pompous hierarchy in old Jerusalem. The present world conflagration is revealing the weakness of those in the place of power in the pulpits of the land. There is no clear ringing challenging message of God issuing therefrom. Again the God of heaven and earth has a strange act to perform (Isa. 28; 21). He is about to turn the world upside down and bring His chosen people to the fore. It is the question of the "builders" and the "Stone" again, but set on a larger stage. The intending builders of a New World are laying foundations contrary to God. Though the builders often name the Name of Christ, they are preparing to build other than in Christ's way. God's way and Christ's way is to build through and around Israel. The favoured nation of the old days is to be the nucleus and foundation of the New Age. That is the chosen way of God—and from it He will never turn, not even for the prayers of the whole world. It is again the privilege mainly of illiterate and untaught men to know the way of God, and if we read the signs aright, it will be the privilege of some from this lowly class to do again as Peter did. While such a possibility is still in the hands of God, and will come only in its due time, and when circumstance is ripe, it is a privilege, great beyond measure, to be given to see and understand the Way of God in these momentous days. Like Peter and John, it is our privilege to learn to read in the Book of God, and fit its statements into their proper place, and know, of very surety, that God still has His secrets for the "illiterate and untaught" who go aside to consort with Jesus and learn of Him.

Look well to the oracles of God, dear brethren in the Lord. From time to time new flashes of light break out of it upon the pilgrim's path. It may well be that the unparalleled state of world affairs will afford conditions suitable for another "bursting forth," if only the pilgrim's gaze is keen enough to see. It is only when historic happening is running alongside prophetic forecast that the meaning of prophecy can be understood. Then, like Peter in his Pentecostal address, we will be enabled to say: "This is that which was spoken by the prophets . . ."

(Acts 2; 16). Although Peter and John were accounted "ignorant and unlearned" men by the great scholars of those days, it was the ignorant and unlearned, not the scholars, who drew the right conclusions from the happenings of their day.

"This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which has become the head of the corner," was the conclusion they drew, and history has proved that conclusion correct.

A Word from the Past

"For as the few and obscure prophecies concerning Christ's first coming were for setting up the Christian religion, which all nations have since corrupted, so the many and clear prophecies concerning the things to be done at His second coming are not only for predicting but also for effecting a recovery and establishment of the long lost Truth, and setting up a kingdom wherein dwelleth righteousness . . . It is a part of this prophecy (Dan. 12) that it should not be understood before the last age of the world . . . but if the last age, the age of the opening of these things, be now approaching, we have more encouragement than ever to look into these things . . . But in the very end the prophecy shall be so far interpreted as to convince many, for then, says Daniel, 'many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.'"

(*Sir Isaac Newton, 1642-1727*)

I KNOW THAT THOU CANST DO EVERYTHING.

Job 42. 2.

What a complete picture we have in the miracles of our Lord's power to repair the ruin caused by sin! Death typifies the condition of those who are dead in trespasses; leprosy represents the defilement of sin; palsy its enfeeblement; blindness the ignorance of sin; demonical possession its enmity. Deafness suggests the sinner's inability to hear, and dumbness his inability to testify—neither able to take in nor give out anything; the withered hand represents inability to work. The case of the woman with the spirit of infirmity shows how sin crushes and bows down, so that the eyes are directed earthward instead of heavenward.

THE QUIET TIME



C.T.W.

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

THROUGH THE VALLEY.

*Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil.—Ps. 23, 4.*

This "valley" does not refer primarily to the death of saints, although that may be involved. The "Valley of the shadow of death," is this world, sunk in sin and shame. In the midst of this we walk. We are in the world, although we are not of it. Around us, on every hand is sin and its wages, "death." It is in such a valley we walk; and it is in such a valley that He gives us His promise,—"I will be with thee."

HYMN.

Whilst I beheld the neck o'th' dove,
I spied and read these words:
"This pretty dye
Which takes your eye
Is not at all the bird's.
The dusky raven might
Have with these colours pleased your sight,
Had God but chose so to ordain above."
This label wore the dove.

Whilst I admired the nightingale,
These notes she warbled o'er:
"No melody indeed have I,
Admire me then no more!
God had it in His choice
To give the owl or me this voice:
'Tis He, 'tis He that makes me tell my tale."
Thus sang the nightingale.

I met and praised the fragrant rose,
Blushing, thus answered she:
"The praise you gave,
The scent I have
Do not belong to me;
This harmless odour, none
But only God indeed does own:
To be His keepers, my poor leaves He chose."
And thus replied the rose.

All creatures, then, confess to God
That they owe Him all, but I.
My senses find
True, what my mind
Would still, oft does, deny.
Hence pride! Out of my soul
Or it thou shalt no more control.
I'll learn this lesson, and escape the rod.
I, too, have all from God. (Selected.)

THE LABYRINTH OF LIFE.

A labyrinth is a species of structure full of intricate passages and windings, so that when one entered it is next to impossible for an individual to extricate himself without a guide.

Many are the stories told of visitors to the famous labyrinth of Henry VIII, at Hampton Court, one of which is of a minister who wandered about it for a time, but when the time for closing drew near, with all his efforts could not find his way out, and he feared that he might have to remain all night. At last he looked up, and saw a man in the tower in the centre of the labyrinth who had been watching him all the time, and waiting to catch his attention. The eye above could see all so hidden from the man within and soon guided him out of his difficulties.

One of the important lessons for every Christian to learn is the need of the Lord's care and guidance through the labyrinth of life. "Who is sufficient for these things," writes the Apostle. Then he declares, "Our sufficiency is of God"—in Christ. He who redeemed us has gone the way before us and directed that we walk in His steps. If those who are walking in the Master's footsteps and are walking circumspectly, neglect these and become overcharged with the world and its joys and toys, they are surely unwisely selling the glorious heavenly birthright for a mess of earthly pottage. On the contrary, he who carefully follows the Master experiences the truth of the declaration, "He restoreth my soul." Some find their spiritual strength refreshed as they walk in the paths of righteousness in which the Lord leads. *He leads them* "for His name's sake." This is one of the considerations. Our Lord, the Shepherd, has undertaken to do a shepherding work; to gather a flock His promise is involved; His honour is at stake. We may be sure that not only because of His love for us will He guide us aright, but because it would be a dishonour to Him to make the slightest mistake in respect to our guidance. He is the faithful Shepherd. The angelic hosts are watching and learning lessons in respect to all this shepherding of the flock through the narrow way. "Which things the angels desire to look into."—1 Pet. 1: 12.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANONYMOUS.

We would acknowledge, with sincere appreciation, the receipt of two anonymous donations of £1 each during December.

NEW BOOKS IN STOCK.

We have secured one NEW copy of STRONG'S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE, giving all occurrences and meanings of the Hebrew and Greek words used in the Scriptures. Both Young's and Strong's are now out of print and unobtainable from the publishers, and second-hand copies also are very scarce, so that it is only occasionally that we are able to secure an odd copy. This copy is available at the present list price of 45/-, post 1/- extra.

A few copies of "Daniel, the prophet," a well-written book for children of eight years upward, are available in stock at 1/6 each postage 6d. It is unlikely that further supplies will be obtainable when this small stock is exhausted. The book, which is illustrated, gives a very clear impression of Daniel's life in Babylon, written in an easily understood style.

FAMILIAR BOOKS OUT OF STOCK.

Our quota of the "Divine Plan" is exhausted and import licence restrictions are such that we shall not be able to receive any more until about the end of March. Orders will continue to be accepted and the books will be despatched in order of rotation, as soon as they come to hand.

The same remarks are true of the leather bound pocket mannas, except that in this case the books come from Australia and it will be June at least before we can expect supplies. A few copies of the cloth pocket mannas are still in stock.

It is advisable for friends to consult the latest issue of the B.S.M. when about to order books, to ensure that the ones required are still available. If a star appears against the title in the price list, instead of the price, the book is temporarily out of stock but further supplies are expected in reasonable time, and orders will be booked for despatch as soon as available. If the desired book has been deleted from the price list altogether it is unlikely that further supplies will be obtainable and orders will not be accepted.

BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE.

SECOND-HAND BOOKS WANTED.

Many of our brethren are desirous of obtaining copies of the following books, all of which are now out of print or unobtainable in sufficient quantity due to the war situation. The Committee is open to purchase such books for this purpose, and will be glad to have details of any which are for disposal. Stat: title of book, condition (good, fair, bad) and price desired. The following list covers those most in demand but others will be considered if of the type used by the brethren.

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The object of the Reference Library is two-fold:—

First:—To maintain a permanent collection of all "Present Truth" literature of value, from earliest days to current times, such books of this class as are out of print being available for loan to interested brethren.

Second:—To build up a collection of other books which are of definite use to our brethren for specialised study but are not easily obtainable from public libraries. These books are available for loan anywhere in this country.

Lists of books available in the library can be had upon request

The use of the library is quite free, the borrower merely being required to pay postage both ways, this being easily achieved by inserting postage stamps to the required value in a special pocket in the book when returning same. A post card request is all that is necessary for a book to be sent. Such requests should be addressed to the Librarian, Bro. V. R. Chandler, 9 St. Edmunds Road, Ilford, Essex, and books should be returned to that address.

The Committee is always pleased to accept gifts of suitable books for inclusion in the library. Brethren donating such books may do so feeling assured that their gifts will be held in trust for the use of all brethren without distinction.

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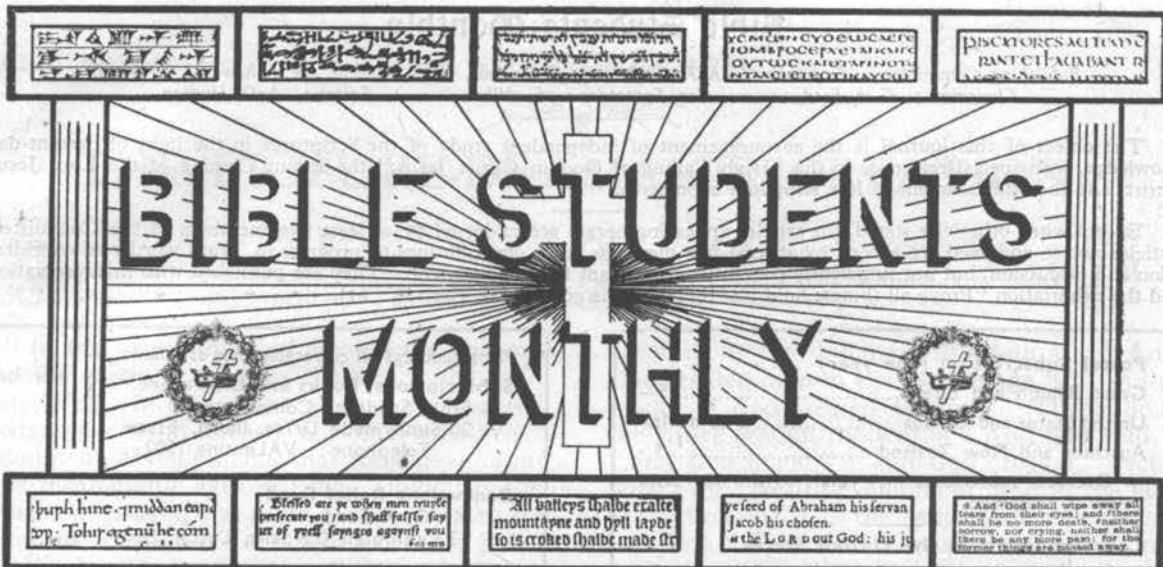
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TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY; TEACH—

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come to "all people," and they find access to Him.

—I. Cor. 3; 16, 17. Eph. 2; 20-22. Gen. 28; 14. Gal. 3; 29.

That meantime the chiselling, shaping and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these "living stones," elect and precious, shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with His glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.

—Rev. 15; 5-8.

That the basis of hope, for the Church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the truelight which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."

Heb. 2; 9. Jno. 1; 9. 1 Tim. 2; 5-6.

That the hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see Him as He is," "be partaker of the Divine nature," and share His glory as His joint-heir.

—I. Jno. 3; 2. Jno. 17; 24. Rom. 8; 17. 2 Pet. 1; 4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be "kings and priests" in the next Age.

Eph. 4; 12. Matt. 24; 14. Rev. 1; 6; 20; 6.

That the hope of the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and His glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.

Acts 3; 19-23. Isa. 35.

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THE PICTURE-DRAMA OF CREATION.

PART I.—VISIONS OF GOD.

T.H.

A new suggestion regarding
the Creation story.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." So runs the first sentence of Holy Writ. In this simple phrase the inspired writer places on record a "God-breathed" account of developments that may have occupied incalculable ages of time. Obviously the Creator of heaven and earth "was" before He began to create. We are therefore fully justified in breaking up that simple sentence in order to set forth the immortality of God. "In the beginning God." That is where everything begins. "Of Him," or, better still, "Out of Him," as out of the depths of an inexhaustible fountain, has proceeded everything. He is Primal Source as well as Great First Cause.

To say that God created the heavens and the earth does not conflict with other Scriptural declarations. The Apostle, in John 1:3, says: "All things were made by Him (the Logos), and without Him was not anything made that was made"; but before the Logos began to create, He Himself was the handiwork of God. Paul says He was "the first-born of every creature" (Col. 1:15); and the Revelator speaks of the risen Lord as having been "the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. 3:14).

By these statements we are told that the beginning of God's creative work was not the creation of heaven and earth, but the creation of an intelligent and appreciative Son. Through that first-born Son the power of God continued to operate, and from the hands of that God-like Logos came forth all things that were made. That is the plain literal statement of Scripture testimony which no other statement can modify.

In the creative account in Genesis an entirely different viewpoint is set forth. There are no second causes at work—no deputies, no proxies, nor any secondary authorities. Apart from one brief statement, "Let us make man in our image," there is no indication that any being other than God is engaged in the great work; and even that statement is modified and brought into alignment with the rest of the

account, by the statement that follows: "And God created man in His own image"; "in the image of God created He him." Throughout the entire section the words "And God said," "and God made," "and God created," recur with every fresh development, and at the end of the account it is the same God who enters into rest. That will be found to be an important point as this study proceeds.

How many attacks—needless attacks—have been made upon this simple story. It has been accounted too ridiculously naïve, except for credulous folk. It has been attacked by the biggest guns science could muster, and where frontal argument was of no avail the sniping effects of ridicule were employed. In the late decades of the nineteenth century the conflict between leaders of scientific and religious thought waxed hot. Great minds on both sides employed time, talent, and energy to assail or defend the story as told by Moses; or as they thought it was told by Moses. Science thought it had struck a mortal blow at the simple narrative and discredited it for ever. Certainly the opposing theory put forth by science seemed to gain the day, and found itself written into every new text-book of the times. Many religious teachers, after witnessing the futile efforts put forward in defence, accepted the attacker's views, and relegated the story of Genesis to the limbo of legendary tales. One thing the attack most certainly did achieve. It did explode an old religious dogma, which without reason or warranty taught that the whole realm of nature in its every part from centre to circumference, sprang forth from the eternal void in one specific moment of time some six thousand years ago.

The extreme scientific position of that day is not tenable to-day. The more cautious, advanced scientists of this present day prefer not to place themselves on record quite so emphatically as their forebears did, choosing rather to say: "We find ourselves confronted by such varying phenomena, and with so many conflicting attempts to explain, that we cannot be sure that the position we advocate to-day

may not be proved to be wrong to-morrow. There are many things we do not yet know about cosmic phenomena—we are awaiting further light."

Religious teachers have also changed their views. Some have swung far over to the scientific view—others have jettisoned the simple Bible story, but have nothing better to put in its place. The Higher Critic, too, has had his turn at the attack. The record in Genesis is so much less acceptable to many Doctors of Divinity than the cylinder records unearthed in Babylon, that they decided, years ago, to amputate the story altogether. The record was wounded, therefore, more sorely in the house of its friends than by all its open enemies could do. They have concluded that some zealous Hebrew editor copied the story from the garbled rambling accounts current in Babylonia in pre-Abrahamic days, and that Babel is more reliable than the Bible.

The underlying trouble is that one and all have taken the story for what it is not. The old orthodox advocate defended it for an actual literal account of one supreme week's work—six days of twenty-four hours—undertaken by the great Creator. At one precise instant of time heaven and earth sprang out of the void, and from that moment the week began to count. Each day saw its development and its work completed. On the sixth day man appeared as the crown and summit of the work.

The Huxleys and the Darwins made short shrift of this flimsy belief, by pointing to the fossils in the lower strata of the earth, proving, so they said, that man had been on the scene before its surface layers were laid.

The scientists fought the story on the presumption that it was a Divine (and thus an authoritative) statement of Cosmogony—an inspired record dealing with the actual specific stages of world and universe building. They denied the seemingly implied assumption that this world—this planet earth—was the heart of the scheme, the centre around which everything else revolved. To intensify their attack they brought evidence that the earth revolved round the sun, and that our sun, with its planetary system, was only one of many such systems whirling through space.

The story of Genesis was no such record of Cosmogony; but, having set up their presumptive man-of-straw, it was no difficult thing to administer the knock-out blow.

The Higher Critics scoffed at the story because it was found in the holy books of the youngest nation in Palestine and the Near East. Babylon (with Assyria) was old when Israel left Egypt to enter Canaan—and was even a mighty power when Israel's solitary ancestor dwelt in a tent. Discarding Abraham's history as more or less legendary and mythological, it was unreasonable, they said, to challenge the records chiselled on the baked cylinders of the elder nations which excavation brought to light, by the words written in the books of a nation newly arrived, and filled with conceit and consequence as to their place in the world.

Their depreciation of Israel was one of their greatest mistakes—an initial mistake which brought many others in its train. Critic, scientist and religious advocate have all assumed that the story of Genesis 1 (with the first four verses of Chapter 2) is a prelude to the story of Adam's creation as told in Chapter 2. It has been taken by one and all that the sixth creative day ended with God's work in Eden, and that thenceforth God has been "at rest." All have assumed that the seventh day began when Sin came in, and will continue till all sin has been removed. This thought is based on Heb. 4; 4 and 10, which reads: "For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise: 'And God did rest the seventh day from all His works' . . . For he that is entered into his rest has ceased from his own works as God did from His."

It is assumed that the Apostle says God is resting now from His creative work, and that in consequence believers should also rest from their works. Jesus counters the idea of God's rest by saying: "My Father worketh until now and I work" (John 5; 17). In this place Jesus is defending Himself against Jewish attack because He had healed an impotent man on the Sabbath day. ". . . for this cause did the Jews persecute Jesus because He did these things on the Sabbath." Taking His Father as His exemplar, Jesus also sought to help men in distress, living and acting in the Spirit of the great Sabbath Day, when all will be at rest. Obviously God's creative work throughout His vast domain did not cease, nor has His control over Nature's forces slackened for one single moment.

One thing did most certainly cease with the entrance of sin. God's fellowship with man ceased there, and will not be resumed till sin be taken out of the way; but God had rested

this work in the hands of One in whom He had every confidence. God placed His full confidence in the Logos, who, in course of time, would be transferred to the earth, and be found in fashion as a man. He would make His soul an offering for sin—He would die, and be raised again, and then be exalted to God's right hand and endowed with all power in heaven and earth. It is this same trust and confidence in Jesus which the Apostle exhorts his brethren to show, to find rest from further labour, even as God rested all in the Coming One. The work concerning which God has found rest is redemptive work, not creative work. God's vast creative work cannot cease. In the employment of creative power there can be no rest, or relaxation, or else catastrophe must ensue.

It is usually assumed that the climax of God's creative work, as told in Gen. 1, was reached when He had created man, as the king of creation. That is not so. The climax is not reached on the sixth day, but on the seventh. God's rest, not man's creation, was the goal towards which the whole creative period moved. If, in the vast wide field of God's universal domain there can be **no rest** for Him whose power drives its myriad systems along their orbital paths, we yet find in this simple story of Genesis the statement that after man is made, the Creator of man **does rest**, surely that seeming discrepancy stamps this story—and its works—as a thing apart from God's universal supervision over the wide deep spaces of the infinities. This is a story with a limited field. It is the story of the creation of the earth—the habitat of man and beast—with its surrounding heaven (or sky). Outside this field is a wider field—in which myriads of suns and planets abound. But they do not enter into the story of Genesis. The scientist may claim this wider field as his territory if he will, but it is outside the story of the book of books. The only earth depicted there became the home of man and beast, while the heavens there shown affords pathway for the birds.

The Christian advocate's mistake was in the assumption that this earth and heaven was the sum total of the Creator's work. The scientist's mistake was in trying to apply the laws of the whole to only a very small part.

The Higher Critic's mistake was in forgetting that it is God's world, and that He puts forward whom He will, and trusts His oracles to the servant of His choice.

The difference between the former Christian advocate's, the Scientist's and the Higher Critic's view, and the viewpoint of this simple Bible story is that they have accounted it real creative work, when it is only drama. It is a story told like a moving-picture story is told; and as with the film-scenario, there may be a real story behind; but it is the scenario story and not the real story that is told in Genesis. It is told from the standpoint of one who sees and hears, and records what he sees and hears. No mortal eye ever saw in reality the swaddling bands of darkness in which this earth of ours was bound, and from which in due time it was set free. But he whose hand wrote the words of our simple story saw the chaos and darkness and the Spirit of God brooding mother-like over the dark wild waste. He heard God speak, and saw God perform the work He had decreed, and noted the satisfaction of the Creator-Workman when He said His work was good. He saw the work progress to its destined end for the day; by then, the morning of that day had come. But the next step onward and upward in the ascending progress begins in darkness again. Each new day begins where the former one ends. The former ends in light, but immediately the new one follows in darkness and gloom, until the last is reached. There is no night to the seventh day. It is light, all light, with no darkness at all. There is no work; it is rest, all rest!

In this story there is no sin, no suffering, no reconciliation, no redemption. Nothing mars the sequence of events from the first dark day till God retires to rest. Progression is uninterrupted from first to last; and the whole complete story is seen by one beholder's eyes, and recorded by that beholder's hand, and only God, without attendant or co-worker of any kind, is seen throughout every scene.

How comes this to pass? God has had His own ways and means for putting over the profundities of Divine things down to the level of human consciousness. Had that not been so men must ever have remained in ignorance of God. Many of the great things of Divine revelation were received by men in dreams—or better stated, in that super-sensitive receptive state of mind described by the Apostle John in Revelation as being "in Spirit." They were enabled to receive impressions from heavenly sources which they were also enabled to interpret and apply, or have interpreted and applied for them. They described this ecstatic state as one in which they saw and heard

things clearly and vividly, but on a different level from fleshly sight and hearing. Living beings moved from place to place, speaking to and conversing with each other, while the entranced beholder looked on—an experience which could be well illustrated to-day by a person watching a modern talking picture display, except for the super-normal state of mind in the man to whom God made revelation.

At every stage in the Divine education of man, God has made use of this pictorial way of imparting such information as He wished them to know. To Moses in the mount a "pattern of the heavenly things" was shown, so that he would understand exactly and precisely the kind of Tabernacle God wanted him to build. By God's hand upon him (1 Chron. 28: 19) David was instructed how to provide and plan for the erection of the Temple, which God forbade David, but permitted Solomon to build. By a living panorama of living scenes Daniel was given a fore-view of the history of ages to come. Paul was carried up into the third heaven, and saw and heard things which he was not allowed to tell. Greatest of them all, the seer of Patmos beheld that most thrilling series of living and talking pictures, equalled only by this revelation in Genesis. These are the really big things of Divine revelation, but there are many others of smaller degree, such as when men in Israel resorted to the "Seer"—the man who could "see" with a deeper eye—and from the "mystic" learned the answer to their perplexities.

The suggestion here made is that the Biblical record began on the same level as that on which it ends, and that to some worthy father of the race (Adam, perhaps, or Enoch) God used the moving and talking picture method of imparting knowledge of such a kind that man could not otherwise have obtained it at all. Like the Apostle John, the recipient could have been "in Spirit"—a highly-exalted, super-sensitive, ecstatic state of mind, and whether asleep or awake, receive impressions "sent across" from the other side.

Under such conditions, creative activities which in reality covered long flights of time, could be compressed into sights and scenes occupying but moments or minutes in the beholder's time. Experience has taught men that "seeing" is a better method of imparting knowledge than mere hearing alone, for it is

said that the impressions carried inward from the "eye-gate" create deeper effects upon the brain than those carried only from the "ear-gate," but the best effect of all results when both are used at the same time. What man has of late discovered in this respect, God has known from eternity.

Thus, when God made use of the "eye and ear gate" of the super-normal mind of His chosen watcher, the moving pictures "sent across the divide" may have corresponded with the real actual constructive activities involved in the creation of this planet Earth, as symbols do to realities, except that the length of time would bear no relativity to the actual duration of the reality—activities stretching over æons in the reality being compressed into moments or minutes in the symbol.

The story of Genesis 1 is drama, pictured drama, and can be consistently interpreted only from that point of view—it is the scenario story of the "Picture Drama of **Creation**" in very deed and truth.

(To be concluded in two further parts)

SENNACHERIB'S HOST.

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed on the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still.

And there lay the steed with his nostrils all wide,
And through it there rolled not the breath of his pride,
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider, distracted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpets unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the Temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmeared by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord.

(Byron.)

THE QUIET TIME



C.T.W.

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

THE BLESSING OF THORNS.

When we thank our Heavenly Father
For the blessings of each day;
For the flowers that are strewn
O'er the roughness of the way;
When we thank Him for the roses
That we gather day by day,
Do we ever see the blessing
Of the thorns along life's way?

Oft we thank Him for the sunshine
That He sends us from above;
Do we ever in the shadow
Recognise His tender love?
When our feet grow worn and weary
And our crosses hard to bear;
Oft the way seems long and dreary,
Knowing not His tender care.

When the clouds that round us darken
Change to night our radiant day,
Oft we murmur that the sunshine
Has been hidden from our way.
But our Father in His wisdom
Sends the dark as well as light;
Can we doubt His loving kindness
In Whose keeping all is right?

If no shadow veiled our pathway,
And we knew no ill to fear,
Would we cling so closely to Him?
Would our Father seem so near?
As when darkness gathers round us,
And our faith in self is lost,
We but trust Him, and the Saviour
Gives us strength to bear our cross.

In our path if all were sunshine,
Would we look to Him for light?
And if all below were brightness,
Then would Heaven seem so bright?
When we meet beyond the shadows,
In that land of endless day,
We will thank our Heavenly Father
For the darkness of the way.

Oft we cannot see His kindness
Through the darkness, pain and loss;
But we know the crown is dearer
For the sharpness of the cross.
And when in His throne we gather,
And our dear Redeemer meet,
We will thank our Heavenly Father
For the thorns that pierced our feet. (Selected.)

WARNING VOICES.

In the midst of the "perilous times" of these days with snares and pestilences and subtle dangers on every hand—and in the midst, too, of a realising sense of the actual existence of such evil besetments and perils—how precious to the saints are the assurances of Divine protection and care and personal love!

We call to mind the gracious promises of our Lord—"The Father Himself loveth you;" "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom;" and "He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him; . . . and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him . . . Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 16: 27; 14: 21, 23, 27; Luke 12: 32.

Warning voices and wholesome counsel, however, are also necessary; and he is not wise who turns a deaf ear to them, and takes notice alone of the comforting assurances which are designed only for those who faithfully "watch and pray lest they enter into temptation." Every soldier of the cross needs to heed the Apostle's warnings—"Take unto you the whole armour of God, THAT YE MAY BE ABLE TO WITHSTAND in the evil day, and having done all, to stand;" and again, "Let us FEAR lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

OUR UNSEEN GUARDIANS.

Our great, all-wise all-powerful Heavenly Father has numberless messengers at His command, and has deputed and appointed many of these to care for the interests of His cause on earth—especially to watch over and minister unto the very elect. Nothing can by any means, therefore, harm these, except as the Heavenly Father sees that the earthly injury or disadvantage would prove profitable either to the individual New Creature or to the Lord's general cause. This is in full accord with His general assurance that all things work together for good to them that love Him.

CONSECRATED TIME

— W.A.D. —



So teach us to number our
days, that we may apply
our hearts unto wisdom.

Psa. 90; 12.

The years come and go with seemingly increased rapidity by reason of the many duties with which each is concerned, and the speed of modern life. It is often said that there is not time enough in the day for the doing of all that is necessary, far less is there time sufficient for the many tasks that we would like to undertake. On the other hand, much can be done by good organisation, hence it is a dictum in the world, "if you want a thing done, go to a busy man." If the worldly-wise realise the value of time, how much more should the consecrated appreciate every day, every hour, indeed, every minute, as something to be used wisely and in harmony with our vows. The Scriptural viewpoint is comprehensive, for, says the Apostle: "Whatsoever ye do in word, or in deed, do **all** in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3; 17). Much of our time is taken up with gaining a livelihood, or with domestic duties, as is the case with mankind generally, but the underlying motive in all that we perform must be to glorify God—everything must be done **as unto the Lord**.

The consecrated are, of course, not merely concerned with activities, or "works." Nevertheless, they are very important as an **evidence** of our faith (Jas. 2; 18), and it is clear that we need carefully to consider how best to use our time in the eternal interests. This is an essentially practical problem, and the following observations, based upon experience, are submitted for the sanctified consideration of the brethren.

Time so easily wasted

Nothing is more easily wasted than time; it is ever slipping away, and can be more easily wasted than money, for it can be dissipated without the slightest effort. Even the natural man realises this truth, but the New Creature should be more alive to the wise use of time than those who are not enlightened, because the Spirit inevitably quickens our faculties and enables us to see real values. We should earnestly seek to spend our time to best advantage to the end that the maximum may be done, in the widest sense of accomplishment.

The world is clamouring for a "planned economy," but we at all events should know the benefit to be derived from a well organised and carefully planned individual life. Our activities may vary because we move in different walks of life in order to obtain our daily bread; some are not blessed with good health, and thus have to strive against the inertia of bodily weakness; yet others, however they contrive, seem to be unable to use all the moments as they swiftly fly.

Nevertheless, a discussion of principles cannot fail to be helpful, knowing, as we do, that allowances must be made in individual cases, for it is always a mistake to think that we ought to **force** our particular way of life on others. More is as a rule accomplished by persuasion and suggestion than by dictatorial and high-handed methods. In this attitude, let us soberly review what is admittedly a problem to all in these days when there is so much running to and fro (Dan. 12; 4), and speeding-up in material affairs.

The general principle is admirably expressed by Frances Ridley Havergal in her well-known Consecration Hymn—

**Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in constant praise;
Take my intellect and use
Every pow'r as thou shalt choose.**

Use of odd moments

Possibly the greatest snare of all is the omission to use odd moments, for we all have some spare time during the day, although we may try to make others believe that we are "on the go" from morning till night. Instead of allowing the mind to be lazy at such times, it is profitable to use the odd moments for meditation, remembering that prayer may be uttered or unexpressed. On the way to the station in the morning, or while waiting for lunch to be served, or during the homeward journey, there are many "things," within the meaning of Phil. 4; 8, to occupy our minds. Hence, we exhort with the Apostle, "if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think

on these things." If we are acquainted with foreign languages, it is useful to think in another language in order to "keep it going," and to meditate, in particular, upon the New Testament in the original tongue is a blessed experience for those with a retentive memory.

Odd moments are, however, so easily wasted by **pointless** chatting to those around. The ordinary man, for instance, spends quite a deal of time grumbling about the weather, or in planning how affairs of government at Westminster should be reorganised, or in complaining about something else not to his liking. It is so easy to waste time in frivolities, and in this connection we do well to remember the Master's words—"but I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12: 36). Possibly, the poet had something of this in mind when he wrote:—

**Were half the breath that's vainly spent
To heaven in supplication sent,
Our cheerful song would oftener be,
"Hear what the Lord hath done for me."**

✓We all fail on these lines at times, but must keep the perfect standard before us. The Pastor was a noble example of diligence, for not once but often do we read: "Brother Russell was soon ready to begin work, and began dictating. Very little time goes to waste if he can help it, and he is a wonderful example to us all. The rest of the party put in the time in various ways . . ." (*Souvenir Convention Reports*, 1912, p. 11.)

Wastage of time is bound up with the sin of procrastination. Sometimes, of course, it is wise to delay action, but it is wrong to put off doing tasks because the very delay itself seems to bring a measure of satisfaction. After a day of hard toil, for example, there may be an inclination to leave duties that should be fulfilled until the morrow; this has a cumulative effect, and eventually we find our affairs in a muddle. This often happens with correspondence unless we are on guard against procrastination, whereas, if we bestir ourselves, the answered letter will speed on its way to assist some brother or sister in need of comfort and strength. It is usually a question of will power and the making of effort, as is early rising in the morning. It is then surprising to find how much can be done, and the extent to which good organisation avoids confusion, so that one continues to be able to cope with all the demands made upon one's time.

Fixed times set apart

It is usually a safe rule to distrust the statement that "I haven't got time," in the sense that if there were a real desire to do the task, time would be "made" for it, as we say in common parlance. At all events, when we contemplate how to fit in all that is required of us in the Master's service, it is a good plan to have fixed times for doing certain things. Remember, withal, that the Lord holds us responsible "every man according to his several ability" (Matt. 25: 15), and some of our brethren who are now performing land work should not feel discouraged because utter physical exhaustion seemingly limits their activities of service. The Lord has arranged it so, for some wise purpose, but we must use what time we have available to best advantage.

First and foremost, regularity in prayer is vital. It must never be said that we have not time for this spiritual exercise. First thing in the morning and last thing at night, at least, we should betake ourselves to our Heavenly Father in earnest prayer, for this is the life-line of our spiritual existence. Every day, there are personal sins for which forgiveness must be sought; otherwise our "robe" remains spotted. Every day, we should delight to express our gratitude for our many blessings, both temporal and spiritual, especially in these times when there is marked evidence of the Lord's over-ruling providences, despite the compulsions of society. Every day, too, we need guidance in our endeavour to be rightly exercised by the experiences through which we pass, while strength is sought to "walk in the light," and thus be able to repel all the "fiery darts" of the Adversary. Family prayer, as well as individual prayer, is helpful where all are of like mind; this is one blessing missed by those who in the family circle are alone in understanding spiritual things, although it is doubtless made up to them in other ways. At such family prayer the reading of the Daily Heavenly Manna is also strongly to be recommended, just as it was done in former times.

There should also be regular times for attending to set duties, such as preparation for study classes, visiting the sick, and so on. These are privileges of which all can take advantage, and not merely those in prominent positions. Moreover, we should study the Lord's word daily, whether or not we read set portions as some do, and thereby cover the whole Bible in the course of a year.

It is surprising the useful matters that can be accomplished by means of a regular plan. Some brethren, for example, have set aside fifteen minutes each day for the mastery of New Testament Greek, and have in this way facilitated their study of the Scriptures. In the same way, it is possible to enter upon a deep study of various prophecies of the Scriptures in the light of the essential historical background. By this means of here a little and there a little, the sum total of study accomplished is astonishing; this helps to impart spiritual strength, provided the knowledge gained is rightly applied so that it sanctifies both heart and mind.

Then there is the important exercise of assembling ourselves together. As far as possible, nothing should be allowed to prevent our regular fellowship in the Ecclesia. In this respect, moreover, members are of secondary importance, for our prime object in meeting together is to **study the Truth** and to obtain a clearer insight into **present Truth**.

Most of the friends find themselves able to engage in Fire Watching duties. Sometimes this offers an excellent opportunity to use time to good account; several of the friends find this time most useful as a means to accomplish more good.

Progress in time

If we seek in this way to number our days, then we should be able to recognise progress over the years, as regards both imbibing of knowledge, and growth in the likeness of the Master. Despite the trying conditions in which we live, we have still manifold blessings, although, according to our understanding of prophecy, there is much sorer trouble ahead, *ere restitution blessings are on the earth in the sense of Isaiah 35*. The time may come when we shall not be able to fellowship together, or when some of our other privileges cease. It is then that the spiritual strength now built up through a knowledge of Present Truth will enable us to "endure" and thus gain the victory as overcomers.

HE GIVETH MORE GRACE.

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater,
He sendeth more strength when the labours increase;
To added affliction He addeth His mercy,
To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.

When we've exhausted our store of endurance,
When strength has failed ere the day is half done,
When ended also our hoarded resources,
Our Father's full giving is only begun.

His love has no limit, His grace has no measure,
His power no boundary known unto men;
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.

What is Victory?

WHEN you are set at nought, your wishes crossed, your tastes offended, your advice disregarded, and you take it all in patient, loving forbearance,

THIS IS VICTORY!

WHEN you will not approve by word or silent acquiescence, exaggeration, evil speaking, vain imaginations, or perverse conduct,

THIS IS VICTORY!

WHEN you do not love to refer to yourself in conversation, nor glory in your own pious deeds, when you can in honour prefer others,

THIS IS VICTORY!

WHEN you can be conscientious under all conditions, when you can be faithful in things small and great, when you can practise true Christianity equally in your home as in public life,

THIS IS VICTORY!

WHEN you have stumbled into error, foolishness, weakness or sin, and you thereafter grasp more firmly the hand of the Lord,

THIS IS VICTORY!

WHEN you seem overwhelmed by discouragement, disappointment, difficulty, pain, affliction, sorrow or wrong, and you can confidently look to the Lord for deliverance,

THIS IS VICTORY!

WHEN you can stand face to face with the opponents of truth and righteousness, who misunderstand, hate and persecute you; and you faithfully endure it all as Jesus did.

THIS IS VICTORY!

Heirs of the Kingdom.

+ C.T.W. +



David in Adullam, a picture-parallel for Christians.



In the Old Testament our Heavenly Father has provided many pictures to illustrate truths mentioned in the New; we find the particular truth of James 2; 5: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?" illustrated by the life and experiences of David and his men in the cave of Adullam. When David was forced to leave Saul's house he went into the wilderness and selected a very large cave to dwell in. Then he gathered a faithful company from all the tribes of Israel, who shared his trials and experiences as an outcast, a fugitive while in the cave of Adullam, and later they shared with him his glory when he became king. These experiences of David between his rejection by Saul and the time when he became king lasted seven years, and represent the entire Gospel Age, the period during which our Lord has been gathering out a little band, not only from all the tribes of Israel, but from every kindred, tongue and nation. They are called to follow Him through difficult experiences now; and later, when He is the recognised King over all the world, they are promised a place on His throne.

Who were the men who were drawn to David, and what were their characteristics? 1 Sam. 22; 1-2 says that his brethren and all his father's house went thither to him, also every one that was discontented, and he became captain over them. Some were drawn by ties of relationship, others by admiration of David himself and his character, but the majority were drawn by personal trouble. Some were in distress, some in debt, and came to David to escape from their oppressors and creditors. Others came under Saul's wrath, as had David himself, and came to David by way of escape, while some were discontented on account of the tyranny and oppression of Saul, and so came to David. From some viewpoints they were not at all a desirable band. This turns our minds to the company the Lord is selecting and reminds us of the Apostle's words: "Not many wise, not many noble are called. Hath not God chosen the poor of this

world?" Some have, indeed, been drawn to Him because of their great love for Him, others by an appreciation of His great sacrifice, but the majority by personal affliction and trouble. Worn out by the trials and troubles of the world, we sought rest; discontented with the oppression and tyranny of the god of this world, we came to the Lord and can now say: "Jesus has satisfied, Jesus is mine." Perhaps on account of mental difficulties or the loss of loved ones, we sought rest, and where drawn to the Lord.

When these men came to David they found no very hard conditions laid down before they could enter into the company. Any might come to him; he set no age limit, no standard of fitness. Some were indeed strong, mighty men; others were men of weakness, so weak that on some occasions they had to be left behind as unfit to stand the fatigues with the rest of the band. David did not pry into their past life; some had been noble, fine characters, others ignoble, but David was willing to let bygones be bygones; only two simple conditions were laid down, viz.: Do you accept David as your deliverer, do you believe he can deliver you from your oppressors and Saul? Do you accept David as your leader, are you willing to follow just wherever he leads? It will cost you something; you will need to be, as David is, an outcast, a fugitive. You will come under the scorn of Israel. Are you willing to share his outcast experiences? These two conditions were accepted by David's followers, as is shown by their exclamation, "Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse."

During this age those who would follow the Lord find no hard conditions laid down; He places no age limit. Some come and give their entire life to Him in their youth, but others come after having spent the largest portion of their life in the pursuit of worldly hopes, pleasures and aims; yet the Lord accepts both. He also places no standard of fitness. Some have many talents to bring, while others feel they have nothing whatever. Jesus does not pry into the past life of those who would become His disciples. Some have spent their

lives in the service of others, others have been ignoble and selfish, but the Lord is willing to let bygones be bygones, and says "the past is under the blood." There are just two conditions laid down, namely: Do you accept Jesus as your Saviour, do you believe He can deliver you? Do you accept Him as your leader; are you willing to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth? Sit down and count the cost, for it will cost you something; it will mean standing for unpopular truth and going unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach.

When these men came to David they entered into entirely new experiences. Old things passed away and all things became new. All would not run smoothly in the cave; they would have many trials to meet. They had come to David to escape trials, but they found trials right there in the cave. There were men from all the tribes of Israel, varying in habits and temperament. They were all men of grit, or they dare not have joined themselves with David. They were all forced to live together in a cave, and how apparent to each other their weaknesses would become; how often their ideas would clash. There would certainly be many difficulties in that cave; they would often rub one another the wrong way. One thing, however, would tend to bind them together, the desire of their leader that they should live together as one family and gradually that desire of David began to soften their disagreements.

We have similar experiences, for the Lord has drawn His people from every kingdom, nation and tongue. He knew full well that there would be little differences cropping up and we would be inclined to view things from different standpoints, and there would be differences of opinion, but the desire of our Leader is that we should endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. It will take some effort, but we remember our Lord's prayer, "Father, I pray that they whom Thou hast given me may be one as we are one." We know that our love for the Lord will be measured by our love for the brethren, and we must endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit. We cannot countenance revolution in the cave. The Lord will measure our love for Him by our desire to live in peace, but what can we do to keep this spirit of peace? When the children of Israel murmured on account of the report brought back by the spies sent to view the land of Canaan,

Caleb was able to "still the people before Moses" (Num. 13; 30), and the secret of Caleb's power is given in Numbers 14; 24: "But my servant Caleb, **because he has another spirit with him**, and hath followed me fully." He had the spirit, not of strife, but of peace, and the secret of his great influence lay in the fact that he followed God fully. If we would preserve the spirit of unity we must not have the spirit of strife and agitation, and we must follow God fully.

The experiences of David's followers, however, would not all be trying; they also had blessings. They came under the influence of David's life, and his life was one of devotion. He was a godly man, a man of prayer, very often pouring out his soul in prayer to God; and he was a man of praise. Oft-times he would take up his harp in tuneful praise. How this would soften their harshness. David was so skilful on the harp that when, prior to his Adullam experiences, he played before Saul, the evil spirits that possessed Saul left him. He delighted to meditate on the law given to Israel through Moses, and probably would often call his followers and read to them from the law (see Psalm 34; 11). On two occasions he could have killed Saul, but he refused to lift up his hand against the Lord's anointed, for he had implicit trust in God. His influence must have worked wonders on the hearts of his rough followers, as is shown by the testimony paid them by Nabal. They had been tending Nabal's sheep, and the record is: "The men were very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we anything as long as we were conversant with them. They were a wall unto us both by day and by night" (1 Sam. 25; 15-16). What a splendid tribute to pay to this company, who, before they had come under David's influence, would have robbed and plundered whenever possible.

As with these men, so with the followers of the Lord. We come under entirely new influences, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, under the influence of the mind of the Master. Jesus gathers us to Him to instruct us. "Where two or three are gathered together, there am I in the midst of them." The scripture does not read "Where two or three are **come** together," but "**are gathered** together"; neither does it read "there will I come." No, Jesus is already there, and we are gathered unto Him. We do not come together to learn some new truth, nor to be re-

freshed by some old truths, nor yet to meet with the brethren, but we meet to hold communion with Jesus.

**Where two or three in sweet accord,
Meet in Thy name, oh blessed Lord,
Meet to recount Thine acts of grace,
Oh, how Thy presence fills the place.**

These men also entered into a new security. The name Adullam means resting place. The cave was situated six miles south-west of Bethlehem, and to reach it one had to pass along a narrow way along the side of a precipice. On one side was a rocky gorge, and on the other high, towering rocks. Then one entered a crevice leading sheer into the face of the rock which was so low that it was impossible to stand in an upright position; one must enter in a crouched attitude. Against David and his men in the cave Saul was powerless, no matter how large an army he brought against them. They had to pass in single file along the narrow path leading along the mountain side, and enter one at a time what appeared to be a pitch dark hole in the rock; but David and his men had the advantage of looking towards the light and could see each one as he entered. They were quite secure; only in the daytime dare Saul attack them, and at night they went down into the neighbouring villages for supplies.

This represents another blessing in our Adullam life. We have entered into a new security; "Our life is hid with Christ in God," and no power in the universe can hurt the spiritual life of a Christian; none can pluck us out of His hand (1 Pet. 3; 13). If our faith were as strong as our security is good we should never be afraid (Psa. 27; 1).

Another phase of the life of David and his followers is given in 1 Chron. 11; 3. David is now anointed king over Israel, no longer an outcast with but 600 men, but thousands flock to his side. It is now popular to be one of David's followers (1 Chron. 12; 23 and 40). What now becomes of the faithful six hundred? Are they forgotten now that David has so many? No, the time has now come for them to be specially remembered. They shared in David's trials, now they are to share in his honour. 1 Chron. 11, from verse 11, and chapter 12, 1-24, tell of his faithful Adullam band. We know that we are about to enter the greatest change the world has ever experienced; soon it is to become popular to be on

the Lord's side. All will then want to give themselves in full consecration, but the opportunity of becoming heirs of the Kingdom will be for ever gone. Only those who share with Jesus in His Adullam experiences can hope to have a place on the honours list of the Kingdom. Those who would share with Him in His Kingdom must go with Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. **"No cross, no crown"** (Matt. 19; 28-29). The honours list is already partially written, and it is interesting to see the names written there, and the great deeds that have won them distinction. There is Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit. When his persecutors came against him he said: "I see Jesus standing on the right hand of God." He also prayed: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Col. 4 records a number of faithful saints who have found a place on the honours list; verse 12 mentions Epaphras an invalid who laboured "fervently for you in prayers." Rom. 16; 3 mentions "Priscilla and Aquila, who have laid down their own necks for my sake," and among others mentioned in this chapter is "Rufus and his mother and mine." Rufus' mother had apparently a very warm place in the Apostle's heart, as he referred to her as his own mother. Afterwards this honours list will be published to the world. They will learn that such and such a one is born in Zion, and the Highest Himself has established them. Just at the foot of the honours list there are yet some vacant places; will our names be there? Are we following in His Adullam footsteps? If so, the Lord will certainly record our names there. "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's **good pleasure** to give you the kingdom." The matter now rests with ourselves. We must give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, remembering that God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom, **which He hath promised to them that love Him.**

We never know what will be the end of the smallest deed we do in this world. It may start a series of blessings which shall extend, with increasing benefit, through centuries. There have been single acts of simple kindness, done even without the thought that they would be helpful, which have proved the beginning of endless chains of blessing. An old writer says: "When men do anything for God, the very least thing, they never know where it will end, nor what amount of work it will do for Him." Love's secret, therefore, is to be always doing things for God, and not to mind because they are very little ones.—*Forest Gate Bible Monthly.*

A Witness from the Catacombs

The pagans of Rome often remarked on the strange, living hope which transformed the lives of those from among their number who became converts to Christianity. Nowhere is this contrast between the living faith that was Christianity, and the dark despair that characterised paganism, more marked than in the epitaphs set up by pagan and Christian over their dead. The Christian sentiments, of which many examples are found in the Catacombs at Rome, breathe a spirit of calm and even joyous confidence for the future. The pagan epitaphs reveal utter hopelessness and resentment against a fate which offered them no recompense for the trials and vicissitudes of life. Here are a few examples, all belonging to times between the year A.D. 74, when Paul was still alive, and the seventh century.

**PETRONIA, A DEACON'S WIFE.
THE TYPE OF MODESTY.
IN THIS PLACE I LAY MY BONES.
SPARE YOUR TEARS, DEAR
HUSBAND AND DAUGHTERS,
AND BELIEVE THAT IT IS
FORBIDDEN TO WEEP FOR ONE
WHO LIVES IN GOD.
BURIED IN PEACE ON THE THIRD
BEFORE THE NONES OF OCTOBER
IN THE CONSULATE OF FESTUS.**

Another one, much more brief, but how eloquent—

**VICTORINA,
IN PEACE,
AND IN CHRIST.**

Against this, read a pagan epitaph, brief in its tragedy of a pagan father who has lost a well-beloved daughter, without hope of re-union:

**I, PROCOPE, LIFT UP MY HANDS
AGAINST GOD, WHO SNATCHED
ME AWAY INNOCENT.
SHE LIVED TWENTY YEARS.
PROCLUS SET UP THIS.**

Not so the Christians who set this brief word on the stone of a pilgrim who had reached the end of the way,

THE DORMITORY OF ELPIS

To us a dormitory is a sleeping-place. To the early Christians the grave was but a dormitory. Our own word "cemetery" is the Greek "koimeterion," meaning the same as "dormitory," a place of sleep. So two loving Christian parents, many centuries ago, laid their child to rest in a grave far below the

streets of Rome and inscribed upon her stone—

**HERE SLEEPS PORCELLA IN PEACE,
SHE LIVED
3 YEARS 10 MONTHS 13 DAYS.**

That peace was denied the sorrowing mother who knew nothing but the hopeless creed of paganism, and poured out her heart's anguish in these bitter words—

**CAIUS JULIUS MAXIMUS
AGED 11 YEARS 5 MONTHS
O RELENTLESS FORTUNE
WHO DELIGHTEST IN CRUEL DEATH.
WHY IS MAXIMUS SO SUDDENLY
SNATCHED FROM ME?
HE WHO USED TO LIE JOYFULLY
ON MY BOSOM.
THIS STONE NOW MARKS HIS TOMB.
BEHOLD HIS MOTHER**

How different is the affectionate remembrance and calm submission of those other parents, believers in Christ, who inscribed—

**NAVARINA
IN PEACE
A SWEET SOUL,
WHO LIVED 16 YEARS AND 5 MONTHS.
A SOUL SWEET AS HONEY.
THIS EPITAPH WAS MADE BY HER PARENTS.**

Peace, peace: that is the constant refrain of these rejoicing believers as they laid their loved ones to rest. This last example is perhaps the record of a Christian matron, well spoken of for good works and labours of love in the service of the brethren.

**CONSTANTIA
BURIED IN PEACE
ON THE LORD'S DAY THE SIXTH
BEFORE THE KALENDS OF JULY
IN THE FIFTH CONSULATE OF
HONORIUS AUGUSTUS
TO THE WELL-DESERVING,
IN PEACE.**

* How well these brethren of ours must have learned the truth contained in Paul's triumphant words: "So then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?'" Truly, we who follow in their steps are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, men and women, who, in their lives and deaths, manifested the reality of that faith which was in them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EASTER CONVENTION AT WARRINGTON.

The friends at Warrington wish it to be known they plan holding their usual Easter Convention and are making arrangements to welcome as many as can attend. The hall will be that at which last year's convention was held, viz. 'St. John's Hall' Wilderspool Causeway, Warrington, commencing on Saturday evening and continuing until Monday evening. Brethren are requested to write as early a date as possible with details of their accommodation requirements, to

Bro. D. Stanley, 42 Euclid Avenue,
Grappenhall Road, Warrington.

Full details of the arrangements will be given in the March issue of the "Monthly."

FOR DISPOSAL.

2 copies "Revelation of Jesus Christ," vol. 1, by Bro. Streeter, new but rather "shop soiled," 2/- each, post free. "God's remedy" and "Armageddon," two "Dawn" pamphlets. A few copies left, while stock lasts, 1/- per dozen, post free.

Our quota of the "Divine Plan" is exhausted and import licence restrictions are such that we shall not be able to receive any more until about the end of March. Orders will continue to be accepted and the books will be despatched in order of rotation, as soon as they come to hand.

The same remarks are true of the leather bound pocket mannas, except that in this case the books come from Australia and it will be June at least before we can expect supplies. A few copies of the cloth pocket mannas are still in stock.

It is advisable for friends to consult the latest issue of the B.S.M. when about to order books, to ensure that the ones required are still available. If a star appears against the title in the price list, instead of the price, the book is temporarily out of stock but further supplies are expected in reasonable time, and orders will be booked for despatch as soon as available. If the desired book has been deleted from the price list altogether it is unlikely that further supplies will be obtainable and orders will not be accepted.

BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE.

SECOND-HAND BOOKS WANTED.

Many of our brethren are desirous of obtaining copies of the following books, all of which are now out of print or unobtainable in sufficient quantity due to the war situation. The Committee is open to purchase such books for this purpose, and will be glad to have details of any which are for disposal. State title of book, condition (good, fair, bad) and price desired. The following list covers those most in demand but others will be considered if of the type used by the brethren.

Berean Comments.
What P.R. said; his answer to hundreds of questions
Photo-Drama Scenario
Sets of Reprints
Vols. 1, 5 and 6 (first-class condition only)
Emphatic Diaglott
Bible Translations, Concordances, etc.

Valuable collections of "Truth" books have often been lost through the relatives of deceased brethren being unaware that the Committee would willingly buy such books. A word fitly spoken may be the means of saving some such collections.

Offers of books should be sent to Bro. A. O. Hudson, 18 St. Ives Road, Leicester.

A selection of Bibles now in stock

| BIBLES | Please order Bibles by the number to avoid mistakes | Price | Postage |
|---------|--|-------|---------|
| No. G55 | Brevier 16 mo Clarendon type, India paper, Persian Morocco, Yapp, 7 x 4 1/2 x 7/8 ins. thick, weight 1 lb. The best Bible for general use | 28 0 | 7 |
| No. G53 | Same as above, but Bible paper, French Morocco, weight 1 1/2 lb and 1 1/2 in thick | 17 6 | |
| No. G44 | Minion 16mo, Clarendon type, Persian Morocco, Bible paper, 7 1/4 x 5 x 1 in. thick, weight 1 1/2 lb. A good Bible for general use, the type not quite so open as Brevier | 17 6 | 7 |
| No. E10 | Bible without references, in 4 thin volumes, extremely large print, very suitable for friends who find ordinary Bible print difficult. | 15 0 | 9 |
| | Set of 4 volumes | | |

Bible Students Committee.

— REFERENCE LIBRARY. —

The object of the Reference Library is two-fold:—

First:—To maintain a permanent collection of all "Present Truth" literature of value, from earliest days to current times, such books of this class as are out of print being available for loan to interested brethren.

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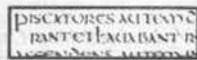
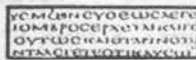
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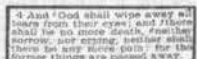
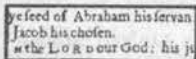
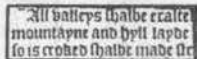
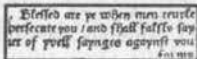
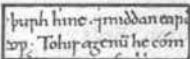
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BIBLE STUDENT'S MONTHLY



Vol. 20 No. 3

MARCH, 1943

Fourpence

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TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH—

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come to "all people," and they find access to Him.

—1. Cor. 3; 16, 17. Eph. 2; 20-22. Gen. 28; 14. Gal. 3; 29.

That meantime the chiselling, shaping and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these "living stones," elect and precious, shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with His glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.

—Rev. 15; 5-8.

That the basis of hope, for the Church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."

—Heb. 2; 9. Jno. 1; 9. 1 Tim. 2; 5-6.

That the hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see Him as He is," "be partaker of the Divine nature," and share His glory as His joint-heir.

—1. Jno. 3; 2. Jno. 17; 24. Rom. 8; 17. 2 Pet. 1; 4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be "kings and priests" in the next Age.

Eph. 4; 12. Matt. 24; 14. Rev. 1; 6; 20; 6.

That the hope of the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and His glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.

Acts 3; 19-23. Isa. 35.

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Except when otherwise stated, the articles appearing herein are endorsed by at least five members of the Committee. Articles not so endorsed are agreed by at least five members to be contributions to progress in Truth worthy of consideration and discussion, but not sufficiently conclusive to warrant full endorsement. They are published with this reservation and the exhortation "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (1 Thess. 5 : 21).

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OUR INHERITANCE

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"Now are we . . .
the sons of
God."



The Apostle Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians after he had been for some time a follower in the footsteps of his Master. During a period of at least twenty-five years he had been greatly blessed in heart and mind by Divine revelation, by the understanding of prophecy and by the Lord's providences overruling his experiences. In this epistle, more perhaps than in any other, he shows forth the eternal purpose of our God, and dwells on the class predestined by God to be associated with Jesus in His sufferings and also in Heavenly glory and the grand work to follow this dispensation. In the first chapter he sets forth two wonderful thoughts, viz., "God's inheritance in the saints" (verse 18), and "our inheritance in Christ Jesus" (verse 11). It is on the latter thought, our inheritance in Christ Jesus, that we will let our minds dwell for a while, for if we are faithful to our inheritance we shall be part of the class described as God's inheritance.

Paul opened his epistle with the words: "Blessed be God, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Heavenly places in Christ." His mind was always full of gratitude to God, and this expression "Blessed be God" is synonymous with the Psalmist's "Bless the Lord O my soul." He does not here refer to blessings that are to be ours in the future, but says, "Who **hath** blessed us." Our blessings are present, for they are spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, and refer to the spiritual relationship we have to Christ. A change has taken place in the spirit of our minds, and we are now the children of God in Christ Jesus. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3; 26. Rom. 8; 17). Weymouth's translation of Col. 1; 12-13 says: "Give thanks to the Father who has made us fit to receive our share of the inheritance of God's people in light. It is God who has delivered us out of the dominion of darkness, and has transferred us into the Kingdom of His dearly beloved Son, in whom we have our redemption—the forgiveness of our sins." "Who **has** made us fit to receive our share of the inheritance of God's people in light . . . who **has** delivered us . . . and **has** transferred us." This surely refers to our

present inheritance; the light of Divine truth and all it means to us in Christ Jesus is our share of the inheritance now. We have been transferred into the Kingdom of His dearly beloved Son, we who were children of Adam, sold under sin, have become children of light. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4: 6-7). When we read: "God commanded the light to shine out of darkness," we think of Gen. 1; 2-3, when the spirit of God moved on the face of the waters, and God said: "Let there be light," and there was light. The same spirit, power, energy of God is shining into our hearts, and it has brought about the change.

The Apostle shows us that we are now the children of God, and he shows how we entered into this relationship. It is well for us to review and consider this scripture over and over again, even though we may have been some time in God's family, for it always brings back to our minds what we were, and how much we rely on our Father's providences in Christ Jesus. "In whom we have redemption, deliverance, through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." This is a simple truth, but one which we must accept right at the beginning, it is through His blood alone that we have any standing before God. "Wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him" (verses 8-10). He has made known to us something that was not revealed in past dispensations; that there should be a class not only redeemed by the blood of Jesus but associated with Him in His sufferings and later in his glory. Weymouth says: "He made known to us the secret of His will." The revelation of the plan of God has made these things known to us and we understand the Apostle's words that we are "Predestined

according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

That which brings us into relationship with Christ is shown in verses 12-13, where the word of truth is shown to be the **Gospel of your salvation**, and we read, "after ye believed ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." This word "believed" carries the thought of obedience after hearing; it is when we have heard the instructions in the word and acted upon them by making an unreserved consecration that we are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise.

The scripture is often quoted: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," but believing implies more than accepting as a fact the life and death of Jesus; it means believing and acting upon all He said. In Matt. 16: 24-25, the Lord said: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life will lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." Jesus showed the terms of discipleship to be complete submission to the Father's will. When this step is taken the sealing of the Holy Spirit begins to take place in our hearts. Those who are willing to lose their lives for the Master's sake appear foolish in the eyes of the world, but they are blessed and truly wise in the sight of our Father. Our Lord also said: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood ye have no life in you." Jesus knew when He said these words that His disciples would not understand Him, but He also knew that when they received the Holy Spirit in their hearts they would understand the full significance of His words, and would appreciate the opportunity of "eating His flesh" and "drinking His blood;" by being associated with Him; so He said, "at that day ye shall know" (John 14: 20). That day came at Pentecost, when there began to dawn upon them the meaning of what their Master had taught, and they gradually understood the true significance of John 15 and the relationship there shown to exist between the Vine and the branches.

A wonderful relationship exists, not only between our Lord and His followers, but also between the Father, the Lord, and those willing to lose their lives in obedience to the terms, and to continue faithful to the end. "He that keepeth My commandments, he it is that loveth Me, and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him and manifest

Myself to him. If a man keep My words, My Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." These are loved of the Father! He looks down and sees all the sin of the men and women of the world to-day, and He also sees a little company here and there who believe the precious word and take it as direct from Him, fully believe it, and endeavour to shape and control their lives by the things written in His Word. These are sealed by the Holy Spirit, and this sealing is a very real thing in their lives. "As certainly as God is faithful, your language to you is not now 'Yes' and now 'No.' For Jesus Christ the Son of God . . . did not show Himself a waverer between 'Yes' and 'No,' but it was and always is 'Yes' with Him. For all the promises of God . . . have their confirmation in Him, and for this reason through Him also our 'Amen' acknowledges their truth and promotes the glory of God through our faith. But He who is making us as well as you steadfast through union with the Anointed One, and has anointed us, is God, and He has also set His seal upon us, and has put His spirit into our hearts as a pledge and foretaste of future blessings (2 Cor. 1: 18-22—Weymouth). Happy are we if we have this pledge or guarantee in our hearts; all the promises are ours, present and future, and the sealing or guarantee of the Holy Spirit produces a deeper and deeper conviction in connection with our vital union and relationship with God. We are gradually learning to know God, and "this is life eternal that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent." Both the acquiring of knowledge and Christian experience contribute to this. Knowledge is very necessary, but there is something that is more than knowledge. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith" (Eph. 3: 17-20). This is something more than intellectual knowledge, it is the vital relationship in our lives, "being rooted and grounded in the love of Christ that you may be able 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." It is our Christian experience that Paul is here referring to, and every one of us, as we go along the pilgrim way, knows that there are things in our Father's dealings with us that surpass knowledge. Paul said, in the wonderful 13th chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, "Though I have all knowledge . . . and have not love, I am nothing. Knowledge will pass

away; it is the right use of knowledge that matters. It requires some knowledge to exercise love, and as the spirit of Christ is in our hearts, His principles will guide our life. We may all have reached more or less the same degree of knowledge, but we are at different stages of faith, and our Father deals with us individually according to our faith, so we have experiences differing from each other, but we are assured that from the standpoint of the future, all things work together for our good. Paul had many bitter experiences, but he never complained; the desire of his heart was "if **by any means** I might attain," and towards the end of his life he said, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." "I have learned," said Paul; all that most of us can say is, "I am learning."

The extent to which we have been blessed by God is revealed in Hebrews 6:4-6. "Those once enlightened." The light of truth from Heaven shone in our hearts and showed us that we needed a Saviour, and it showed us that we could lay down our little lives with the

Master. We have tasted of the gift from Heaven, our Lord Jesus, and we are made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted of the good word of God. This good word has been sweet, and has comforted our hearts when no human being could do so. What a comfort to our hearts has been the tasting of the powers of the world to come, that new world that is promised as the real remedy for the troubles of mankind. This passage brings joy to our hearts as it shows to us the many blessings we have received from our Father, but if one who has been a recipient of all these blessings has repudiated the Lord, then it is a solemn warning. No man, however, has the right to apply this to anyone else.

Our final inheritance is in Heaven. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you." (1 Peter 1:3-4.)

THE SWEET INFLUENCES OF PLEIADES.

A O H

"Thy faithfulness
shalt thou establish
in the very heavens."

Psa. 89:2

A rich inheritance has been bequeathed to us by reason of the ancient peoples' intense interest in the starry heavens. From the very beginning of history men have studied the stars, their arrangement and their movements, and woven into the glittering glory above their heads a wealth of imaginative romance and fable. Some of the oldest and most widely told stories known to mankind have been thus immortalised upon the face of the sky. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the Scriptures themselves contain various references to the "story of the stars" and make use of them to illustrate some of God's dealings with men.

The well-known passage in the 38th chapter of Job commencing "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?" is one of the finest of such passages. The opening expression is well known, and is often quoted; the remainder of the passage not so often read, and much of the interest attaching to the Divine words to Job is thereby lost. It was when, at last, both Job and his three friends had

nothing further to say, that the Lord spoke to Job out of the whirlwind, and demanded of him (Job 38:31-32): "Canst **thou** bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst **thou** bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? Or canst **thou** guide Arcturus with his sons? Knowest **thou** the ordinances of heaven? Canst **thou** set the dominion thereof in the earth?"

There can be no doubt that Job himself understood the import of the questions perfectly, or the Lord would not have asked them of him. That Job drew correct conclusions from the conversation is evident by his frank confession afterwards: "I know that **thou** canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee... wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:2 and 6). We do well, therefore, to try to see these things as Job saw them, and draw from them the lesson for ourselves that he drew for himself. It means exploring somewhat unfamiliar ground, and delving a little

into the ancient myths and stories associated with the constellations, but if we can discern behind these things something of that glory light which shone into Job's heart and gave him compensation for all his sufferings, our search will have been worth while.

It is necessary to keep in mind throughout our study that the purpose of the Lord's questions to Job was to demonstrate that the ultimate truth respecting the great mystery of the permission of evil remains with God Himself; and that He has the power to achieve the triumph of righteousness, and will accomplish that triumph, in due time. As Job's attention was directed to these various constellations in turn, the ideas associated with them came into his mind, and from those ideas he discerned the lesson God was desirous of teaching him.

"Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?" The more popular name for this constellation is the "seven stars," although the majority of people can discern only six. In ancient times they were thought to have an influence especially beneficent to mariners; this legend being due to the fact that they first appear in May when the favourable season for voyages, in the early days of the world, was due to begin. Pliny, who lived at about the time of the First Advent, says (*Natural History, Book 2*) that the rising of the Pleiades on May 10th brings Summer, and their setting on November 11th marks the beginning of Winter. This idea, that some mystic benign influence radiates out to earth from the Pleiades, is also expressed by various Arab poets, one of whom (Hafiz) alludes to them as the seal or earnest of immortality. The word translated "sweet influences" is "**maadannoth**," one which has given the translators a great deal of trouble. It is considered by some authorities to have been misspelt, and they read it "**maanaddoth**," which comes from a root, "**anad**," meaning "to bind on." On this basis Margolis, Leaser and Ferrar Fenton translate "chains," and Rotherham "**fetters**," and it is then suggested that the appearance of the Pleiades in a cluster, like a delicate necklace, is referred to. On the other hand, the Authorised Version, standing by "**maadannoth**," has the advantage that this word comes from a root meaning "pleasures," "delight," "delicacy," and can be construed to indicate the operation of an influence radiating happiness and pleasure, and making for prosperity. This view well accords with the ancient tradition regarding the Pleiades, and

gives point to the Divine question which made it plain that Job himself was powerless to "bind" those same "sweet influences."

What is the moral? It surely is that the sweet influences of the Love of God, shed abroad upon mankind, taking root in the hearts and lives of believers, and bringing forth rich fruit unto God, **can never be "bound" by man.** The sad time of sin and death stands between humanity and the Kingdom, for a while, but, like mariners on the hazardous deep, men can look up to the heavens and reflect that the sweet influences of the Divine care are constantly streaming down from above, and that they guarantee mankind's safe arrival at length at their "desired haven" (Psalm 107: 30). Job, probably familiar with the seafaring tradition of those influences, and certainly well acquainted with Arabic thought—for Job was undoubtedly an educated Arab of his day—must surely have read this lesson into the question which came to him from above, and drawn no little comfort from the thought.

"Canst thou . . . loose the bands of Orion?"

From reverently thankful thoughts of the loving watch-care of God, Job's mind swung instantly to a vision of rebellion and sin—and sin's penalty. The constellation Orion is the most notable one in the heavens, and almost everyone has had Orion's head and arms, feet, girdle and sword, pointed out at some time or another. Orion, said the ancients, was a giant, and a mighty hunter, who once lived upon earth. He was greatly renowned because of his prowess in the chase, and eventually became a personal attendant to the goddess Diana. Having committed a great offence, he was bound to the heavens by means of strong chains, there to remain for ever as a warning to others of the consequences of sin. (The Bible student will readily recognise the likeness between this story of Orion and the Biblical story of Nimrod, the "mighty hunter before the Lord" of Gen. 10: 8-9. Nimrod's death is not mentioned in Scripture, but ancient traditions are that Nimrod met his death in consequence of some great sin, and that he was bound to the heavens for his impiety.) Looking up into the night sky, then, the peoples of old would gaze upon the mythical giant, arms and legs outstretched, suffering his perpetual sentence, and reflect upon the power of God Who ordains an inescapable penalty for sin.

To Job, then, came the question: "**Canst thou loose the bands which I have placed upon evil?**" No less certain than the love of God is the retribution that must follow upon deliberate, wilful sin, and no man can loose the chains which God has forged for the restraint of sin in the "Second Death."

"**Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season?**" The A.V. translators, not knowing how to render the Hebrew word "mazzaroth," left it untranslated. There seems little doubt that it refers to the twelve signs of the zodiac. The zodiac is that broad path across the heavens which is apparently traversed by the sun in its daily journey. Month by month, as the earth travels around the sun, the latter is set against a background of groups of stars which vary according to the relative position of sun and earth. To an observer upon earth it is as if the sun enters into one constellation after another in order, and the ancients separated these constellations into twelve "signs," into each one of which the sun enters at a certain season of the year.

The force of the question to Job, then, was this: "**Canst thou bring forth, and present to the sun, each successive one of the twelve signs in its due time in the sun's onward journey?**" The evident answer is "No." No man has power to retard or advance the majestic course of the procession of heaven which has been ordained of old by God. **So with the ages and dispensations of the Divine Plan.** Just as the twelve signs follow each other in ordered succession, likewise do those epochs which God has designed for the accomplishment of His purposes for mankind, and no man can either alter their order nor stay their course. "The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth," wailed the unbelieving captives in the days of Ezekiel. Resonant with faith came the prophet's rejoinder: "The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision" (Ezek. 12: 22-23). "The vision" came the word of the Lord to Habakkuk (Hab. 2: 3). "is yet for an appointed time. . . . Though it tarry, wait for it, for it will surely come, it will not tarry." Can we bring in the Kingdom of Heaven on earth by our own efforts, **in advance of God's due time?** Can we "bring out Mazzaroth in his season"? By no means; God alone can, and He will, at the time prefixed.

"**Canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?**" With their usual charming inconsistency, the A.V. translators have given us

here the Greek name of the constellation which was known to the Hebrews as "Aysh," and, in England, variously as the Plough, the Wain, or the Great Bear. The later Greeks pictured it as a wagon drawn by horses, which gave rise to the English idea of the Wain (Old English for wagon), and of the Plough. The ancient Greeks called it the Bear, because, as they said, this constellation was none other than a nymph named Callisto, who, to escape the attentions of her suitors, was changed into a bear and placed in the heavens. The Arabs, however, had a very different name for this group. They called it the Bier, and pictured the four main stars as forming a bier upon which a deceased person was being taken to burial, and the three stars behind as the mourners who follow, "daughters" or "sons" of the bier. It is much more probable that Job would be accustomed to the Arabic idea in preference to those of foreign lands, and this is confirmed by the fact that the Hebrew "Aysh" is derived from the Arabic word for "bier."

Unfortunately, nearly every translator of note has adopted the Western European name—the Bear—for this constellation, and whilst this is a perfectly correct thing to do in a translation meant for English readers (the expression "bier" would leave most readers wondering what constellation is meant), it does have the effect of obscuring the real meaning of the question. Perhaps Young's translation best brings out the thought, in rendering "and Aysh for her sons dost thou comfort?" Coming at the climax of this fourfold inquisition, surely this brings a wonderful picture before our minds. The bier, symbol of death and the grave; the mourners, sons or daughters of the bier, symbol of all the heart-ache and sorrow that death brings in its train; can Job, **can any man, guide these things into the glories of that day when death shall be no more?** Once again, the answer comes, sadly and sorrowfully, "No." Only God can guide the bier and its mourners into the glorious day of life and joy. Only God can "bring to pass the saying that is written 'Death shall be swallowed up in victory' (1 Cor. 15: 54). Only by His power shall it ever be that the 'ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads' (Isa. 35: 10). As Job looked up and saw the symbol of death engraved upon the heavens; beheld it night after night moving on its slow course around the sky, he must surely

have reflected on the inexorable law, "death leads all to Sheol," but remembered then that one day the great God of all men will break the power of death and restore to man the dew of his youth. "All the days of my appointed time will I wait," said Job, "until my change come" (Job. 14; 14).

Thus, then, we have in this short passage of two verses an epitome of four fundamental features of the Divine Plan. The loving watch-care of God is over all His creation, His Holy Spirit ceaselessly active in pursuance of His wonderful designs for human happiness, "sweet influences of Pleiades" which no man can hope to bind or restrain. His manifest judgment against sin, and the certainty of retribution upon the one who sets himself deliberately against the goodness of God, cannot be frustrated or defied by any, in this world or the next; none can ever hope to "loose the bands of Orion." Then the fixity of the Divine purpose: "By myself have I sworn, saith God" (Gen. 22; 16)—and the certainty of every feature of His Plan coming to pass in His own due time; every age and dispensation succeeding its predecessor in orderly sequence, no man having the power to haste these things or to accomplish the work of any Age in his own strength; no man can

"bring forth Mazzaroth in his season." Lastly, the enthralling theme of Resurrection and Restitution. Only God can do that, only He Who has promised that He would in the fulness of times "send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things" (Acts 3; 20-21). God, too, watches that Bier with its three mourners, wending its way across the dark night sky of earth's present evil world; but God is guiding it with a sure hand, and that Bier will one day come forth into a fair pleasant land where the dead will be raised up and life enter into them; and the mourners will rejoice, for "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, . . . for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21; 4).

These are the words God spake to Job on that memorable occasion. To him, as to us, they conveyed a message of hope, a confirmation of the Lord's great promise made to Moses in an hour when it almost seemed as if His great Plan **was** in danger of frustration. "**As truly as I live**, the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of Jehovah."

For no man, NO MAN, shall ever be able to "bind the sweet influences of Pleiades."

TREES OF LIFE.

The great city of Babylon was once the metropolis of the world—its merchandise was renowned among all nations. But the proud city was a city of sin, and Divine condemnation came upon it. The fiery words of the prophets regarding Babylon are familiar to all of us, and in fulfilment of those words, the site of Babylon has now, for thousands of years, lain desert and derelict, the proud buildings levelled with the ground, the wonderful gardens and parklands dry and sterile, and wild beasts the only signs of life.

In recent years there has been a change—date-palms are springing up everywhere over the ground that is ruined Babylon. During the archaeological excavations of recent years, dates formed the staple food of the native labourers, and the stones, thrown down haphazardly, have taken root and begun to clothe the desert site with living green.

The date palm was the most valuable product of ancient Babylonia, providing food, several kinds of drink made from the juice of the fruit, timber for

building, and fibre for many other uses. This is the tree which is depicted as the "tree of life" in Babylonian and Assyrian legend and sculpture. How appropriate then that upon the very site of the city which above all cities stands for the reign of evil, there should now be springing up "trees of life," as a result of the work of men who have been busy there proving the Bible true.

During this Age the earnest consecrated followers of Jesus have been sowing seeds—the seed of the Kingdom—and soon it will be springing into life in the very soil of the reign of evil, the hearts of fallen men, called at last to rise up from the ruins of this "present evil world," and see it transformed into a "world wherein dwelleth righteousness." The seed sown to-day will become trees of life in the Millennial Age just as those date-stones dropped in the ground of ruined Babylon are clothing the waste place with living green. "The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

THE QUIET TIME



C.T.W.

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

FOLLOW THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

More and more as "New Creatures" we are learning to appreciate the barrenness of worldly hopes and ambitions and knowledge. And more and more we should be giving heed to the leadings of the "Good Shepherd," who is guiding His flock of "New Creatures" for their spiritual refreshment through the labyrinth of the "present evil world." Those sheep which keep nearest to the Shepherd secure the fattest and richest experiences and refreshments. On the contrary, the sheep which stray looking for pastures green on their own account, or follow the voice of false shepherds, are the ones that are likely to become hungry and eat of the poisonous growths and fall into the pitfalls of sin and be devoured by the ravenous beasts of passion and worldliness. Happy is the "sheep" who learns to know the voice of the true Shepherd, and whose faith is such that he follows closely and not afar off.

GROWING TOWARD GOD.

Plants and vegetation and trees grow toward the sun. Even the heart of a tree trunk is not at the centre, as many suppose, but the main body of every tree has an elliptical bulge toward the sun-prevailing side. In garden or grove or thicket, if any plants or trees or shrubs are in the shade, they struggle toward the sun, the source of their life and light and well-being. It is in the same way that Christians ought to grow—toward God, the source of their life and light and blessedness.

The memory of a kindly word
For long gone by,
The fragrance of a fading flower
Sent lovingly,
The gleaming of a sudden smile
Or sudden tear,
The warmer pressure of the hand,
The tone of cheer,
The hush that means "I cannot speak,
But I have heard."
The note that only bears a verse
From God's own Word:—
Such tiny things we hardly count
As ministry;
The givers deeming they have shown
Scant sympathy;
But when the heart is overwrought,
Oh who can tell
The power of such tiny things
To make it well!

HIS EYES BEHOLD.

The Psalmist says (Psa. 11: 4) "The Lord is in His Holy Temple, The Lord's throne is in heaven: His eyes behold, His eyelids try, the children of men." The Psalms often supply fitting words to express the reactions of the Christian to the experiences he meets when in contact with the wicked. Someone had advised David to "Flee as a bird to your mountain" because the wicked made ready to shoot at the upright in heart; he was advised to stampede. What a victory it would be for the enemy if the Lord's people could be induced thus to lose their inward calm and trust and forget that He sees all and knows all about it. His eyes behold the children of men and, as Paul says (Rom. 2: 6) will render to every man according to his deeds. The Psalm goes on to say in verse 5 that the wicked and him that loveth violence, His soul hateth, and appropriate punishment will be meted out to them, and adds for our encouragement in verse 7, "The righteous Lord loveth righteousness; His countenance doth behold the upright." The righteous endeavours of the Christian do not pass unnoticed—He notices the righteous and the wicked.

Robert Browning, after observing how the things of Nature take their course and keep their appointed way, finished one of his poems with the words—

"God's in His Heaven—
All's right with the world."

TRUST.

Master, I set my seal that Thou art true,
Of Thy good promise not one thing hath failed!
And I would send a ringing challenge forth,
To all who know Thy name, to tell it out,
Thy faithfulness to every written word,
Thy loving kindness crowning all the days,—
To say and sing with me: "The Lord is good,
His mercy is for ever, and His truth
Is written on each page of all my life!"
Yes; there is tribulation, but Thy power
Can blend it with rejoicing. There are thorns,
But they have kept us in the narrow way,
The King's highway of holiness and peace.
And there is chastening, but the Father's love
Flows through it; and would any trusting heart
Forego the chastening and forego the love?
From strength to strength Thy pilgrims pass and sing
The praise of Him who leads them on and on,
From glory unto glory, even here!



THE PICTURE-DRAMA OF CREATION.



PART 2.—“AT EVEN TIME IT
SHALL BE LIGHT.”

T.H.



A new suggestion regarding
the Creation story.



In resuming the study of the Creation (Gen. 1; 1-31, 2; 1-3), there will be no discussion as to whether God is the First Great Cause of all Creation, nor whether He is the primal fount, “out of” which all things have come. That is accepted and taken for granted before the further consideration begins.

Nor will any suggestion be made for or against any scientific claim that the earth is many thousands or millions of years old. Nor will the suggestion that the earth was made from matter thrown off by the sun, be either controverted or approved. Nor will the related question as to whether the moon was thrown off from the earth be either approved or disapproved. None of these questions is even hinted at in this creation account, and to introduce them for discussion in connection with this story only confuses the simple clear-cut outlines of the record, and makes the essential facts harder to understand.

The first point to be introduced is the obvious fact that God was there—existent—before creation began. How long He had been there does not matter. Very certainly, the Creator preceded Creation.

The next point is, that the primal material of which the heavens and earth were made was also there. How it had come to be there, or how long it had taken to come to be there is of no relevance at all to our study.

Our resumed study begins by saying that God the Creator was there, and that the primal elements of creative matter were also there, and that the theme of this story is the ordering and shaping of those elements in such wise that they would become a suitable habitation for man and beast, for bird, fish and reptile.

This simple story will be treated as a complete story in itself, without reference to any later or variant account as to who made everything that was made. This story has its own viewpoint of creation, and will tell its own tale convincingly if other Scripture references are not obtruded into it. The whole story lies between Gen. 1; 1 and 2; 3—and is complete in itself without any addition from any other

source, Scriptural or otherwise.

Moreover, it is essential to a proper understanding of the story to keep the personality references to God exactly as they are stated. To run the name and personality of the Logos into it will spoil the thread of the story. It is the same God all through the narrative, who, after accomplishing six days' creative work enters into His rest on the seventh. He who thus enters into rest is the God of the whole story. It is He of whom it is written throughout, “And God said,” “And God made,” “And God created,” “And God saw,” “And God blessed.” There is no other active participant in the work.

Before proceeding with the survey of these days' work in detail, there are several points in the text which call for prior consideration. For instance, seeing that the story shows God to be alone throughout the whole creative period, why is it necessary for God to speak, and decree what each day's work shall be. If God speaks and the same God creates, why did He not proceed to create without saying one single word? Could He not have begun each new stage of the work without uttering any statement at all? Is it not the case that the spoken words were uttered for some other person's benefit—so that the onlooker, watching the continuously moving picture-scene, would understand and comprehend the full scope of each day's activities, and realise that God was working to a plan. He would then see that the results at each day's end were in full accord with the pre-arranged plan, announced when the day began, and had not come about by chance. He would then realise that God was a purposive, designing Creator, knowing the end from the beginning, and not an opportunist, snatching at any situation, exploiting without controlling it. Again, another reason why God spake was to give names to some of the things He made, so that the onlooker could apply its own name to each created thing.

Another point which is very noticeable throughout the whole series of day-pictures was the orderly and continuous progression

from day to day and stage to stage. Progress once made was never lost. Each day carried the development a stage further onward and upward; the creations of each day being designed to meet the needs of the next or a subsequent day. There was no indication of recession or retrogression anywhere. What was formed each day was retained on the next, and served as foundation for construction, or as provender for food in the next stage or subsequent stages of the series. The light of the first day remained till it was augmented and increased in the fourth. The firmament of the second continued to be, so that when the birds came it was there for the service in flight. The green vegetation of the third day had not disappeared when the animals came, but was ready as food for them when they were brought on the scene. Continuous progression and orderly development is an obvious principle in operation all through the series of days from beginning to end.

Yet, in spite of that obvious fact, some change and alteration spread over the scene from time to time. "Evening" and "Morning" alternated six times—each period called a day commencing with an evening and ending with a morning. No explanation is given by God concerning this phenomenon, nor about the terms used to describe it, hence it must be taken that these terms are the onlooker's own way of defining and describing what took place at the time. They are human terms used to describe a condition where darkness comes and goes, increasing and decreasing in alternation; or, from the other point of view, it denotes a condition brought about by the waxing and waning of light. Having no other guidance in defining the terms than their established meaning among men, we have to take them as indicating periods and conditions of alternate darkness and light, yet never so dark at any time as the primeval darkness of the first day.

Thus, while the trend of development was always progressively onward and upward, seasons of waxing and waning light spread over the scene, the waning always beginning and the waxing closing each new day.

But there were other indications also which differentiated the beginnings and endings of each day. At the beginning of each new day the Voice of God was heard outlining the nature and scope of the specific work for that day. At the closing of the day the satisfaction of God was seen by the beholder to show in

His face and general manner, when He "saw that it was good."

Now, inasmuch as the decree of God came at the beginning of each new day (before its activities began), the opening stages of each day's work coincided exactly with the "evening" phase, and reached its "good" completeness with the "morning" phase. "Evening" thus seems to be synonymous with immature initiatory beginnings, and "morning" with completed developments or growth. "Evening" (from the second day to the sixth) implies new beginnings, supplementary and additional to what had been produced before. "Morning" implies that the additional thing has now become complete.

The "evening" decree reveals quantities as small and number as few. A little light early in day one, became more light at its close. A "few" creeping things, early in day five, multiplied fruitfully to "many" before that day was done.

"Evening" thus agrees with "little" or "few," "morning" with "much" or "many," increase by growth or multiplication taking place in the time between. Of living things God "created" by direct creation only "few"—increase thereafter came by natural means. "Kinds" and "species" were inaugurated by the direct creation of a "few," increase of each "kind" or "species" came by self-propagating processes. As it was with animals, so it was with man.

With each morning phase occurs the phrase "and it was so." In five of the six days' activities this is the recorded climax to the day's proceedings. It indicates that development processes have reached the stage envisaged and embodied in the day's decree. It means that where multiplication had to follow the direct creation of the few, multiplication has taken place, and the number has become large. This is a particularly important point to note, for in its application to the sixth day's activities it indicates that multiplication of both man and beast had to take place, before it could truly be said "it was so." It had not become "so" according to the Divine decree, when the first male and female of either man or beast came forth from the hand of God. It is not true to say that the direct creation of the first man or beast made it "so." The direct creation consisted of only the evening "few." Fruitful multiplication was needed to make it up to the morning "many," and only the morning "many" was "so" according to the

decree. And until the morning "many" of day six has been produced, **the sixth day cannot have reached its close.**

Moreover, it requires that "every beast of the earth" and "every fowl of the air" and "everything that creepeth upon the earth" shall be taking the "herb bearing seed" and "the fruit of every tree" for their meat, before it can be said "and it was so." The present reign of carnivorous feeding is not in accord with this decree.

That better condition belongs to a stage beyond this present reign of sin and death, when man will have learned to subdue his own appetite, and to bring the feeding instincts also of beasts and birds (of every kind) into subjection to his sway. Man's dominion over the whole creation must be an established fact before it can be said of it "and it was so." Only then will "day-six" results be in accord with God's decree. Only then can God say of this whole wide heaven and earth that it is "very good." Man to-day is not "made," but only in the "making." In the Hebrew text the decree runs "Let us be 'making' man in our own image," and the "making" process is still under way. In the record (Gen. 1; 26-28) there is no mention of sin, nor of redemption, nor yet of restitution. Man's life on the earth began in the "evening" phase, when darkness covered the scene, and he is living in the darkness still. As with animals, so with men, God created the first members by direct creation, and then gave command for increase to come by multiplication and fruitfulness, till there has been enough brought forth to "plenish" the earth.

Adam's fall into sin, and his redemption.

reaching full restoration at last, is part of the development processes. He is "learning" by slow processes how to live to be a "man." To-day he is a brute, the most lustful and destructive of the brutes, but here and there the up-grade development goes on. His contact with sin and death, his redemption by Christ Jesus, and his subsequent deliverance is a secret work, not recorded in outline here, but will be seen, some better day, to have been a part of the development (or "making") of man. The "brooding" of the Spirit of God is an essential in the "making" processes, but thus far its "brooding" has been restricted to only few of the earth's increasing numbers. But, in due time, the "brooding" will become universal and world-wide, and the progress will proceed apace. The "making" of the man will then become apparent everywhere.

This present reign of sin and death is hidden away in the shadows of "day-six," and is thus not in full view to the beholder of these picture-scenes. Darkness still overspreads the scene, but the decree of God has gone forth: "Let us be making man," and, sure as earth and heaven, and sun and moon, have come to be by the same God's decree, so surely will "man," the king of all the earth also come to be. One day the "making" will be complete, and man will be a pleasing thing in the sight of God. God will say of man and his earthly home, "it is **very good.**" "Very good" at last supersedes each former day's "good," for creation is now complete, and the creative work is done.

Then God can "rest," and find pleasure in all that has been done.

"And the prisoners heard them"

Acts
19: 26

A stirring episode in the lives of Paul and Silas

T.H. 

What an artlessly simple statement Luke makes in these few words, and yet how full of significance. Of course, all the prisoners would know what had happened earlier in the day, when the two special prisoners in the inner ward had been brought into custody. Every one of them would know that when the Roman lieutenants had done their work the two

prisoners' backs would be a complete mass of bleeding wounds and discoloured bruises. And if any articulate sounds did pass the sufferers' lips, they would expect only groans and curses. Most men the world over, when every movement caused pain, would give vent to their resentment with such groans, even if it did not constrain them to call down imprecations of

woe upon their torturers. And then, added to the physical injuries, and swollen sores, they were thrust into the stocks, so that little or no movement of the extremities was possible to them.

Thus, cramp and rigidity of muscles would supervene, and make a bad condition worse, and if the stocks confined the upper limbs as well as the legs—even if not also the neck—unnatural posture would make the body ache from head to toe, without any slightest means of alleviating the distress. One can well imagine them to be in pain within and without, and from end to end of their tortured frame. Even if (as seems probable from the text), only their feet were fast, and hands and necks were somewhat free, the actual degree of free movement would be small. A special charge concerning the prisoners had been made by the magistrates, and in view of that the jailor would not be over-lenient to them, so that though only their feet were in the stocks, it is very probable their hands were in chains.

At the very best, their position was an undesirable as it could well be. Added to this physical distress would be the dankness and the darkness of their cell. Scarce a breath of air and not one single ray of light would tend to lighten the damp musty odour of the cell. Such places were often vermin-infected, even if not tainted with pestilential stench. When the two prisoners' position is summarised thus, it would seem that this wicked old earth had only one penalty more severe it could inflict. Short of depriving them of life, the passions and inhumanity of man had heaped upon them an avalanche of sorrows and woes. To the spite of foes had been added the injury of an unjust trial, against which most men would have severely chafed. Thus, to the physical distress must be added the possible sufferings of the mind.

What a conquest of mind over matter, of the spirit over the body, of faith over actual reality occurred in that inner prison cell that night! Like others of the same little band, they counted it a privilege to suffer for the Name of the Lord, for they knew that in this suffering they were "filling up the measure of suffering allotted to the Christ of God. As every cup may be filled by adding drop to drop, so Christ's Cup" will be filled by every spasm of anguish and suffering nobly borne for His sake. There is indeed the "filling" of a cup, as there is also the "drinking" of a

cup; and in the Way of God they who drink from the one, contribute a little quota to the filling of the other.

Hence, there was no room for vain regrets or groans or maledictions in that little cell. "Paul and Silas prayed," then, when the voice of prayer came to an end, the accents of praise to God swept through the confines of the cell, and out into the larger outer ward. "And the prisoners heard them." What would they think of such men? Perhaps first feelings would be of annoyance if the singing had roused them from their slumbers, but soon they had reason enough to listen and hear.

The prison itself began to shake; the doors were flung widely ajar, and even their own chains fell off! What a night that was, as Heaven answered both prayer and praise! The fortitude of two stout hearts, rising up above dismal circumstance set in motion the wheels of Providence, and great things ensued.

From this episode sprang the nucleus of the Philippian Church — perhaps the dearest church of all to one of our prisoners in the stocks! Truly it was a mysterious way in which Divine Providence that night performed its wonderful work. It planted its footsteps in the quaking earth, and rode upon the repentant attitudes of men, because two valiant followers of the Lamb had risen up superior to their woeful circumstances.

What lesson can we learn from this episode?

First, let us be reminded that the God of Paul and Silas is our God too. He knew full well, even though midnight darkness lay around, where His faithful children were confined. No darkness could hide them from His sight. In our nights of sorrow or alarm, that is a great thought to take to heart. No curtain of night can intrude and hide God's child from God's watchful eye. The darkness is as the light to Him, and cannot intercept His view of those on whom He has set His Love.

Then let us note that prayer is better than recrimination, even at the midnight hour. Paul and Silas might have talked only of their bleeding backs and aching limbs, and have spent their time wondering how long they might have to endure their lot; or they could have allowed fear to chill their hearts about future prospects.

When terror stalks the night sky or dangers multiply, it would be far more to the glory of God if the neighbours hear of our peace of heart and our trust in God, than if we moan

and grumble and lament. The difference between the two sets of prisoners that night lay in this: Paul and Silas knew the way of God, the others did not!

That knowledge was a strong controlling power which conquered human fear and fancy, and helped to transmute suffering into Christ-like fortitude. It helped the followers of the Lord to take the episode in the curriculum of the school of Christ, and to make the members of the body the servant (or slave) of the new mind. This is the fibre martyrs are made of, when it has been sublimated by fire and ordeal. And it is in the little hole-in-the-corner

episodes of life where it is done—in the darkness of our prison cells.

The best commentary upon the power of God in the heart is a calm, cool deportment in face of danger, which rises from the assurance that God is our Father, and that we are His children, and that we are being kept in the hollow of His hand. We may not all be able to sing praises in the dead of night, but we can all pray, and let the knowledge thus go forth that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him. Other prisoners will then also hear.

THE STONES CRY OUT.

Our readers are familiar with the account, in "The New Creation," of the discovery of a frozen mammoth in north-eastern Siberia in 1901, and the testimony of Prof. Vail that this mammoth was one of many overwhelmed at the time of the Flood. This discovery was one of many converging lines of evidence which led Bro. Russell to expound the theory of Prof. Vail as to the probable cause of the Flood. Assuming these deductions to be correct, a very interesting confirmation comes to light.

The leader of the expedition, Dr. Herz, has been dead for many years, but his colleague in the work of excavation, Prof. Pflizenmayer, published a full account of the expedition soon after the last war. This work was translated into English and published in 1939, and gives a mass of accurate detail not accessible to Bro. Russell at the time of writing "The New Creation."

Prof. Pflizenmayer, describing the actual work, says that the mammoth's mouth was found to contain partly chewed food, gathered immediately prior to its sudden end. This food consisted of leaves and grasses, the latter being in seed, in a stage which indicated that **"the mammoth came to his miserable end in the autumn."**

And it was in the autumn that the Word declared the Flood came upon the earth. Gen. 6; 11 gives the seventeenth day of the second month as the day that the fountains of the great deep were broken up. There is abundant evidence that the ancient year began in October, and the commencement of the Flood was therefore in the middle of November.

So a few insignificant grass seeds, preserved for nearly five thousand years in the mouth of a dead monster buried under sixty feet of soil and ice, have come to light in this our day to give testimony to the Word of God.

A BETTER USE FOR BOMBERS.

Mauna Loa, in Hawaii, is the world's largest volcano. Bombing planes have been used, for the second time in seven years to bomb the vicinity and break up the ground so that lava streams, threatening the destruction of a nearby town, were diverted and stopped. Here is a use for the bombing plane which all Christians will heartily endorse—a beating of the sword into the plowshare in literal truth. Although the world is as yet unconscious of the fact, we know that the last great onslaught upon the citadel of God's holiness at the end of this Age is to be made by an assembly

of great nations well armed with all the implements of modern warfare, and that in a totally inexplicable manner all their armaments will prove useless in face of the powers of heaven which will come into action for the first time in modern history. There will be a great many bombers and quantities of high explosive thrown spare after that great day is over and wars have been made to cease to the ends of the earth. Is it possible that they will be diverted to useful purposes as at Mauna Loa, assisting in making the earth a safe and fitting home for the restored human race?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANONYMOUS.

We have to acknowledge with sincere appreciation the receipt during January of anonymous donations of 11/- and £1 respectively.

THE MEMORIAL.

The appropriate date for the celebration of the Memorial of our Lord's death is, this year, Sunday, April 18th, after 6.0 p.m. May the rich blessing of our Heavenly Father be upon all who assemble at this season of the year to witness, in solemn sacrament, the reality of their pledge to be "buried with Him by baptism into His death" that they might also rise to walk in newness of life. Let those who assemble together remember also the isolated ones, the ones and twos whom considerations of age and distance preclude from gathering with their brethren of like faith. Let prayer be made that these also, in their homes, may on that evening share in the communion of saints, in spirit and alone with their Lord. So let us make this observance a pledge of renewal of our Fellowship and a sign to us that

Brother clasps the hand of brother,
Stepping fearless through the night."

MEMORIAL EMBLEMS.

It has been our custom for many years to send the emblems to the isolated ones who must perforce observe the Memorial by themselves. At the moment it seems that there may be some difficulty in obtaining the requisite supplies, and therefore we cannot promise that the privilege will be ours this year. An announcement will be made in the April Monthly, but this intimation is given to enable the friends to make their own arrangements if they can.

In any case we would like to remind the friends that facility is intended only for the isolated ones and twos, and that we cannot undertake to supply groups of six or more; in such cases it is thought that the number participating justifies the effort to obtain supplies being made locally. Please send your requests EARLY.

BRAILLE LIBRARY

The extension of public library facilities for the blind has so lessened the call for our Braille Library that it has been virtually out of use for some years. We are advised by blind readers that the books are so worn as to be scarcely readable, and this library is therefore to be considered closed. We have, however, one copy of "The New Creation" in Braille, quite new, and this is available on loan at any time, upon application to the office. The book is in several parts, and one part will be sent at a time until the reader has finished the book.

BACK NUMBERS OF "HERALD" & "DAWN"

We have a quantity of back issues of 'Herald' & 'Dawn' on hand, and will be glad to send parcels of assorted copies on payment of postage only. This offer may be of interest to brethren who like to hand these periodicals to neighbours and friends. Send 1/1 for parcel of 50 copies.

THE BOOKROOM

A consignment of books has arrived from our Australian brethren, the Berean Bible Institute, and we now have the following in stock:

- "Foregleams of the Golden Age," price 3/6 post free.
- "The Son of the Highest," the much-appreciated children's "Truth" story book, price 4/- post free.

The price of "The Plan of God in Brief" has been raised to 7d. as from this month.

We are very sorry for the continued delay in production of the booklet, "Jacob's Trouble," due to causes quite outside our own control. A large number of orders have already been received and have been carefully booked, and the booklets will be sent so soon as they have been printed.

"A little life of Jesus" is at present out of stock but publishers are shortly producing a new edition and orders can then be filled.

It is advisable for friends to consult the latest issue of the B.S.M. when about to order books, to ensure that the ones required are still available. If a star appears against the title in the price list, instead of the price, the book is temporarily out of stock but further supplies are expected in reasonable time, and orders will be booked for despatch as soon as available. If the desired book has been deleted from the price list altogether it is unlikely that further supplies will be obtainable and orders will not be accepted.

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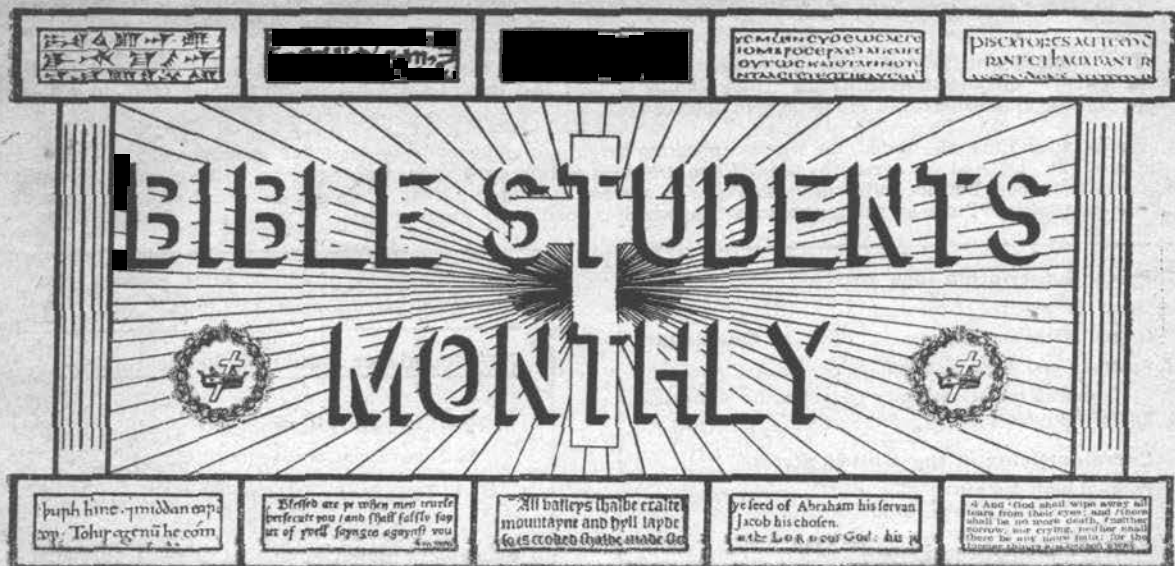
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APRIL, 1943

Fourpence

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TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH—

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come to "all people," and they find access to Him.

—1. Cor. 3; 16, 17. Eph. 2; 20-22. Gen. 28; 14. Gal. 3; 29.

That meantime the chiselling, shaping and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these "living stones," elect and precious, shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with His glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.

—Rev. 15; 5-8.

That the basis of hope, for the Church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."

Heb. 2; 9. Jno. 1; 9. 1 Tim. 2; 5-6.

That the hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see Him as He is," "be partaker of the Divine nature," and share His glory as His joint-heir.

—1. Jno. 3; 2. Jno. 17; 24. Rom. 8; 17. 2 Pet. 1; 4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be "kings and priests" in the next Age.

Eph. 4; 12. Matt. 24; 14. Rev. 1; 6; 20; 6.

That the hope of the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and His glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.

Acts 3; 19-23. Isa. 35.

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One with Christ and one with each other



V.R.C.

"The Unity of the
Spirit in the bonds
of peace."



"That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are One: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in One; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.

Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world" (Jno. 17:21-24).

No doubt it was with rather mixed feelings, dear brother or sister, that you surveyed the world just prior to consecration, counting the cost. Here and there were peaceful, easy-flowing, interesting little streams of life; perhaps yonder you could see a strongly moving river inviting you to plunge in and be taken up with its erratic, eddying progress. But you loved your Lord, because He first loved you, and you sought unity with Him in word, deed and character, and as you progressed up to higher planes you could see that the little stream led to the strong river, which relentlessly, following out a natural law, flowed down to the sea; a sea in which tempests were imminent; a sea which is now a thunder-riven, raging maelstrom.

We are frequently distressed by the fact that, although not of the world, we are, however, still very much in it, the natural man being what it is; and so we look up with great encouragement as experiences of to-day tend to make us feel more and more our separateness from the world. At first our allegiance to Christ, and the pursuing of His principles of loving self-sacrifice only affected our home and social life; now it is affecting our civil and business life, insofar that in many cases we must choose to plough a comparatively lonely furrow rather than follow the line of least resistance with the crowd. This is separating . . . separating . . . separating . . . and a good good thing too. How much more eagerly we

turn to the Lord in prayer; how much tighter we grasp His outstretched hand; how much more we understand and reciprocate the warmth of the brethren's love. And does not the Heavenly Father rejoice with us as He sees us easing away from the earthy materialism around us?

What awe-inspiring wonder there is in our calling! What a high, what a glorious, lofty calling is ours!

So, as we separate from the things that do not matter, we find a wholesome, satisfying peace in our unity with each other, and with Jesus. As we, as a Church, gravitate to Him as our Head, let us do what we can to draw the bonds of love a little closer round each other. The Apostle Paul, that apt channel of the Holy Spirit, teaches us on this point in Ephesians 4:

"I . . . beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all. . . . And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity . . . speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

It is not difficult to walk with all lowliness and meekness when we consider the vocation wherewith we are called. The gentle, patient, forbearing brother or sister is an invaluable asset in the preservation of unity amongst each other. "Forbearing one another in love;

endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Just as Jesus did. How our thoughts rise in leaps and bounds as we remember His forbearance in love. His great, earnest desire for us to be one with Him, and the bond of perfect peace which He left us as a legacy.

It is clear from Paul's words that our unity does not find its root in form, activity, or even thought. Our unity is in body (the Church), Spirit, hope, in our Lord, our faith and our baptism, and in the one omnipotent Father, Jehovah God. In fact, the Apostle would seem to show us that our unity as a Church to some extent depends upon each individual fitting in to that part of the Lord's service for which he is most suited. "He gave some, apostles . . ." etc. Let us be frank with ourselves. Am I trying to do too much in activities for which I am not suited? What talents have I? Are any being used in worldly affairs which could be turned to the perfecting of the saints? Are we, as Ecclesias, using our Elders and Deacons to the best advantage? It is an important matter; it is for the edifying of the body of Christ. We must think very prayerfully and carefully along lines of the Holy Spirit's guidance before we act in such holy service. A sincere prayer for a weak brother is more effective

than trying to work out a line of procedure by natural means. Our consecrated time is valuable.

The inspired words of the beloved Apostle teach us to forbear in love, speak the truth in love, unto the edifying of the body in love. He would have us see that these are all aspects incidental to our "unfeigned love" one to another; and we know in practice that our mutual love is our unity. Our Lord's great Love for us, and our devoted love for Him makes our unity, and, as Paul points out in another epistle, what can separate us?

Whilst at a Convention once, I heard the Chairman use the expression, "Let us unite in prayer." I was profoundly moved as about a hundred of us quietly and simply united in the one desire to commune with the Father. It meant that all those sincere minds were concentrated on the one high purpose, and coming as it were, from a world where man's hand was turned against his neighbour, the thought was impressively beautiful. We were children together, at home with each other, speaking reverently to our Father, and the Spirit of Peace and Love prevailed.

This much we gain this side of the veil.
What of the other?



A SONG OF VICTORY

E.W.W. & C.T.W.



A meditation on
the 22nd Psalm.

We read that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. They were permitted to pass through certain experiences and then to write of them, and so leave on record certain features to attend another set of circumstances which God would provide at some future date. Thus, the experiences they went through became prophetic pictures of the experiences of someone else. Often they picture those of Jesus, and so become Messianic prophecies. Sometimes they prefigure and illustrate the sufferings of the larger Christ—Head and Body—or perhaps to some extent the terrible experiences that the Jewish nation has passed through during the centuries. It is not always easy to make a proper distinction. The Ethiopian eunuch who was reading Isa. 53 asked in perplexity: "Of whom writeth the prophet this, of himself or of some other man?" It was explained to him by Philip that

the prophet was describing the sufferings of the One who had recently been put to death at Jerusalem. The Jews, however, to this day suppose that Isa. 53 has reference to their own terrible history as a nation.

It is probable that the eunuch would likewise have been perplexed respecting the application of Psalm 22; was the writer describing his own experiences, or did he speak of another? The Psalm is described as a Psalm of David. Whether that be so or not, it seems quite probable that the writer began to write about himself. Before he has got very far the Holy Spirit comes upon him, and he commences describing, with a wealth of detail, circumstances which could not possibly have happened to himself. With a poet's imagination he writes of One who suffers intense agony of mind and body. With the skill of an artist he portrays a very vivid drama which grows

more intense every moment, until it mounts to a climax and then abruptly terminates. After a pause the curtain is raised again, and a happier scene is presented. The Victim has become the Hero; the Suppliant Sufferer has given place to the Joyous Victor.

It seems quite evident that the Sufferer in the Psalm is an individual and not a nation; for verse 14 refers to His heart, bones and body, verse 15 to His tongue and jaws, verse 16 to hands and feet, and verse 18 to clothing. In verses 9 and 10 He looks back to childhood and forward to death in verse 15. His situation is described with minuteness; He is exposed to the public view (verse 7), apparently He is fixed to one spot, for His enemies gather around Him (verse 12), He is deprived of His clothing, for He can count His bones (verse 17), He sees His garments distributed (verse 18), and He has been subjected to violence, for His feet and hands have been bored through (verse 16). Inasmuch as Rotherham translates verse 17, "they look for and behold me," it may well be that either He has companions in suffering from whom it would seem to the on-lookers desirable to distinguish Him, or else that darkness has gathered and it is difficult to discern Him. He is either absolutely friendless, or His friends are so few and feeble that they do not count, hence His repeated cries for Divine pity and succour (verse 11). Nevertheless, verse 22 shows that He has friends in the background, amounting to a large assembly, but they do not come into view till the sufferings are ended. His enemies are many; mankind in general reproach Him, His own people despise Him, beholders deride (verses 6, 7 and 8). Meanwhile, His sufferings are intense, His bones are dislocated, His mouth is parched, His strength flows away like water, and physical courage fails like wax (verses 14 and 15). He struggles to maintain faith in God, who seems to Him to be far away and slow to rescue. Crying to Him day and night brings no answer—the delay to help is all very mysterious. The fathers had trusted and been delivered in their adversities, He had trusted and not been delivered; indeed, verse 11 implies almost that He had been handed over to His enemies by permission of God. The sufferings grow in intensity, and His appeals for Divine aid are louder (verses 19 and 20), but the face of God seems turned away, and in anguish He cries, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (verse 1). His heart is bursting. He had never anticipated

such intense mental suffering as that which these words imply. There is a last cry (verse 21): "Save me from the lion's mouth"—then silence reigns. . . .

There is a sudden calm; all at once the strain of sorrow ceases with the "Yea" of verse 21 . . . "Thou hast delivered Me." There is no recurrence of pain, no further trace of a single sob, the voice is hushed in death, but, marvel of marvels, suddenly the voice is heard again and on a note of praise. It is the same voice—the same metre—the same direct address to God; despair has given place to praise, keenest suffering has given way to ecstatic joy, all is changed! Deliverance has come! So great is His gratitude that He must shout His deliverance abroad (verses 21 and 22). His own deliverance is a matter of the deepest interest to the world at large. He calls upon Jew and Gentile to praise Jehovah, "For He hath not despised nor abhorred the humbling of the patient One, neither hath He hid His face from Him, but when He cried for help unto Him He heard. Of Thee is My praise in the great convocation, My vows will I pay before them who revere Him" (verses 24 and 25, Rotherham).

As we go through this Psalm there is in our minds one name only: JESUS. Surely, it is the crucifixion of our Saviour which is here portrayed with such a depth of feeling and wealth of pathos. It could not be anyone else. We seem to hear the appealing cry: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow, which is done unto Me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted Me in the day of His fierce anger" (Lam. 1: 12). We cannot pass by, we are arrested and gaze at that sublime exhibition of sacrifice and suffering, we marvel and silently meditate upon the Mystery of Divine Love. It is much to us—nay, it is EVERYTHING to us.

Did the Father hear when Jesus cried unto Him? Yes, He heard, and showed that He heard by mercifully cutting short these sufferings and eventually raising Jesus again from the grave, restoring Him to life—an immortal glorious being nevermore to be tried and tested by pain and suffering. Because of His trust in God, He came forth an overcomer, a hero—a conqueror.

The lesson is an inspiring one. Often God does not answer prayer for deliverance exactly the way we expect; we have to descend into the very depths first before He puts forth His

power to rescue, and then aid comes in an unforeseen manner. His ways are manifold, wise and loving and just, as He rescued our Lord and Saviour from the power of death, so He can and will rescue all who put their confidence in Him. "For He hath not despised nor abhorred the humbling of the Patient One, neither hath He hid His face from Him, but when He cried for help unto Him He heard."

What a very fitting sequel the last few verses present. Only through the Redeemer's death—the one and only great sacrifice for sin, can mankind obtain life. There is no salvation

except through Jesus, and we have the assurance that when the knowledge of God's way of salvation is known in all the earth, then all the ends of the world will turn unto the Lord. All shall worship before Him and recognise that apart from Jesus none can keep alive his own soul. Through all the coming ages the story of this great sacrifice will be told, and the exulting shout of praise to God will pass from mouth to mouth: "He hath done it, He hath done it!" Truly, it will then be fulfilled that Jesus shall "see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied."



"IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME."

Thoughts on the First Memorial + — T.H. — +



How truly wonderful it is to be able to hold things in remembrance, and to live again to-day with the events of yesterday, partaking once more of the thrills or pathos of that hour which gave those memories birth. All memories do not afford pleasure, for there are some things in every life which we would rather forget. That fall under temptation; that unkind or bitter word; that cold and icy look! How we would prefer to forget it and tear it from memory's page! But that side of memory's store notwithstanding, it is truly a most wonderful boon to be able to call forth from the depths of memory's chambers those episodes of life which reclothe themselves in joy and delight, whensoever time and circumstance carry us back on wings of good desire to the sights and scenes of yesterday.

Do we ever pause to think what life would be without remembrances? How different it would be if each day's experiences were faded or wiped out with every setting sun, and there were no impressions to carry forward to another day. Imagine how barren the daily round would be if there were nothing gained, nothing learned, nothing achieved, nothing experienced save the drab monotony of existence at the low level of a limpet or an oyster! No love as parents or offspring; no appreciation of home or country; no regard for truth or righteousness; no delight of colour or harmony—none of these things to call to mind, to think upon, or to link us with the past.

The chambers of remembrance are the store-

houses of all the real riches of life, the treasury of sweet thoughts, ennobling influences, and inspiring motives, precious far beyond gold and rubies or wide verdant acres, for thereby we are linked with our God, and with Jesus, home, and loved ones, and everything that is worth while.

It is greatly desirable to remember intensively, notwithstanding that the ability to remember intensively is not a self-created acquisition. Some people are blessed with good memories, or, shall we say, with good capacity for remembering. They do not have to develop remembrance by constant repetition of things or facts, nor by any patent rule-of-thumb methods.

Quality and intensity depends primarily upon the natural endowment bestowed by heredity or parentage—that is, upon the density and receptivity of the impression-cells of the brain with which we are born into this world of sensation and experience. Something, too, depends upon the general state of health—a tired, run-down brain being unable to receive or register adequately the sense-perceptions from external sources. The first of these situations cannot be remedied, if deficient or lacking. Something may be done to correct the second and thus make the best use of nature's equipment.

There is one factor that compensates, no matter whether we be well- or ill-equipped by natural aptitude. That factor is "interest." Remembrance depends more upon interest

than any other single factor in life. When the whole being—heart, mind and soul—is caught up by the written or spoken word so that every pulse and desire is set throbbing and vibrating with warm sympathy and response, the impressions then received register themselves more sharply and deeply on the brain, and, thereafter, in proportion to the depth of the registration, so will be the ability to remember and recall at will. Who has not seen and felt the magnetising effect of some wholly-engrossed gifted tongue as the spoken message draws the listener from his comfortable relaxed position till he is sitting forward, eyes and ears and body alert to catch every word, and note unconsciously every ardent expression in the messenger's attitude to his theme. These are the occasions which trace themselves deep on memory's tablets.

What supremely serious things affected the disciples on that tragic night in the upper room to enable them to "remember" their Lord and Master! Was ever such an occasion as this? Was ever such a speaker as this? Did ever so much depend upon the faithfulness of one Sufferer? What solemn words were spoken! What serious things were done! What impressive eyes looked out upon the little band! Think what that little gathering meant. The established religious usages of sixteen centuries were coming to an end, and were to be memorialised for the very last time. They were to be replaced and superseded by the first observance of a new and better memorial arising from the "better" features of God's great plan. For those few pious souls which God had given into Jesus' keeping the old order was beginning to pass away, and a new order to come in.

This night, as throughout the span of one whole Divinely-appointed Age of time, the call to remembrance had carried back the minds of godly men to that dread night in Egypt's oppressive land when the sword of God flashed through palace and hut, leaving its trail of death behind. Thirty to forty generations had lived and died with that dread memory behind them, but none had dared to interfere or change the order which Moses had caused to be established there. So far as all outside that little room were aware, thirty or forty, or even hundreds more might be expected to pass away, and all may come and go while still calling to remembrance that same dark tragic night in Pharaoh's land. The constitution founded by God, under Moses, in Jewish

belief was to be eternal. Established upon the Law of God, they could not rise to the thought that its authority could ever pass away; and they were sure that even the coming of their Messiah would only settle it upon an even surer foundation.

The little band of disciples who had come aside with Jesus into this little room had been cradled and reared to manhood in that belief, and even their learning at Jesus' feet had not eradicated it from their minds.

Now they had come to the conjunction of the Ages, and this little room was to be the sanctum of one of the greatest changes the world was ever to know.

Already they had come to this quiet room with strange thoughts and memories rushing through their minds. On the way up to Jerusalem they had heard Jesus dwell repeatedly upon His coming death, and though they had not comprehended fully what He meant, still they had heard His words. He also had invited them to share with Him His Cross, His Cup and His Baptism. They had been with their Master when the hot words of righteous reproof had been administered to self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees—words such as Jesus had never used before. They had seen Him drive money-changers and merchants from the Temple Courts, what time He charged them with sacrilege in the House of God. They had heard Him say that that Holy House was to be henceforth left to them desolate—the Holy House wherein God had placed the only earthly memorial of His Holier Name, and from which alone in all the whole wide world, He had been pleased to accept the Incense of worship! Now it was to be left desolate.

Not comprehending the deadly seriousness of what He said, they called His attention to the stately magnificence of its stones, only to be told that a day was approaching when one stone should not be left upon another stone, so utter and complete would its desolation become. Stunned and amazed by their usually compassionate Master's words, some of them broke into His sad reverie as He sat looking from Olivet over the doomed city, to enquire more particularly what His solemn words might mean. Responding to their solicitude, He gathered together the testimony of their holy books, and showed them what God had spoken about the overthrow of Jerusalem. They heard Him speak of wars and rumours of war, of famine, pestilence, and persecution. He told of an abomination that would stand

in the Holy Place, and of a period of tribulation such as had not been since man lived on the earth. He likened the overthrow to the catastrophe of Noah's day, and to Sodom's fate, and dated it by telling them that that generation would not pass away till all was fulfilled.

What a strange miscellany of sights and sounds the recent days had brought into their lives, and into this night, and into this room! Away from the madding crowd in the quiet seclusion of this upper room Jesus brought His little flock to keep first the memorial of Egypt's tragic night and then to institute an ordinance to be remembered in coming days. A solemn seriousness rested on the Master throughout the night, as He spake quietly and slowly of what was on His heart. Reverently He led their memories in the accustomed way, and then, taking a portion of the remaining bread, He invoked Heaven's blessing thereupon, and passed the bread to them, saying, "This is MY body, take it and eat it." Then He took a cup, and, blessing it, said, "This is MY blood of the covenant, take it and drink it." Then they heard Him pray—a prayer never yet heard by mortal ears!

How reverently and sacredly impressive this quiet ceremony would be! Those gravely searching eyes; that quietly arresting voice; and the strange newness of what He did! Could they ever forget that little room? Then those words: "This do . . . in remembrance of Me." Throughout the days and years that followed they did remember Him. He was to them the Lamb of God; the Prince of Life; the Lord and Master of their lives. They counted not their lives dear unto them so they might lay them down in His service!

FAITHFUL IN LIFE

Two years ago there died A. C. Haddon, known to his scientific colleagues as the "Head Hunter" because of his scientific researches in the Torres Straits (north of Australia). One of his native workers in that primitive part of the world, a Christian, described him as being a man "close up alongside God." A simple testimony, but how eloquent! What a witness to the cause of Christ must have been given by this man, who, in the midst of his researches in things to do with the "wisdom of this world" so impressed the simple mind of a Christian native that he came to be re-

garded as a man "close up alongside God"? And what of these days, and of ourselves in this remembrancing? Only in spirit can we share that experience in the upper room, but it is still true that according to the "interest" that grips our hearts, so will the measure of our "remembrancing" be.

These many years we have come apart into our own upper rooms, and at the appointed time have taken the emblems of His broken body and spilt blood, and "remembered" Him! We have shown to each other our "interest" in "the Lord's death." We have accepted the benefit to ourselves of His life and death, and have covenanted also to become "dead with Him." Again, the appointed hour draws near—what will it mean to us? Again, a world-order is tottering to its doom. Can we go forward into the unknown future with nothing more than Him? Is He of such "interest" to our hearts that we would willingly surrender all for Him? Is there one thing else that can share our heart's "interest" with Him? Does the torch of remembrance burn fiercely in us for Him alone? If so, then the measure of our "interest" will reveal how much we shall desire to remember Him! For what have we to remember Him? Is it not for everything that is worth-while in life? For our redemption and reconciliation for our safe-keeping day by day; for our comfort and consolation in tribulation; for the hope of attaining to a share in an inheritance in joint-heirship with Him; and for the possibility that we may be found acceptable to enjoy His eternal friendship and companionship! Is there not here sufficient cause to awake the interest of the deepest springs of our life, and lead us to remember Him for the things of yesterday, to-day, to-morrow, and for evermore?

garded as a man "close up alongside God"? The fruits of Haddon's work are to be seen to-day in our museums, in the shape of skulls and other relics. Those fruits of his life's labours are as dust, doomed to perish; but there is also surely something of more enduring value which, in order that it may bring forth more fruit, in due time, has been preserved "close up alongside God."

Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence from the pride of man; Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.—Psalm 31:20.

THE QUIET TIME

 C.T.W.

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

THE SUNSHINE OF GOD'S LOVE

How apt is the simile. Without the sunlight no living organism could exist, and this earth would be barren and unfruitful, but in the light of the sun living things grow and flourish and are robust and healthy. So it is in the spiritual world. The Heavens are ablaze with the Divine Presence, and all who dwell therein are radiant with spiritual life. The world as yet is dark and barren spiritually, for it is not quite due time for the sunshine of God's love to dispel the mists of sin and sorrow which now hang over it like a shroud, but we are of that privileged class who have been called out of darkness into God's marvellous light.

Howbeit, no earthly thing can adequately picture the spiritual. Owing to the earth's movement the sun is not always overhead; the chilly night follows the day, and the warmth of summer gives way to the dark and dreary autumn. How different is God's marvellous light! In James 1: 17 (Moffatt) we read that God is the Father of the Heavenly lights, who knows no change of rising or setting, who casts no shadows on the earth. Yes, in God's presence it is always noonday, but do we always dwell in the sunshine? It is true that God casts no shadows on the earth, nevertheless, earth-born clouds do sometimes hide His face. What, then, can we do?

He who would dwell in eternal sunshine must rise above the cloud banks. So we must learn to rise above the clouds which obscure our Father's face. As the lark can only maintain its tuneful flight by the ceaseless beating of its tiny wings, so we can only rise above earth's sorrows on the twin wings of faith and prayer. Even as the homing pigeon drops exhausted at its journey's end, so we, with all our struggling, may fall senseless in the presence of our God, but in the warmth of His love we soon revive, and earth's ills are dispelled by the glow which steals over our reviving soul. Such is the sunshine of God's love.

(Contributed)

BEND ME TO THY WILL

"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death."—Prov. 14; 12.

This text is worth committing to memory. Its lesson is that we are not competent to guide and direct our own affairs; that we need Divine counsel. Human judgment would be unreliable even if supported by absolute knowledge; but in view of our deficiency in knowledge as well as in judgment, very evidently to man many ways seem right and wise and advantageous and desirable, which, pursued, lead to disappointment, and ultimately would lead to death. The wise, proper course, therefore, is to realise and acknowledge our own insufficiency, and look to our God for guidance. The earlier this right course is begun the better will be the results in every way, the easier it is for us to bend our wills to the will of the Lord; and the lessons and satisfaction and peace coming to us through the Lord's guidance will be the more precious.

LET HIM WORK

Let Him work, the Heavenly Artist,
On the canvas of your soul;
Hinder not His work of beauty
Till the masterpiece be whole.
'Tis the work of One who loves you;
One all-wise, all-tender, too;
Leave Him free to choose His colours,
Paint in bright or sombre hue.
What if now upon the canvas
He should trace some grief's outline;
Trust, and hinder not His touches;
Wait and see the whole design.
Watch Him work, and praise His talent,
Genius of love and power.
'Tis a Master Hand that painteth,
Think of this in sorrow's hour.
Suffer not your will imperfect
His fair master strokes to spoil;
Some day, in His Home of beauty,
You will thank Him for His toil.



The Power of His Resurrection. . .

✱ A.S. ✱



"That I may know
Him . . . being made
comfortable unto
His death." Phil. 3:10



As our Lord entered Jerusalem a few days before the last Passover the crowds assembled there for the feast came out to meet Him waving palm-branches and shouting "Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord"; yet, a few days later, a forlorn little band stood downcast before a cross, a cross upon which hung the King of Israel. As the women wept and the men bowed their heads in sorrow, how they must have wondered what it all meant. Their hopes, raised so high during a time of teaching, preaching and miracles the like of which had never been heard or seen before, were dashed to pieces in a few short hours.

This, the greatest tragedy of all time, was but the outworking of a law which Jesus Himself had propounded just a little while previously: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Just a little later He said: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth (signifying what death He should die), will draw all men unto Me." In the light of these words we see that that which in the sight of men was the end of all their hopes, was really an integral part of the greatest creative plan ever conceived.

Why should the King of Israel be so cruelly put to death? We would suggest that the death of Jesus on the cross was but the climax of a daily dying, a daily crucifixion of the man Jesus; so likewise His glorious resurrection on the third day was but the final manifestation of the mighty power which had been working within Him from the time of His immersion. Until that time He had been "obedient to His parents," and had gained in both wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man, but at Jordan a new phase of His life began; He was no longer "obedient to His parents," but came under the direct influence of His Heavenly Father, for, in Luke 3:22 (*Moffatt*) we read: "And a voice came from heaven. 'Thou art my son, the Beloved, to-day have I become thy Father'" (compare Heb. 1:5). Here a new power came into His life, the power of the Holy Spirit, and from this time

onward there was a complete change in His experiences. His complete consecration to God, symbolised by His baptism in Jordan, brought Him into greater favour with God, but He began to lose favour among men, and, furthermore, He found a powerful enemy in the form of the great Adversary.

How soon this change became manifest. Immediately after His baptism He was led by the Spirit's power into the wilderness, where He was sorely tempted; but this was only the beginning of temptations, for we read that after these first temptations the Adversary "left Him for a time." From thence He went to Nazareth, and there preached to His fellow-countrymen, but as a result of this they were filled with fury and rushed Him out of the town, and tried to murder Him by pushing Him over a cliff. So began a period of hardship, suffering and daily dying; but also a time filled with doing good, at every opportunity, to those who rejected and finally crucified Him.

In spite of the burdens He bore He went from strength to strength, and grace to grace; the more He was persecuted the more intense became His desire to serve His Heavenly Father and do good to all men, so that, whilst healing all manner of diseases, feeding and comforting the poor and ministering continually to all who flocked to Him, He was conscious of the mighty power which was operating in and through Him (John 10:37 and 38; 14:10).

The same power which led Him into the wilderness led Him not to a throne, but to Gethsemane and Golgotha; nevertheless, as we saw earlier, this was a part of the great creative plan in the mind of His Father. The daily dying of Jesus which culminated in His death on the cross was an indication of the growth of the New Creature within, and when, as He Himself put it, His "time had come," His death was a sure indication that the first fruits of a New Creation was fully matured and ready to be elevated to the very right hand of God, raised by His Father's glorious power.

This change from human to spiritual is not easy to comprehend, but the simile which was

used by both Jesus and the Apostle Paul, that of the grain of wheat, does give us some insight into the working of the mighty power of God which accomplishes His design. We have not the space to go into the details of the wonderful processes by which a full ear of wheat is produced from a single grain, but a brief outline should help us to see that the same power which works in the tiny seed can work in an earthly being to produce a glorious spirit creature. The grain of wheat is really an embryo plant, but if kept stored up in the dry remains what it is, a single grain. What happens if it is planted in the right conditions? Given warmth, moisture and air, the life within begins to germinate and the root appears; when this has gained a hold upon the soil the shoot develops and thrusts its way upwards to reach the light. The first part of this germinating process must take place in the dark, otherwise the plant is weakened and the shoot injured by premature exposure to the light.

Our Lord, Who likened Himself to a grain of wheat, began, as it were, the germinating process at His baptism, and immediately went into the darkness of the wilderness temptations, where He began to thrust His roots down into the Word of God; then the shoot of the new life developed, and began to thrust its way upwards to the light of Heaven.

What then is happening to the grain of wheat? This consists largely of a supply of starch upon which the tiny plant is to feed, but the plant cannot assimilate this until it is changed into glucose. This transformation is brought about by **diastase**, which develops during germination. The supply of starch may be likened to our Lord's humanity, and the diastase, which develops during germination, to the spirit of complete consecration to God, which brought our Lord to Jordan, and thus made possible the development of a new life. This glucose, although important, cannot sustain life of itself; the material basis of life is a substance called **proto-plasm**. This may be likened to the Holy Spirit, for this very complex substance has the power to assimilate the glucose and make more proto-plasm, thus enabling the plant to grow. Nevertheless, this living substance does not increase itself indefinitely. An opposing process tends to destroy it, thus it is being continuously made and unmade. As the coal burning in a locomotive boiler supplies the power which pulls its load, so the burning or destroying of the

chemical substances accounts for the growth in the plant: therefore, as the process of germination and growth goes on, the seed loses weight and finally disappears. Is not this the very process by which the humanity of Jesus was consumed? Even as the working of the life principle in the plant brings about the complete destruction of the seed, so the power of the Holy Spirit working in the man Jesus brought into being the most wonderful of all God's creations; but this was only accomplished at the cost of His perfect humanity.

As the plant develops there is an increase of chemical change. The roots not only fix the plant in the earth, but also absorb water and certain food substances from the soil, and it is upon this second function that the **NOURISHMENT** of the plant depends. So Jesus, as He grew in strength, thrust His roots deeper and deeper into the word of God, so that He might draw therefrom the spiritual food necessary to nourish and sustain His increasing spiritual stature. Even as the roots are hidden in the soil, so the source of Jesus' strength was hidden from man (John 4: 11 and 32).

The leaves, too, play an indispensable part in the nourishment of the plant, they breathe, and so draw **carbon dioxide** (which is poisonous to man) from the atmosphere, and this, mixing with the water drawn up by the roots, is formed into starch, upon which the plant feeds; but only the carbon is used, the oxygen being returned to the atmosphere, which is thus purified. So Jesus left the pure atmosphere of Heaven and came down to breathe, metaphorically, the contaminated and poisonous atmosphere of this sinful world; He did not choose the company of the self-righteous, but was called, derisively, gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners; but His presence among men left a more pure and holy atmosphere.

The leaves can only form starch if they are exposed to the light of the sun, as well as supplied with water through the roots. So Jesus did not shut Himself away from the world to meditate upon God's Word, as the manner of some is, but, whilst drawing deeply from the Water of Life, spread forth His leaves, as it were, to the full heat of temptations, contradictions and a multiplication of sorrows, so drawing from the fulness of life's experience those lessons which developed in Him the qualities of a sympathetic High Priest.

THE AFTER-FRUIT

This simile applies in all its details to all those to whom the Lord has given new life. They, too, must have and retain the spirit of consecration which will make it possible for the power of the Spirit to work within them. They, too, must have their roots deep down in the Word of God, that the new life be nourished; also they must not shut themselves off from the world, but must spread forth their leaves to the heat of temptations, contradictions and sorrows, and as they mix with the worldly-minded their influence should always be one of purity and holiness; then they, too, will feel, here and now, the inward working of the Spirit's power, and in the future be raised by God's glorious power to untold heights.

The Apostle Paul was conscious of this marvellous power working from within and being manifested without, for he says: "The eternal life of Jesus is always plainly shown forth in our bodies, even whilst His death seems operative in us at all moments. Yes, even in this mortal flesh that wondrous life of His begins to appear, even whilst we are being apparently thrust down to death. The immortal life of Jesus has appeared in our bodies, and we still live immortal, even at the very moment when the power of death is preparing to take us prisoner" (2 Cor. 4: 10-11—*Cornish*).

Having such an understanding of this eternal life of Jesus it is small wonder that he desires to know the fellowship of His sufferings, and to be made conformable to His death, for he knew that through the power of His resurrection it would "advance him to the earlier resurrection which is from among the dead" (*Rotherham*).

Comparing his present condition with his future life, the Apostle uses the same simile as did Jesus when he says: "On the one hand weakness, corruption, dishonour, comparable to the body of a seed, which rots and dissolves beneath the layer of soil; and on the other hand power, glory and incorruption, of which the green shapely stalk of wheat may be taken as a simile" (II Cor. 15: 43 and 44—*Cornish*).

These statements prove indisputably that the Almighty power which first raised Jesus from among the dead, can and does work in imperfect men that they, too, may be raised incorruptible, providing that they have both at the beginning and throughout all their sojourn here below, that attitude of complete consecra-

tion to God, which will enable the power of the Spirit to so change, so consume their humanity that the purpose for which it was sent may be fully accomplished.

If we would know and feel this power of Christ's resurrection we must be willing to follow Him through the valley of shadows; we must be ready to accept the frustration of all our plans, the subversion of all our earthly hopes; we must be able to submit to every form of self-effacement, for it is only from the ashes of the complete destruction of the "old man" that the new creature will rise.

When the wheat is fully ripened it is severed from the root and leaves, and is gathered into the barn, so all those who are being wrought upon by the Holy Spirit look forward with eager anticipation to the time when, having followed their Master through Gethsemane and Golgotha, they will join Him as joint-heirs of God, raised to the highest estate in all God's creation, through the operation of His Almighty power.

With this glorious prospect in view, we look not at the "seen" things, which are temporary, but at the unseen, which are eternal. "For this our light and transitory burden of suffering is achieving for us a preponderating, yes, a vastly preponderating, and eternal weight of glory" (II Cor. 4: 17 and 18—*Weymouth*).

In conclusion, we would emphasise the thought that it is the life principle in the grain of wheat which produces the ear of wheat. Without this the seed would be sterile; so in the spiritual picture, we may have the spirit of consecration, we may have our roots deep down in the Word of God, and expose ourselves to all the hardships of life, but without the power of the Spirit working within we shall be barren and unfruitful. But, by the grace of God, and through the faithfulness of Christ, we can and do feel this power of His resurrection as a living vital force, and can say with the Apostle Paul: "**God be thanked who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**"

Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee,
—Psalm 84: 5.


Jesus, my Saviour, keep me
Close to Thyself I pray;
There only shall I gather
Strength for the onward way.



HIS PRESENCE IN THE MIDST



✻ T.H. ✻



"In the midst of the . . .
candlesticks one like unto the
Son of Man." Rev. 1; 13.

About the time of our Lord's departure from this earth He sent His servants out into a wider field of service. Hitherto, at His instruction, they have confined their labours to the Jews, in Palestine—now, the Lord commissions them to go out into the whole world seeking disciples; and, for their comfort and assurance, says: "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28; 20).

Thousands of His followers since those days have lived and laboured—and faced the ordeal of death—in the assurance of this promise. In densely populated cities, or thinly inhabited country places, thousands who have loved His Name have believed, though unseen, that a great vital Presence has been with them—not only the great congregations, but also the twos and threes—and also the solitary ones—have had their portion in His watch-care and oversight.

It is not possible to fully explain the method or the philosophy of that Presence. Even among men there are so many subtle factors associated with Presence and Personality, that even advanced psychological students find themselves unable to account for all the phenomena which different men and women exhibit. There are men and women who repel their fellows on the instant. Others are as magnets, and draw friends from everywhere. In the lesser range of things with which the ordinary man is familiar there is some mystery to what we call "presence." We speak of a person being present in a room and of things that transpire in that room as taking place in his presence. In what way is he present beyond the few square feet of space occupied by his body? That his presence extends beyond that small circle, marked by the outlines of his physical frame, as all know and realise, but how it does so is not so easily explained. A lecturer is as much present to men in the hindmost seats as to those who sit close before him! It may be a blending of personality and presence, but there it is; some subtle force emanates from that body located within the tiny space, and radiates itself throughout the room! There are dictatorial

men in our world to-day who, though occupying but a few square feet, make the whole world tremble and fear. Why? Because out from them goes an aggressive spirit; and because of its peculiar nature, backed by reserves of military power, the whole earth becomes their audience-chamber. Their slightest words and their tiniest acts are bruited about the world over.

Now, let us try to imagine these men exalted into a majesty and glory like that of Jesus. Imagine their few square feet expanded out to corresponding proportions! Increase the scale of their influence by as much as the heavenly is greater than the earthly! That may then serve as some slight assistance in conceiving how the blessed Lord can have been present with all His people, and yet have occupied a definite place in the Heavenly Realms. The whole wide world is not as great to Him as a small room is to us. If, then, it is possible for a mere man to make his presence fill some audience-room, or for a dictator to send thrills and fears throughout this earth, then surely the glorified omnipotent Saviour can fill His Church; entire and individual, with the sense of His saving presence, even from His celestial location at His Father's right hand. This whole world is to Him but as an ante-room. The whole wide universal creation, including every dimension, known and unknown, is His audience-chamber.

"Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit," the Psalmist asks, "or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.' Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee." (Psa. 139; 7-12.)

No height above, no depth beneath, no space abroad is outside the range of His presence and

power. A noted scientist has said that Heaven may be a "fourth" dimension; and may be even all around us, too subtle and mysterious for our gross material sensibilities to apprehend. Whether it be so we do not know; but that the God of Love and the Saviour of men have ever known and understood the needs of God's children, even to the tiniest loss of a single hair (spiritually speaking) every page of Holy Writ will testify. Our lives lie naked and open before Him, no matter where, by day or night.

All through her dark days, when faggot and sword encompassed her, the Church of Jesus was never left untended or alone; and though the flame of her love burned low, and the glow of her light was feeble, yet, not once in all the years since she set out to follow Him, has He

left His charge uncared-for. In her periods of joy; in her seasons of sorrow, He has been at His post—walking "in the midst of the candlesticks."

Her eyes may have been under earthly limitations, but His were not. His eyes of flame could pierce the barriers imposed by mundane things, and through her walls He made His presence felt—"a living blest reality." And still, though His "locus standi"—the place of His habitation, has been changed (since His "Parousia" days arrived), still is He walking among the candlesticks, trimming our lights, and feeding the oil; diffusing the fragrance of His Presence and the charm of His Personality through our lattice-windows (Song Sol. 2; 9).

LET US GO FORTH

(Hebrews 13; 13)

Silent, like men in solemn haste,
Girded wayfarers of the waste,
We pass out at the world's wide gate,
Turning our back on all its state;
We press along the narrow road
That leads to life, to bliss, to God.

We cannot and we would not stay;
We dread the snares that throng the way;
We fling aside the weight and sin,
Resolved the victory to win;
We know the peril, but our eyes
Rest on the splendour of the prize.

What though with weariness oppressed?
'Tis but a little and we rest.
This throbbing heart and burning brain
Will soon be calm and cool again;
Night is far spent and morn is near—
Morn of the cloudless and the clear.

No idling now, no slothful sleep,
From Christian toil our pow'rs to keep;
No shrinking from the desperate fight,
No thought of yielding or of flight;
No love of present gain or ease,
No seeking man or self to please.

No sorrow for the loss of fame,
No dread of scandal on our name;
No terror for the world's sharp scorn,
No wish that taunting to return;
No hatred can to hatred move
The soul that's filled with pitying love.

No sigh for laughter left behind,
Or pleasures scattered to the wind;
No looking back on Sodom's plains,
No listening still to Babel's strains;
No tears for Egypt's song and smile,
No thirsting for its flowing Nile.

'Tis but a little and we come
To our reward, our crown, our home!
Another year, or more, or less,
And we have crossed the wilderness;
Finished the toil, the rest begun,
The battle fought, the triumph won!

—Horatius Bonar

GETHSEMANE

In golden youth, when seems the earth
A summer land of songs and mirth,
And not a shadow lurks in sight,
We do not know it, but there lies,
Serene beneath the evening skies,
A Garden all must sometime see.

Gethsemane!
Somewhere there lies Gethsemane!

With joyous steps we go our ways,
Love lends a halo to the days,
Light sorrows sail like clouds afar,
We laugh and say, "How strong we are!"
We hurry on, and hurrying go
Close to the border land of woe,
That waits for you and waits for me;

Gethsemane,
Forever waits Gethsemane!

Down shadowy lanes, across strange streams,
Bridged over by our broken dreams,
Behind the misty cape of years,
Close to the great salt-font of tears,
The Garden lies; strive as you may,
You cannot miss it in your way,
All paths that have been or shall be
Pass sometime through Gethsemane.

Gethsemane,
All roads pass through Gethsemane.

All those who journey, soon or late,
Must pass within the Garden's gate,
Must kneel alone in darkness there
And battle with some fierce despair.
God pity those who cannot say,
"Not mine, but thine," who only pray,
"Let this cup pass!" and cannot see
His purpose in Gethsemane.

Gethsemane,
God **help us** in Gethsemane!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANONYMOUS.

We have to acknowledge with sincere appreciation the receipt during February of anonymous donations of 10/- (sister M.) and £1 respectively.

THE MEMORIAL.

The appropriate date for the celebration of the Memorial of our Lord's death is, this year, Sunday, April 18th, after 6.0 p.m. May the rich blessing of our Heavenly Father be upon all who assemble at this season of the year to witness, in solemn sacrament, the reality of their pledge to be "buried with Him by baptism into His death" that they might also rise to walk in newness of life. Let those who assemble together remember also the isolated ones, the ones and twos whom considerations of age and distance preclude from gathering with their brethren of like faith. Let prayer be made that these also, in their homes, may on that evening share in the communion of saints, in spirit and alone with their Lord. So let us make this observance a pledge of renewal of our Fellowship and a sign to us that

Brother clasps the hand of brother,
Stepping fearless through the night."

MEMORIAL EMBLEMS.

We shall be happy to supply portions of the Emblems to isolated friends, the "twos and threes," but must ask that a suitable flask or small bottle be sent with your request. The shortage of these is so pronounced this year that we have been unable to obtain a new supply. Brethren who have had the emblems in previous years and have omitted to return the flasks would do a great service by looking them out and returning them now, whether or no they wish the emblems to be sent them this year.

BRAILLE LIBRARY

The extension of public library facilities for the blind has so lessened the call for our Braille Library that it has been virtually out of use for some years. We are advised by blind readers that the books are so worn as to be scarcely readable, and this library is therefore to be considered closed. We have, however, one copy of "The New Creation" in Braille, quite new, and this is available on loan at any time, upon application to the office. The book is in several parts, and one part will be sent at a time until the reader has finished the book.

BACK NUMBERS OF "HERALD" & "DAWN"

We have a quantity of back issues of 'Herald' & 'Dawn' on hand, and will be glad to send parcels of assorted copies on payment of postage only. This offer may be of interest to brethren who like to hand these periodicals to neighbours and friends. Send 1/1 per parcel of 50 copies.

THE BOOKROOM

The abridged edition of Cruden's Concordance is once again available in stock, at 4/6, postage 6d. This handy size book consists of 400 pages and for its size and price is an extremely useful work for general use. The full Cruden's Concordance 10/6; postage 7d., is still available in stock.

Moffatt's Bible, both complete and New Testament only, are out of stock and publishers report six months before new editions are ready.

"A little life of Jesus" is at present out of stock but publishers are shortly producing a new edition and orders can then be filled.

It is advisable for friends to consult the latest issue of the B.S.M. when about to order books to ensure that the ones required are still available. If a star appears against the title in the price list, instead of the price, the book is temporarily out of stock but further supplies are expected in reasonable time, and orders will be booked for despatch as soon as available. If the desired book has been deleted from the price list altogether it is unlikely that further supplies will be obtainable and orders will not be accepted.

"WHAT IS VICTORY?"

Some friends may be interested to learn that the well-known words under the heading "What is Victory?" which appeared in a recent issue of the B.S.M. are available in separate form, artistically printed on art paper, from Bro. F. Lardent, 174 Forest Hill Road, London, S.E.23. The price is 1/6 doz., and orders to Bro. Lardent should mention card L.35.

SPECIAL BOOK REQUIREMENTS.

It is recommended that friends who wish to obtain "out-of-print" books, such as books by Bro. Russell no longer published, or Young's Concordance, second hand Bible translations, etc., notify us of their requirements. We keep a list of all such "wants," and when occasional copies of such books come into our possession we are able to offer them to the friend whose name appears next in order for that particular book. We prefer this method to that of open announcement in the B.S.M., since in the latter case it not infrequently happens that several requests are received when only one copy is available, and some are perforce disappointed. A postcard will be sent when the book required is available and friends have the option then of deciding whether or not to take advantage of the opportunity.

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Information from Bro. H. R. Noble,
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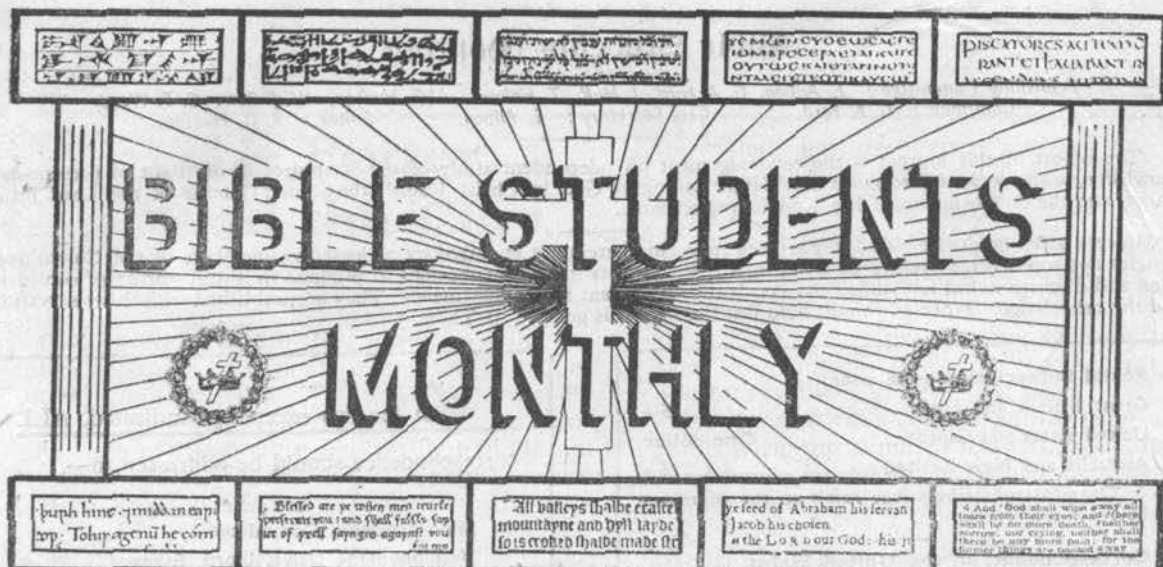
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TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH—

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come to "all people," and they find access to Him.

—1. Cor. 3; 16, 17. Eph. 2; 20-22. Gen. 28; 14. Gal. 3; 29.

That meantime the chiselling, shaping and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these "living stones," elect and precious, shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with His glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.

—Rev. 15; 5-8.

That the basis of hope, for the Church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."

Heb. 2; 9. Jno. 1; 9. 1 Tim. 2; 5-6.

That the hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see Him as He is," "be partaker of the Divine nature," and share His glory as His joint-heir.

—1. Jno. 3; 2. Jno. 17; 24. Rom. 8; 17. 2 Pet. 1; 4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be "kings and priests" in the next Age.

Eph. 4; 12. Matt. 24; 14. Rev. 1; 6; 20; 6.

That the hope of the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and His glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.

Acts 3; 19-23. Isa. 35.

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The object of this series is to provide the brethren with a choice of briefly written leaflets on various Scriptural topics for handing to friends and acquaintances. The subjects available will be added to from time to time as is possible. Nos. 15 and 16 have just been added and the series is now as follows :—

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AN EXTRACT FROM NO. 16 APPEARS ON BACK COVER

The Potter and the Clay.

— T.H. —

When Jesus began His ministry with the announcement, "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4 : 17), the message at once attracted great attention. About the time of His birth considerable expectation of great changes in the national condition had arisen, and the spirit of keen enquiry filled the minds of both the nation and its leaders. Uncertainty concerning the expiry of the seventy weeks foretold to Daniel left the whole people open to easy leading by anyone presuming to come in the name of the Lord. The word used by the angel, "hebdomad"—seventy hebdomads—was of uncertain meaning when applied to the lapse of time. Literally it meant "seventy sevens," but whether those "seventy sevens" meant literal years ("seventy sevens of years"), no one could say with certainty. Then, if they did represent years, what kind of years were they? Were they lunar or solar years?

Every false Messiah over a period of more than a hundred years used this Messianic time-prophecy, each one varying his basis of calculation to suit his own particular claims.

Each unit of the "seventy sevens" were made to vary and represent from nine to eighteen months, by these false Messiahs, to suit their case, the shortest period thus covering about three hundred and seventy years, while the longest spread over seven hundred and forty years. One of these false Messianic claimants had made his appearance about B.C.3. Another followed in A.D. 6. Both these are mentioned in Acts 5 : 36-37. Consequently, Messianic expectation had reached a high pitch about the time Jesus was born. After the disappearance of these two claimants, expectation subsided considerably, until John Baptist came on the scene, calling the nation to repentance because the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand (Matt. 3 : 2). Crowds of people flocked to his ministry, and were baptised so as to be in readiness for the appearance of the King. When John disclaimed that honour for himself, the people realised that he was no self-seeker, and rated his credit at a high level accordingly. John's claim to be only a voice

"Hath not the Potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" (Rom. 9; 21 R.V.)

in the wilderness proclaiming the way of the Lord kindled the fires of expectation again, and fanned them to white hot flame.

Six months after John began to teach, Jesus came with the same proclamation: "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people. And the report of Him went forth into all Syria . . . and there followed him great multitudes from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and beyond Jordan (Matt. 4 : 23-25).

The common people followed Him eagerly, because so many of them benefited from his healing ministry, but the rulers followed only from afar. Some of them, like Nicodemus, conceded that Jesus must be a prophet sent from God, otherwise He could not have done the great things which He did (John 3 : 2), but the rulers were not too ready to accept Him in any higher sense.

In course of time a conference was called to which came Pharisees and doctors of the law from every village of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem—a national church council, in reality. In the midst of that representative assembly the power of the Lord to heal was with Jesus. A palsied man was let down through the roof into the midst of the conference. Seeing the evident confidence of the paralytic's friends that He could heal this sufferer, Jesus said to him, "Man, thy sins are forgiven thee" (Luke 5 : 17-25). Immediately the Scribes and Pharisees begin to remonstrate. To forgive sins in that way was blasphemous. That could only be done in the prescribed place and manner. Only in Jerusalem, and only by the Priest, or by the High Council in conjunction with the Priest, could such a thing be done. "Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" they said. To approach God required the Priest's intercessorship, at the place where God was reputed to dwell. "Which is the easier course," asked Jesus, "to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say Arise and

walk?" Receiving no answer, Jesus then said, "But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (He said unto the palsied man), Arise, take up thy couch, and go unto thy house." And immediately the man rose up, gathered up his bed, and walked out of their midst.

From that time the attitude of the rulers stiffened against Jesus. This was not the type of Messiah they wanted. Talking about sin, instead of talking against Rome was unacceptable in their eyes. Forgiving sin instead of exciting the populace to rebel was contrary to their expectations. They wanted to throw off the foreign yoke, and were waiting for a prince who would lead them to war and victory. Then his interference with priestly prerogatives was not to their taste. His action on that point was revolutionary and dangerous. If that attitude spread, and infected the common folk, where would it end? The central power at Jerusalem would be broken, and their authority at an end. They did not mind revolutionary things happening, so long as they could direct the storm. But it was against Rome, not Jerusalem, that they desired the lightning to strike.

Little by little, thereafter, their attitude towards both Jesus and His acts of mercy became more hostile, till they determined that He was too dangerous to be allowed to live. Either He or their power must die. During this phase of gathering hostility, Jesus became more revolutionary still in act and utterance. Openly He derided Priests, Levites, Pharisees, Scribes, and rulers of the people. He taught them what the nation's elite ought to do, and showed them how far the rulers came short. He publicly exposed the Temple authorities, and Himself drove out the mercenary traffickers from the Temple courts.

Also, as time went by, the subject of His discourse changed. He spake less of the Kingdom, and more about His sufferings and the purpose to be served thereby. When the mother of two followers desired prominent Kingdom honours for her sons, He told them they had not understood the changes under way. Did they really want to enter with Him into Kingdom power—if so, could they enter into His baptism first? Could they drink also of His Cup? Blessing Peter for his confession—an understanding bestowed from heaven—though He were the Christ—the long-expected Messiah—yet He was soon to be smitten in death and not crowned with majesty. And if

any man would be His disciple, let him too take up his cross, and follow Him into death. Thus the objectives of His teaching changed. No longer did He address Himself to the nation as a whole, but to the little group, who, in spite of the official frown, still clung to Him and His words. He had come, at first, to His own as a people, but they received Him not. Only a "little flock" had accepted Him, and even they did not fully understand. His words and actions baffled them. Of the Priesthood He said, their house was to become desolate; of Jerusalem, it was to be laid in the dust; of His followers, He would covenant unto them a kingdom when He should return from heaven. It was hard for them to believe that their nation would be rejected and overthrown, while they, insignificant as they were, should be accepted to a throne.

This was the germ of the great theme which the risen Lord selected another Apostle to proclaim. After revealing Himself alive to Saul on the Damascus way, the Lord sent him forth as a chosen vessel to proclaim His Name "before . . . the children of Israel" (Acts 9: 15), and to suffer for his testimony. That "Name" and "testimony" denoted many things—many facets of Divine Truth. To those who could accept the testimony of the Lord it introduced them to wonderful opportunities and privileges. To those who would not accept that testimony it spake of rejection, and of ancient privileges withdrawn. Little by little they learned to think and speak of God's work as "taking out a people for His Name"—while the "Tabernacle of David" was to lie awhile in the dust.

They learned that the church of God (and of Jesus) was to be built up into Christ as a remnant of **individual** believers, while the nation as a whole would stumble and fall to its doom. These things they taught wherever they went, both in public synagogues and private homes. As a consequence, the ruling class, together with the Priests, became increasingly bitter and hostile to such as Paul. "It is not fit that he should live," they said after hearing his defence (Acts 22: 22). They would have destroyed Paul forthwith. Many thousands (Acts 21: 20) sought to amalgamate the new teaching with the old, unable to see and realise that the two teachings would not blend. They could not detach themselves from the Temple and its activities so long as it remained, nor yet make a full, clean break from the services of the Priests (see Acts 21: 20-25).

In every place where Paul found a little circle of believers and organised them into a church, this Judaising section sent their emissaries to over-ride Paul's work and gather the fruits of Paul's missionary enterprise into their fold. They persecuted Paul and his little band of helpers everywhere, even going so far as to plot his death (Acts 23: 12-14). Paul waged his side of this conflict by voice and pen, using his clear insight into the dispensational changes, and his great intellect, to speak and write incessantly to bring home, were it possible, to his erring brethren their great mistake. They would not allow themselves to realise that God had set aside the nation as a whole—rulers and people alike—and was now taking out from their midst only such as believed in Jesus and were ready to follow in His steps. That the Mosaic system could be superseded was more than they could accept. That the Aaronic Priesthood should be terminated and the Temple service fail they could not believe.

In the peak days of this controversy Paul purposed to visit Rome. In Rome were many Jews, who, though not then hostile to Paul, had heard many things about the Christian sect (Acts 28: 22). Also, a community of Christian believers had been established there. Both these and they Paul desired to see, to tell them the good news of Christ.

Knowing the Christian community there would have the same dispensational and doctrinal difficulties as their brethren in the Asiatic churches, Paul wrote for them an outline of the Christian faith as taught by himself

everywhere he went. Discussing first the great themes of Redemption and Reconciliation, he next tells them of their privileges in Christ. He explains to them the deep things concerning baptism into Christ—into His death, leading up to a grand climax concerning the call of many brethren, who, by Divine Power, would be conformed to the Image of God's Son.

Passing, then, to consider dispensational facts, he opens up the great theme that raised contention in every Judaising community. Had God set aside His ancient nation? And was He now gathering only a small remnant therefrom? Had God decreed that if it refused Jesus the nation should fall, and only a small selected company be saved?

If this were so, the Judaisers said, God was unrighteous and unfaithful to His ancient promise! In view of the great promises of bygone days, God could not cast off or set aside His nation, so they said. Were they not still observing His ordinances, and maintaining His Temple in their midst? Paul meets these arguments by his parable of the Potter and the clay, and shows that of the same lump of clay God could indeed take a portion and make it into a vessel of surpassing honour, while setting the remainder aside to be made up according to His Sovereign Will some later day.

Paul's doctrine gathered up the teachings of His Master and set them out with great force. The nation was to be rejected and left desolate—while a little flock, baptised with and into His baptism, were to be made like Him, and with Him, and "in Him" constitute Jehovah's Anointed—God's choicest vessel of all time.

(To be continued)

Greek mythology tells of a youth named Narcissus, who was so beautiful that all the young men sought his companionship and all the nymphs desired his love; the wild beasts were tame in his presence, and the very flowers and trees swayed and nodded towards him as he approached. In spite of all, he went on his way in cold arrogance, rejecting every overture until he should find one he deemed beautiful as himself. At last, seeing his own reflection in a woodland pool, he stretched out his arms to embrace whom he took to be a fitting mate, but, despite his every endeavour to clasp the handsome youth he saw before him, he could lay hold on nothing substantial. Overcome by grief at his failure, he pined

away on the pool's brink and died.

How many Christians lose much by going a solitary way through life with thoughts turned ever inward upon themselves, arrogant in their own righteousness like the Pharisee who went up into the Temple to pray, wilfully blind to the friendship and fellowship their fellows would so willingly proffer, and complaining at the end that life has brought them only disillusionment. "I am among you as one that serveth," said Jesus, and good indeed is it for us when we can altogether forget self in the joy of giving our life's best endeavours for the enrichment of other lives, and receiving our gifts back in abundant measure.

THE QUIET TIME

 C.T.W.

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

HIS REFLECTED IMAGE

It has been said by someone: "Suppose the sun in the heavens, which enlightens, warms, and makes fruitful everything, were a rational being that could see everything within the reach of its beams, it would then behold its own image in every sea, river and lake and in every brook—it would even see itself reflected on the loftiest mountains of ice; and would it not, in the abundance of its joy at such glorious radiance, forgetting itself, embrace all these oceans, seas and rivers, and even the glaciers in its arms and delight over them?" Thus Jesus Christ, the Sun of righteousness, beholds His image in every renewed soul as in a polished mirror; hence, seeming to forget Himself, in the abundance of the joy that was set before Him, He could condescend to wash the feet of His disciples. Thus our eternal Father beholds in His children the beauty of His Son, Jesus Christ, with a satisfaction greater than we are able to express. He embraces them with the arms of His love, and loves the image of Himself which He sees in their renewed souls. Happy are such people, yea, blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God!

WHAT IS INSIDE?

Men talk what is in them. If their minds are full of business and politics, their words will show it; if they are occupied with froth and vanity, with fashion and folly, the words they say will give evidence of it. A man cannot shake off himself; and his words contain the very essential elements of his existence. The man who has nothing to say for the Lord, knows little about the Lord. "Out of the abundance of his heart the mouth speaketh."

POWERFUL TESTIMONY.

The eloquence of a holy, self-denying, devoted life and Christ-like principle is never lost. It arrests attention; it carries home conviction; it makes an ineffaceable and irresistible impression. It has been said, and rightly, that the strongest argument for the truth of Christianity is the true Christian.

When peace is yours that knows no strife,
An' I joy the same in death or life,
And you can say, "Tis Christ for me
To live or die"—That's Victory.

VESSELS OF MERCY.

See the skilful potter moulding
Cups and vases on his wheel:
Out of clay that has no beauty
Quickly shapes the vessel dainty
By his skill.

Ah! how precious is the lesson
From the potter we can trace:
Like the clay, you had no value
Till God laid His hand upon you,
By His grace.

On the wheel of life's experience
Being moulded by His will,
He is shaping you in mercy
That you may reflect His glory
And His skill.

Soon the Potter's work will finish
And He'll take us all above;
Each He'll fill with living water
From the ever-flowing river
Of His love.

Then to all will go the message,
Sweetest message one could give,
"Come all ye who have no money
Come for wine and milk and honey
Come and live."

THE HONOUR BELONGS TO HIM

The class which the Lord is seeking will be composed of those only who have such an appreciation of the Lord and His grace, manifested in their redemption and forgiveness of sins and call to fellowship with Him in His suffering and subsequent glory, that they will take delight in crediting all the honour, all the praise to Him. Not only their honour and praise for salvation, but additionally their credit for any kind deeds or benevolences or services they may be able to render to any. They will be glad to be able to do something in His name—to the glory of Him who did so much for them. Their sentiment of heart is well expressed in the Apostle's words: "We thus judge, that since One died for all, all were dead, and that we who live should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us"—"doing all things in the name of the Lord Jesus."

TARTARUS.

A.O.H.

The prison of the fallen angels.

"God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell (Gr. tartaros) and delivered them unto chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment" (II Pet. 2; 4).

A strange allusion! In all the Scriptures this word occurs but this once; and in all the revealed Plan of God none but the fallen angels are said to be imprisoned in "Tartarus," wherever or whatever that place or condition may be. The Authorised Version renders this word "hell," the translators thinking that to be the place of the angels' punishment, and the only one of which they knew; but the New Testament writers had already followed our Lord's example in using "Hades" and "Gehenna" for the death conditions and the ultimate fate of the wicked respectively, and the fact that Peter deliberately used a very different word here, and one having a specialised significance to his immediate readers, is evidence that he wished to convey a different thought as to the fate of the "angels that sinned."

There are only three verses in the New Testament referring to this sequel to the angelic rebellion of Gen. 6, and in each case they are but casual allusions introduced in support of the writers' main argument; but the surprising unanimity of these three verses with regard to two main facts presents us with a very clear picture. From II Pet. 2; 4, Jude 6 and I Pet. 3: 18-20 we learn that the fallen angels are "in prison" and that they are "bound with chains of darkness." The first mentioned text has already been quoted. Jude confirms Peter's assertion with the words "those angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he had reserved in everlasting (ajonian) chains under darkness until the judgment of the great day." Peter again, speaking of the life, death and resurrection of Christ, says that He was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the Spirit; by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a-preparing." In these three verses we have our Scrip-

tural basis for considering what Peter intended to convey by the word "Tartarus."

A prison—chains—darkness; limited in time "until the judgment of the great day," and a preaching to those in this prison! This corresponds neither with Hades, the sleep of death in the which there is neither knowledge nor consciousness, and therefore no preaching, nor yet Gehenna, death with no possibility of a time limit such as is implied by the words "until the judgment of the great day."

It is worth noting that many modern translators feel that "hell" is by no means the correct rendering of this word. The Revised Version puts "Tartarus" in the margin, and Young gives "Tartarus" without further explanation. Rotherham offers "the lowest hades," recognising a distinction; the Concordat, "Thrusting them into the gloomy caverns of Tartarus," the 20th Century, "Sent them down to Tartarus," and Moffatt, "Committing them to pits of the nether gloom in Tartarus." The difficulty with the majority of these translators is that, being already committed to belief in one hell of conscious misery for mankind, they find it difficult to accept a separate hell for fallen angels, and yet from the evidence of the word they cannot consistently include the angels in the same "hell," and hence they prefer to leave the word untranslated. We who have attained a clear knowledge of the Bible teaching on hell can come to Peter's words with an advantage not possessed by the translators!

The Jews of our Lord's day, and therefore the early Christians also, were perfectly familiar with the word, and had a very clear idea of its meaning. Like many such terms, it belongs to Greek mythology, a knowledge of which had permeated the East by the time of the First Advent. The word "hades" itself is the Greek term which describes the state of the dead, although the Greeks looked upon Hades as a place where there was at least life and consciousness, consistent with their belief in the immortality of the soul. Now, according to the ideas of the Greeks, the universe (kosmos) was a great hollow globe with the earth suspended in the centre, heaven and the

abode of the gods above the earth, Hades far down in the bowels of the earth, and Tartarus deep below Hades. Far back in the early days of the world, said the Greeks, there was a great rebellion of the Titans, the sons of the god Uranus and his wife Gea, against Zeus, God of Heaven. The conflict was fierce, but eventually the Titans were overthrown and cast down to Tartarus, which was closed up with brazen gates, and there the rebels remain to this day. Students acquainted with Genesis 6 will immediately perceive the striking resemblance of this scrap of mythology to the Bible story, for Uranus and Gea are the Greek words for Heaven and Earth respectively, and the myth associates the idea of a rebellion of god-like beings against the Most High with that of a union between Heaven and Earth. "And it came to pass . . . that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose" (Gen. 6: 1-2).

These stories of mythology, enshrining some dim though greatly distorted recollection of happenings before the Flood, together with Greek ideas of immortality, had begun to affect the religious beliefs of the Jews for some time before the First Advent. To some extent the old belief in **Sheol**, a place in which there was no knowledge, nor device, nor work of any kind, and in which the thoughts of man perish (Ecc. 9: 10, Psa. 146: 4) had become coloured with ideas of future punishment, and so Tartarus began to be accepted as a place where retribution would be meted out to the specially wicked. All, good or bad alike, would go to Hades at death, but whereas the true believer remained there until he rose in the judgment at the Last Day, the incorrigibly wicked were conducted past Hades into Tartarus.

The Jewish historian Josephus gives a good example of this belief as it existed in our Lord's own day, when, speaking of the doctrines of the Pharisees, he says (*"Antiquities of the Jews,"* Book 18, Chap. 1; 3): "They (the Pharisees) also believe that souls have an immortal vigour in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and the latter are to be detained in an **everlasting prison** (*aionian tartarus*), but that the former shall have power to revive and live again." Notice how Josephus endeavours to blend the sturdy Jewish belief in death and resurrection with Greek ideas of "rewards and punishments" immediately

after death. It was this combining the philosophies of this world with the revelation of God which rendered the Pharisees "blind leaders of the blind" (Matt. 15: 14), and made the teaching of our Lord by contrast to have such an appeal that it was said of Him: "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt. 7: 29).

Another reference to Tartarus as a place of eternal punishment for men is to be found in Plato (*"Republic,"* Book 10, Chap. 15), where the narrative describes the attempted escape from Hades of certain notorious Greek evildoers of previous days, and of their being recaptured, bound hand and foot, and taken down to Tartarus, from whence they would never be able to escape, there to be tormented eternally.

Although both our Lord and the New Testament writers used the term "Hades" on frequent occasions, they did not countenance the myths which had turned it into a place of conscious feeling, after the Greek model. Like Martha at the tomb of Lazarus, knowing only that her brother would rise "in the resurrection at the last day" (Jno. 11: 24), they stood foursquare for the traditional "sheol," a place of unconsciousness, of sleep, but illumined with the certain hope of resurrection by virtue of the death of Christ. Hades to them was the exact equivalent of Sheol, and Peter's single allusion to Tartarus as the prison, not of wicked men, but of fallen angels, is taken from a belief of which the most complete description extant is contained in the Book of Enoch.

This work, although not included amongst the canonical books, and having no claim to be considered part of the inspired Word, was widely known in the time of Christ, and there is no doubt that both our Lord and His disciples were thoroughly familiar with it. It enshrines a wealth of detail culled from traditions handed down from earliest times, and it is here that the dread sentence passed upon the "angels that sinned" is recorded. The resemblance to Peter's words is remarkable. "From henceforth you shall not ascend into heaven unto all eternity, and in **bonds of the earth** the decree has gone forth to bind you for all the days of the world" (1 Enoch 14: 5). As Peter penned this part of his epistle he must surely have had in mind the vivid description of Tartarus, credited to Enoch: "I saw neither a heaven above nor a firmly founded earth, but a place chaotic and horrible. And there I saw seven stars of the heaven bound together

in it, like the great mountains, and burning with fire. Then I said: 'For what sin are they bound, and on what account have they been cast in thither?' Then said Uriel, one of the holy angels" (Uriel was said to be the archangel appointed to have charge of Tartarus, I Enoch 20: 2), "'These are of the number of the stars of heaven, which have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and are bound here . . . and I saw . . . a great fire there which burnt and blazed, and the place was cleft as an abyss, being full of great descending columns of fire. Then I said: 'How fearful is the place and how terrible to look upon' . . . And he" (Uriel) "said unto me: 'This place is the prison of the angels, and here they will be imprisoned for ever'" (I Enoch 21: 1-10).

These were the beliefs, then, upon which Peter founded his words. Without endorsing the mythology and popular impressions regarding the actual existence of a place of eternal punishment, Peter has used the idea of Tartarus to define the condition in which the "angels that sinned" have been since the Flood. The idea of restraint, under chains, without any possibility of escape unless and until God permits, is the theme which Peter is seeking to stress, a restraint which is to endure for a definite time—until the "judgment of the great day."

This "prison" is one in which these confined can see and be cognisant of things happening upon earth, and in the heavens. They saw the Logos lay aside His glory and come to earth, being born of Mary. They saw Him grow up to man's estate, watched Him being baptised of John in Jordan, observed His ministry, His arrest, and His death upon the Cross. For three more days they watched, while nothing happened. They beheld the miracle of the Resurrection. Perhaps it was then that a great light burst upon them, or at least upon many among them. That, surely, was the sermon that was preached to the "spirits in prison."

It follows that these same spirits must have witnessed all that transpired upon earth between the Flood and the First Advent; and everything that has occurred since, and will occur, until, in the Great Assize of the Judgment of the Great Day, their turn comes, and the brazen gates of Tartarus are flung wide open, that they may come forth and be required to show how much, if at all, they have profited by the things which they have seen

and heard.

The "prison," then, is evidently not a definite place in space. Many of these evil spirits were "cast out" by our Lord from human beings whom they had obsessed, and the history of "spiritism" through the ages shows that the "chains of darkness" are of such a nature as to allow a certain liberty of action to these powers of evil. There is a significant incident recorded in Luke 8: 31, where the legion of demons "besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep," and, in consequence, Jesus gave them leave to enter the herd of swine. The word "deep" in that verse is rightly "abyss," and refers to the same place of restraint as is alluded to in Peter's epistle.

It would seem, then, that this restraint in Tartarus is a Divine prohibition which prevents the fallen angels from appearing in the heavenly courts in their normal condition as spirit beings, from appearing upon earth in materialised form as men, and from taking possession of or influencing human beings against their will. They are thus aware of all that is going on in the earth, but are restrained from interfering with humanity in any way, except to such degree as any man may allow by opening himself to their influence. In the days before the Flood they ruled by violence—each took "of all which they chose." Since then that freedom is denied them, and they can work only through darkness and in secret, through the minds of those who are willingly given over to their designs. There have been many such throughout the ages, and there are dark stories of old which give an idea of the determined efforts made by some of the fallen angels to break through the confines of their prison. Unable to "materialise," or create human bodies for themselves, they overcame their restraints sufficiently to obsess the brain and so use the body of a man or other living creature. Thus, rather than suffer a return to the full and rigorous restraint of the abyss, the demons besought Jesus that they might enter the swine. The concession availed them nothing, for with the herd drowned in the sea, they were left without any material organism through which to operate, and would then, as they had feared, be again fully confined in Tartarus. In this condition they remain until the judgment of the great day, and the measure of such repentance as may be felt by any of them will be evidenced by the extent of their acquiescence

in that restraint as a merited retribution. We are perhaps justified in picturing some at least of the fallen angels as abiding in that condition, making no attempt to communicate with humanity or in any other way to transgress the Divine Law, waiting quietly for the foretold time of judgment. To such, witnesses of affairs upon earth, passive spectators of the drama of sin and death, there may come repentance and a change of heart which will enable their Creator to pronounce them worthy of life, and assign them some station in His

creation. To those who have shown irrevocable opposition to God by repeated endeavours to overcome the restraints of Tartarus, and who even in the "judgment of the Great Day" are still impenitent, there can be only one end. For angels, as well as for men, it is always true that "the wages of sin is death."

Thus, when the penitent have been ushered into life, and the incorrigible have closed their troubled existence in death, Tartarus, like Death and Hell, shall be "Cast into the lake of fire," and shall be known no more.

"HE MADE THE STARS ALSO"

Astronomers report remarkable activity on the planet Jupiter, activity which commenced early in February, and still continues. Jupiter is enshrouded with "belts" which are thought to be of the same nature as the canopies which at one time encircled the earth, and which, collapsing, played their part in the order of events which are briefly outlined in the first chapter of Genesis. The vast distance which separates Jupiter and the earth makes it difficult to determine clearly what is the precise nature of the observed activity, but such phenomena as can be studied are in harmony with the idea that what is going on there at the moment is just such a local "downrush" of canopy material on to the face of the planet as must have occurred many times in the history of this earth. The significance of all this to the Bible student is immense; it indicates that the story of earth's preparation for living beings is perhaps being repeated out there in the depths of space. It is already known that earth's next door neighbour, the planet Mars, has arrived at the "fourth creative day" stage, the appearance of vegetation and access of the sun and moons' light—Mars has two moons—to its surface. (See B.S.M. for February, 1941.) It might well be that astronomers in 1943 are witnessing, all unwittingly, "second creative day" operations on our farther neighbour. Who knows what wonders of material creation, what varieties of intelligent living beings, will grace some of these other mansions in the skies when at last the Divine Plan for human redemption has been completed and the curse of evil has been banished from the Universe for ever? And if these astronomical wonders men now discern with such difficulty do indeed indicate that other homes for other races of beings are in course of preparation, is that not an earnest of God's own sure knowledge that His Plan will arrive

at its fore-ordained consummation just at the appointed time? As truly as I live, saith God, the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of Jehovah."

"NOT AS THE SCRIBES!"

In striking contrast to our own confidence and assurance in the revealed word of God stands the hesitant manner in which the "Higher Critics" attempt to explain how the Scriptures came to be written. Here is a typical extract from a recently published book (italics are our own) dealing with the 13th chapter of Mark, one of the chapters in which the Lord gave us the signs of His Second Advent. This passage was intended to be a sure guide to Christians living at the end of the Age. Here is what the Critics make of it.

"This chapter is different from the rest of the book. An apocalyptic tract, *perhaps* written some years earlier, *seems* to have been incorporated by St. Mark, *perhaps* with some alterations. The two main themes of the chapter, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world, are *interwoven in a perplexing way*. Three paragraphs, vs. 7, 14-20, and 24-27, *may* represent the original leaflet; these *seem* to have been combined with some sayings of our Lord. . . . it is not always easy to decide between actual words spoken and the author's interpretation of them. But the main teaching of the chapter is clear, and must have meant much to the persecuted Christians for whom St. Mark was writing."

The concluding sentence seems hardly in accord with the dubious and uncertain tone of the preceding words. How different Paul's confident words to Timothy: "All Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3: 16-17).



"KEPT!"

T.H.



The surrendering up of a stewardship is always a searching time. It is not every steward who can do this with honour, and look back upon the period of stewardship with satisfaction and delight. Conscious himself of his lapses and failings, the retiring steward could find his mind disturbed by thinking that his successor may bring the lapses to light, or himself do so much better, that, by contrast, his late Master may conclude that the retiring servant had not done as well as he might have done. Happy, indeed, the man who can carry into retirement the conviction that he has not consciously been derelict in duty, and need have no fear even though heaven and earth search into his record.

In that incomparable prayer in John 17, our Lord was rendering up, as a man, His stewardship. He had been entrusted with the highly responsible position of teaching and protecting the little band of apostles, plus a wider circle of believers, numbering in all about five hundred brethren (1 Cor. 15: 6).

These all were of the class that had been waiting for the consolation of Israel, and had readily followed the Lord throughout the most part of His ministry. And these all (but the Apostles in particular) were the choicest souls in Israel, of whom the Lord Jesus said: "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to Me." Now, He had come to the final night of His human life, and in their hearing, so that they might know how close their relationship to God had been, and also how responsible before God His own relationship to them had been, He addressed the most moving and impressive prayer within the records of Holy Writ to the great God of Israel, who had set His love upon the members of this little band. What a sight for them it must have been, and how deeply it must have stirred their hearts to see and hear their Lord and Master engaged in this most intimate prayer—a scene and prayer without parallel in the annals of time.

Surely the occasion carried deep into their hearts, spite of the immediate lapse of some, a conviction that Abraham's God and Jesu's God—and now their own God—accounted them the dearest treasure, not only of their whole nation, but of all the nations of the earth.

To hear Jesus say: "For their sakes I sanctify myself (set myself apart) that they

"I have kept them in Thy Name."

(Jno. 17: 12)



also might be sanctified through the truth," could not do other than impress on them that they were the subjects of Heaven's highest care. This matchless untainted life had been devoted to their protection and instruction—this they already knew—but here in the subdued solemnity of that secluded room, it is their privilege to listen to the Shepherd of their souls, because His death was near, surrender up His charge to God Himself. "While I was with them . . . I kept them in Thy Name"; now, "Holy Father, keep through Thy own Name those that Thou hast given Me," are the impressive words which light on their ears as the Man of Sorrows commits them to His Father's care. That some of these words winged themselves to the target of their hearts is sure, for one who, in that supreme hour, heard them fall, himself wrote: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus . . . who . . . hath begotten us . . . who are KEPT by the power of God through faith." (1 Pet. 3: 5)

Thus, spite of Peter's temporary fall, the words of the dear Shepherd had fixed themselves in such wise that they emboldened him to tell all other spirit-begotten children of God that Divine Power was active as a garrisoning force in their lives, to throw a cordon around God's elect, and to be as an energising influence to help them in their resistance to the Adversary of their souls.

The truth that God was a "Keeper" of His people goes back a long way in Israel's history. At the very forefront of the Priestly blessing wherewith the High Priest was empowered to bless, stood the words: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee . . ." Thus the sense of a Divine Protector was early impressed upon Israel. In later days the Psalmist caught up the theme, and sang: "Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy Keeper . . . the Lord shall preserve thee from all evil . . . from this time forth and even for evermore" (Psa. 121: 4-8).

Again, in a very special promise to a very particular Servant, God said: "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people" (Isa. 42: 6). Again, in a variation of the same promise to the same honoured Servant, God says: "Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel . . . to

him whom man despiseth . . . In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee, and I will preserve thee and give thee for a covenant of the people . . ." (Isa. 49: 7-8).

Thus, in various ways, by many tongues the Lord impressed upon the faithful souls in Israel that the angel of the Lord encamped about them, and that the heavenly messengers were given a charge concerning them to keep them in all their ways, lest they should trip at a stone and fall.

Comparing these promises with Israel's actual national experience, it becomes at once apparent that these promises were not mere blank cheques to be filled in by all and sundry under any sort of condition or circumstance. The Lord did not unconditionally promise to keep Israel, either as a people or as individuals. Israel's chequered history is proof that the Lord did not at all times exert His power for her preservation. Israel was not a blank-minded automaton which could be wound up by a promise and sent undeviatingly upon her way. She was a stubborn, hard-necked, self-willed people, which used the endowment of free-will to choose her course, and set herself to follow out her own path. And most frequently her course was found to be at variance with the Will of God.

Obviously, therefore, conditions lay behind these promises, and only by complying with the conditions imposed, could the Promise itself be claimed. In what sense, then, had God promised to keep the heedful and faithful in Israel? Did He promise to preserve them from injury or death, and give them a long span of life? Let the records of those worthy names inscribed on Israel's honoured scroll (see Heb. 11) be answer to that. Individual faithfulness amid mass unfaithfulness made suffering inevitable.

Royal anger and mob passion wrought their fury upon the valiant souls which dared to obey God rather than bow to the dictates of men.

Thus, even the faithful in Israel fell in death, but in their fall the Divine Promise was verified. God kept them faithful to the end, when faithful testimony meant sure death, or sure confinement with stripes. That which was precious in God's sight was not the bulk of flesh and bones, but that heart of steel, that uncorrupted character, that outlook of well-guided faith. Into such faithful hearts God sent a flow of power—an insurgence of His

own mighty Spirit—an influence from His sovereign Throne. It charged and supercharged the batteries of stern resolve with heavenly dynamism, and made even the strongest men become stronger still. It made the weak more puissant than the loftiest kings, and showed that heaven's finger was powerful beyond even the loins of mighty men.

The Promise of Divine keeping required the opened sluices and unchoked channels of the human heart, so that its dynamic fulness could flow in and through the heart's every thought and word and act.

Thus and then, in either life or death, the Divine protection is an incontrovertible fact, an incontestable truth, and an invincible reality, and Israel's stalwarts always found it so, as fiery furnace-floors, lions' dens, violence of fire, mother-hearts bereaved, decapitating sword, and other unnumbered deaths bear testimony.

This little "great-word" comes down from the ages past, then, freighted with the victories of both God and men. Men had dared, and God had given the power of conquest over self, and circumstance. It tells of great responsibilities nobly borne, of great issues faithfully met; of the shaping of men's lives and the direction of a nation's destiny. When others had fallen faithlessly, God had kept them faithful unto death; when others had been set aside—discarded and disowned, God had "kept" these as His own—His own heart's treasure and delight.

"I kept them in Thy Name," said the beloved Lord—yes! when impetuous impulse rushed Peter off his feet, and discouraging doubts laid Thomas low, and uprush of indignation made James and John desire fire from heaven, and sharp contentions of would-be greatness gave bitterness its chance. These and many other pitfalls had beset their feet, but past them all His gentle words had safely guided them. Words of approval now and then to stimulate; words sharp with rebuke to afford restraint, words pregnant with instruction to enthuse their minds with Kingdom expectations—all these and many things beside had been fraught with keeping power. When success over demon-power threatened to intoxicate, He showed them that this was but the smallest thing in Kingdom work.

Thus, in happy season and sad, He had spoken the word which killed jealousy, checked resentment, smothered contention, provoked love and inspired hope. But, above

all else which had tended to keep them safe was the story of the Father's love. "I have manifested Thy Name unto the men which Thou gavest Me"—God's Name, God's character, God's Love, God's Holiness, God's Omnipotence—set forth in winsome little parables, which shot right home and gripped their interested hearts.

And then, "they have known surely that I came out from Thee; and they have believed that Thou didst send Me." Belief of this cardinal point helped them to stand; disbelief caused the nations to fall.

With the closing of the prayer they went forth into the night—the Master to His Gethsemane, and they to disappointment and flight. Peter fell, Thomas sank into the slough of doubt, others retired crestfallen, with memories disturbed, because He had not redeemed Israel. But into Peter's heart something had been instilled, which, when impulse had been again restrained, gave vent to penitential tears, and kept him from a Judas' fall. Something had been infused into the doubter's mind, and constrained him to venture again into the upper room, where the doubt was immediately overcome. Something had been sown into hearts that in sadness said "We trusted that it had been He," which sprang to renewed vigour as they watched Him breaking bread.

And thus, after one dark hour, while the Shepherd lay entombed, the keeping power began again, and brought to rich fruitage the words sown in pre-resurrection days. Timid and retiring men were made strong, and neither prison cells nor lictors' rods could stop their witnessing. Many of them fell in death—proving again that it was not mass of flesh and bone which God had promised to help and keep. But, again, the Divine Power wrought dynamic energy in the heart, and fitted to stand and withstand every strain. In weakness Divine Power matured, and made them more than conquerors.

Of the little band in the upper room, only one was lost. He had never been amenable to "keeping" power. A cultured man, yet withal a thief, and carping critic all the way. Cold, calculating, desirous to lead, not to be led, a conspirator and traitor to the end!—when came the evil hour he fell finally to his doom! It was not the Master's fault that he thus fell. He had seen and he had heard all that the others saw and heard, which to them had been the "keeping power," but he had not, like them, been "keep-able" or

"salvable."

Sight of eye, and hearing of ear had produced no good effect. He was thus unprepared for the evil hour, and died, as he had lived, with Mammon for his God. Son of Abraham though he was by birth, in moral things he was the child of the Evil One.

Setting the traitor, Judas, and the denier, Peter, side by side, we will be better able to determine what the "keeping power" may do. Peter had his many faults—impulsiveness, impetuosity, too great a readiness to speak—but he was amenable to restraint. If he roamed a little from the path, the Shepherd's crook could draw him back. When others went away and Jesus challenged them, it was Peter's ready tongue which said: "But where else can we go—only Thou hast the words of life!" Despite all his faults, he became one of the "inner" three—a sure token of a sincere man, with honest goodness in his heart.

For him, the Master prayed when the evil hour drew nigh. He knew Peter was "salvable" at heart. He knew the cyclonic rush of circumstance would sweep Peter off his feet, but He also knew he would rise again, and, after his turning about, become a tower of strength to his brethren. For Judas, Jesus uttered not a word. He knew him for the devil's child he was, and made no effort to deter him from his course.

Peter was one of whom God said: "He is Mine." Judas was one of whom Satan could have said: "He is mine." Peter was a true sheep of the Divine pasture. Judas was a wolf wearing a woollen fleece.

The Good Shepherd could keep God's sheep and bring him back when wandering. He was not authorised by God to protect the wolf, but rather to encompass its overthrow and destruction. The same influences were exerted in both cases, but one was saved, while the other was lost.

Brethren in the Lord, there is a determining power in God's truth, which, because of what is inherent in the heart, becomes a savour of life unto life for some, but a savour of death unto death for others! Why is this? The difference springs from the human heart—from the motives which lead to response towards the truth. Some are severely simple and sincere through and through; others are wayward, daring, and inclined to take liberties with the word and with Providence, while others are malicious, ravenous, greedy of place

and power, caring not who may suffer, if only they can gain their ends.

The Shepherd of the Flock is not commissioned to keep and protect the destructive wolf. He is not authorised to check the wayward goat, but He is deputed to use Almighty pastoral power to keep and guard and feed the sheep of God in every circumstance. The true sheep hears His voice. The goat, too, may hear His voice. Even the wolf may hear His voice. But the true sheep immediately obeys. The goat will wander on. The wolf will slouch around waiting for his "kill."

Immediate response to the leading influence of the Lord manifested in the daily Providence is the keynote of the "keepable" state; hesitation to obey, or refusal to obey makes the "keeping" work impossible.

Sheep do not change into goats. Neither do they become wolves. If a seeming brother falls

The pagan deity most frequently mentioned in the Old Testament is Baal, whose visible emblem was the sun. Baal is referred to nearly one hundred times, and his worship was attended by such degrading rites that Israel was forbidden to countenance or tolerate it under any circumstances. Yet this idolatrous worship was but the corruption of a once purer and holier faith. The peoples of Canaan had worshipped God with a nobler and better knowledge of His character; and this is indicated by the very construction of the name itself. "Baal" is thought to be derived from "Bara-el," meaning the "Creator-God," and in earlier days—earlier even than the time of Melchisedek, the "Priest of the Most High God," whose royal city of Salem first gave its name to the City of Peace—God was worshipped in spirit and in truth by men upon whom the degradation of the Fall had not yet proceeded so far as to obliterate from their minds all remembrance of the God of their fathers; nor so far as their descendants of later days, whose iniquity was so great that they were rooted up to make room for the chosen people of God.

BIBLE STUDY

"They are they which testify of Me"

Some of the Scriptures which speak of the "chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely."

The Seed of the Woman: Gen. 3, 15; Gal. 4, 4; 1 Tim. 2, 15; Rev. 12, 5.

Born of a Virgin: Psa. 22, 10; 69, 8; 86, 16; 116, 16; Isa. 7, 14; Isa. 49, 1; Jer. 31, 22; Mic. 5, 3; Math. 1, 23; Luke 1, 26-35.

it is scarcely likely that he ever was a sheep. The congregation may have accounted him a sheep, just as "the eleven" took Judas for a sheep, but the Lord had known the truth of the situation all the time. Only the right time and circumstance was needed to reveal the fact, and because there was no Shepherd's power at hand to "keep," the pretender fell. To enjoy the Shepherd's care as a true sheep is a blessed thing, but to have crept into the fold, yet not know the Shepherd's care is a state of dire peril indeed. Such may for a time range themselves around the study of the Word, but, lacking the sweet binding influence of the Holy Spirit—the caressing touches in communion of the Shepherd of the sheep—it is perhaps only a matter of time before their studious **ardour cools**, and their interest is dead. But on His own word, a true sheep He cannot lose; but keeps them to the end.

Of the Seed of Abraham: Gen. 12, 3; 18, 18; 22, 18; Math. 1, 1; John 8, 56; Acts 3, 25.

Of the Line of Isaac: Gen. 17, 19; 21, 12; 26, 4; Rom. 9, 7; Gal. 4, 23-28; Heb. 11, 18.

Of the Line of Israel: Gen. 28, 4-14; Ex. 4, 22; Num. 24, 7-17; Psa. 135, 4, etc.; Isa. 41, 8; 49, 6; Jer. 14, 8; Luke 1, 68; 2, 30-32; Acts 28, 20.

Of the Tribe of Judah: Gen. 49, 10; 1 Chron. 5, 2; Mic. 5, 2; Math. 2, 6; Heb. 7, 14; Rev. 5, 5.

Of the House of David: 2 Sam. 7, 12-15; 1 Chron. 17, 11-14; 2 Chron. 6, 42; Psalm 89, 4-36; 132, 10-17; Isa. 9, 7; 11, 1; 55, 3-4; Jer. 23, 5-6; Amos 9, 11; Math. 1, 1; Luke 1, 69; 2, 4; John 7, 42; Acts 2, 30; 13, 23; Rom. 1, 3; 2 Tim. 2, 8; Rev. 22, 16.

Born at Bethlehem, the City of David: Mic. 5, 2; Math. 2, 6; Luke 2, 4; John 7, 42.

His Sufferings: Gen. 3, 15; Psa. 22, 1-18; 31, 13; Psa. 89, 38-45; Isa. 53, 1-2; Dan. 9, 26; Zec. 13, 6-7; Math. 26, 31; Luke 24, 26; John 1, 29; Acts 8, 32-35; 26, 23.

His Death on the Cross: Num. 21, 9; Psa. 22, 16; 31, 22; Isa. 53, 8-9; Dan. 9, 26; Math. 20, 19; 26, 2; John 3, 14; 8, 28; 12, 32-33; 1 Cor. 15, 3; Col. 2, 14; Phil. 2, 8.

His Burial: Isa. 53, 9; Math. 26, 42; Mark 14, 8; John 12, 7; 19, 40; 1 Cor. 15, 4.

His Resurrection: Psa. 16, 10; 17, 15; 49, 15; 73, 24; Math. 12, 40; 16, 4; 27, 63; John 2, 19; Acts 2, 27-31; 13, 35; 1 Cor. 15, 4.

His Ascension into Heaven: Psa. 16, 11; 24, 7; 47, 5; 68, 16; 110, 1; Psa. 118, 19; John 20, 17; Acts 1, 11; 2, 24; Eph. 4, 8-10; Heb. 1, 3; Heb. 2, 9; Rev. 12, 5.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GONE FROM US.

Brother W. T. Garnett of Maidstone, passed away on 18th March. Our brother was well known to many in this country and he will be greatly missed. In former times a member of the Society of Friends, he retained in his conversation and personality much of the old-world grace characteristic of Friends, and a time of fellowship with Brother Garnett was always a time of spiritual uplift. His Christianity found practical expression in many unobtrusive deeds of benevolence, in instant readiness to assist brethren in perplexity or difficulty, and in his willingness to co-operate with any who sought to further the unity of the brethren. The loss of his gracious presence is a loss indeed, but the memory of his labours will linger long with us.

ANONYMOUS.

We would acknowledge with sincere appreciation the receipt of an anonymous gift of 10/- (April).

BAPTISMAL SERVICE.

The friends at Forest Gate hope to arrange a baptismal service on the morning of Whit Sunday (June 13th) should there be any brethren who find this opportunity a convenience, they are desired to write Bro. F. H. Guard, 74 Princes Avenue, Woodford Green, Essex, who will be pleased to make all necessary arrangements for their comfort.

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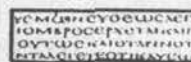
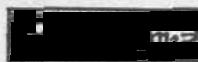
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Blessed are ye when men curse
persecute you / and shall falsely say
of you, ye are mad
for me

All valleys shall be exalted
mountayne and hylt layde
to is croked that be made str

ye feed of Abraham his servan
Jacob his chosen
the Lord our God: his ju

And God shall wipe away all
tears from their eyes: and there
shall be no more death, neither
mourne, nor crying, neither shall
there be any more pain: for the
former things are passed away

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JUNE, 1943

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TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH—

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come to "all people," and they find access to Him.

—I. Cor. 3; 16, 17. Eph. 2; 20-22. Gen. 28; 14. Gal. 3; 29.

That meantime the chiselling, shaping and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these "living stones," elect and precious, shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with His glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.

—Rev. 15; 5-8.

That the basis of hope, for the Church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,"

—Heb. 2; 9. Jno. 1; 9. I Tim. 2; 5-6.

That the hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see Him as He is," "be partaker of the Divine nature," and share His glory as His joint-heir.

—I. Jno. 3; 2. Jno. 17; 24. Rom. 8; 17. 2 Pet. 1; 4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be "kings and priests" in the next Age.

Eph. 4; 12. Matt. 24; 14. Rev. 1; 6; 20; 6.

That the hope of the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and His glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.

Acts 3; 19-23. Isa. 35.

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- No. 12 Will there be Wars for Ever?
- No. 13 The Immortality of the Soul
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AN EXTRACT FROM NO. 16 APPEARS ON BACK COVER



The Potter and the Clay.

— T.H. —

2. Divine Right.

Discussing for the Roman brethren the question of Israel's fall and God's sovereign prerogative to choose and equip whom He wills to serve His purposes, the Apostle wrote: " . . . hath not the Potter a right over the clay from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? "—or less honour (Rom. 9; 21, R.V.).

This is a profound question, and probes deeply into the then perplexing problems of the Christian church. And it has helped to cause deep perplexity in the church in more recent times.

The doctrine of Divine selection—election, as it is called—as cast in the Calvinistic mould is a most repulsive doctrine. It has caused more heartache among Godfearing men than any other single feature of Christian theology. Men of kindly heart have writhed in pain, and groaned in perplexity at the stark statements of that austere creed, because they had no way of escape from having to admit that the words of Holy Writ (particularly from the pens of Peter and Paul) required their consent to the claim that those men upon whom God's favour came were His elect, and that those upon whom no such favour came were "non-elect" and "passed-by." It was the misfortune of these men to find their lot cast in a day when theology knew no other alternative destiny for men than an eternity in heaven or hell. Coat the nauseous pill as they may, it was a soul-racking experience to be compelled, without personal choice, to swallow and then to proclaim the statement that the God whom they tried to love and serve had consigned by far the greater part of this sinful race to an indescribable destiny of conscious pain and suffering to last for evermore. It was a terrible doctrine for any man to teach, even were he himself brutal and callous as a beast. Kindlier men revolted at the thought, even when necessity compelled them to assent thereto.

Among others who joined revolt against this repellent creed was Robbie Burns, who wrote with little sympathy but much fine scorn for



"Hath not the Potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" (Rom. 9; 21 R.V.)



this then prevalent theme in his native land:

"Oh Thou, wha in the heavens dost dwell,
Wha, as it pleases best Thyself,
Sends aye to heaven and ten to hell
A' for Thy Glory,
And no for ony guid or ill
They've done afore Thee."

That this repulsive creed was a gross travesty of one of the finest themes of Holy Writ makes the tragedy of its proclamation all the deeper. Had some of these kindlier souls known the real truth about the Potter's right to fashion His clay as it pleased Him, they would have rent the very heavens with praise and exultation.

May the Lord be praised that our lot is cast in more favoured days, and that we can now face up to the tremendous claims of Divine sovereignty with keen appreciation of the love that chooses to bless all the nations of the earth, and then spends time and effort to prepare a chosen channel through which His grace may flow to reach all the non-elect residues of men. Not an eternal exclusion from His love, but an eternal redemption for the "passed-by" mass, is the objective behind all God's electing processes.

The language in Paul's argument in Romans is very direct and penetrating. He does not ask whether God (as the Master Potter) has any clay to work upon. He takes it for granted that He has. He also assumes that God does possess power (or right) to work up that clay into vessels which will serve His purposes. Paul's question, therefore, is: "Hath not the Potter the right (R.V.) over the clay from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" (or less honour). It is a question of the Potter's "right of choice," that is to say, of His prerogative to select one portion for a particular purpose and allot another portion for a different purpose altogether.

In the ordinary work-a-day sphere from which this illustration is drawn men would readily say (at least in ordinary times) that the Potter has every right to fashion the clay

in such moulds or in such manner as he pleases, according to the purpose he has in mind. If the clay is his own, and the factory is also his property, then he has every right to work the clay to his own design.

But this is scarcely the side of the question which Paul is considering. It is a portion of the clay itself which is represented as taking tongue and voicing its dissatisfaction against the Potter's right. "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it: Why didst thou make me thus? Why hast thou made me thus, and the other portion otherwise?"

It is thus seen to be a question of the use to be made of the clay and whether the Potter has any free option or choice to make it up according to a single design or to many designs, if need so arise.

Behind this "Potter" argument there lies a great fact of history and experience. To Paul's mind, God is the great Master-Potter. And God's creative work on some vessel upon which He has been engaged is that which accords with the Potter's productive activity. The earthly craftsman's side of the illustration pertains only to God, and therefore the Potter's right to use some of the clay for some one particular purpose, and some of the remainder for another, illustrates God's right to use some of His clay for one purpose, without finding it necessary to use **all** the clay for that one purpose exclusively.

The argument claims for God the Potter's right to use a portion of His clay in making a special vessel for a very special purpose, if need arise, and to devote the remainder (or any portion of the remainder) to the construction of a different type of vessel (or many different types) at His will and pleasure, without in any way being answerable to the clay for what He has already done or is presently about to do. "Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?" he asks. That is, who are they among men who will presume to question or remonstrate against the workings of God's hand! Must the Most High justify Himself before men, and ask their concurrence with His designs before He can commence His work?

"But," says the objector, "that is only one side of the argument. If God were really working on clay—and on nothing of higher import than clay—we would concede your argument. There would then be nothing for us to say! But God is not working upon clay. He is working upon men! Moreover,

these men are of one common stock, and above even this, these men are creatures endowed with free will—with the abilities to choose for themselves whether they shall or shall not become the craftsman's material for His workmanship. As such, we claim the right to be consulted before God begins to work upon us! Secondly, being of one common stock, we may not be able to concur with the design to make some part of us into a special vessel, and relegate the remainder to inferior use. Such partiality may be unfair, and we may need to reserve our right to object to such partisan selectivity?"

Thus, two major questions of God's relationship to men were involved in Paul's argument, though they may well be called "questions behind" the main question at issue—questions of deeper and more fundamental importance than that propounded by Paul's reasoning. The first major question is the old, old question of God's Divine Sovereignty versus man's free will and right of choice. If God is absolute sovereign in His wide domains, possessing not only the right to express His determinate will, but having at His command all authority and power to enforce and operate created things accordant with that will, how then can man be free to choose contrary to God's will? Or to state the problem from the other side, if man is free to choose (or if man was originally created free to choose) the evil course as readily as the good, how then can God be accounted absolute ruler of the universe?

This question need not detain our study now—although it is a question always of fundamental consequence to every moral being both in heaven and earth. The complete answer to its issues can be forthcoming only after a comprehensive review of the whole Plan of the Ages, when it can be shown that the co-operation of adverse circumstances, consequent upon man's fatal choice, and the free flow of Divine benevolence, to meet the dire need of man's extremity, will at last bring the will of man to choose (by its own free swing) a course concordant with the will of God.

The second major issue underlying Paul's argument is this: Has Divine sovereignty the right to choose among **fallen** men, and take into His hands one section only of the human race, leaving the remainder to wallow in its sin and weakness, without help or comfort from His almighty throne? To this second fundamental question, every son of Abraham would readily give assent. Their whole his-

toric national experience would be evidence to that end. That God had chosen them, to be His people, was the bedrock of their very existence. Other people had been excluded from God's care, and left to their own designs, while Israel was God's chosen race. That claim was the core of Israel's faith, and around it all her hopes were built. On this second major issue Paul and his critics would be agreed. But this major issue was capable of sub-division, and of further application in Paul's day. A new issue had arisen by reason of new circumstances. That issue had been narrowed down, and could be stated thus: Has the Divine sovereignty the right to take one portion only of His previously selected nation and mould it to a higher destiny, leaving the uncalled section to mark time and wait till His work in the selected portion was complete? Has the Potter the right to take one portion of the clay to make a vessel unto special honour, while reserving the set-aside portion to make a vessel unto less honour afterwards? This issue had been raised in consequence of the coming of Jesus into the world, and the invitation which He gave to such as were ready to follow in His steps.

Paul's whole argument centres round this call. All his references to their ancestral history are cited to prove that, though certain men were of common stock (Abrahamic stock), God made choice of some, and excluded some. And as it has been in the ages past, so it could be again in their own day. No captious critic among the Jews had complained of God's choice in former days, for, it was on these heavenly preferences, the whole house of Israel has built its claim until this day.

Now, when a further application of the same principle was proposed, the whole Rabbinic structure was up in arms to dispute and combat it. They now denied the Potter's right to choose a portion of His clay, and set the rest aside. Self-interest had blinded them so that they could not understand the application of the age-old principle when applied to themselves. The issue, so obvious in ancient days, was not so obvious to them in their own day because the issue had not yet reached its final stage. The setting aside of the cast-away was not complete till Jerusalem was overthrown and the Temple levelled to the ground. Then the "passing-by" would have become obvious to all, for, in that destructive climax, the nation had become set aside like Esau and Ishmael

had been set aside.

That climax was the sequel to a trend of circumstances which men like Paul could see in their own day operating in the nation everywhere. The call of Jesus to His sheep to follow in His steps had divided the nation wherever Jewish people dwelt, and set the tendencies and trends of thought and activity so that one part were called to higher things, while the remainder drifted in gathering darkness till they were broken on the rocks. While the Word of God had not been without some effect, in that it had gathered a "remnant" to the cross of Christ, there were at that time many who, while claiming descent from Israel, were not now in standing as Israel. A new situation had arrived, and their old standing was not enough. Hence, while the new situation remained, they who had no standing, except the old, had no place in the economy of Israel. Hence, also, because so utterly unfit for the new day, they stumbled, and eventually fell, and were set aside, to wait with hardened heart, till the new situation (the Christian call) had passed away, and a still newer situation should be come. Though in themselves they were Abraham's natural seed, they were not the "sons" of this "better" dispensation. Only the "sons" born out of the "Promise" have inheritance in the privileges of to-day.

Was there, then, unfaithfulness in God, as the Rabbinic teaching alleged, in setting the Jew aside in the Apostolic days, because He insisted that His clay must have plastic qualities adapted to His present purposes? If so, He must have been unrighteous in "by-passing" Ishmael, and in showing greater love for Jacob than Esau! But no Jew would have admitted that. Out of their own mouth, therefore, God established the righteousness of His claim to set aside such as were not in step with dispensational adjustments and requirements, taking only such as suited His purposes, and concluding all the rest in unbelief and hardness of heart till a better day should come. The whole selective scheme, from its first beginning to its final end, rests on a well-defined principle that God may rightly take the better part and mould it to a special end, leaving the less suitable part to lie aside till another day has dawned, and then, under less stringent conditions, making it another vessel as it shall then please Him to make—a vessel still unto honour, but less honour than the first.

THE QUIET TIME

 C.T.W.

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

DAILY CONSECRATION.

Every day let us renew the consecration to God's service; every day let us, in His strength, pledge ourselves afresh to do His will, even in the veriest trifle and to turn aside from anything that may displease Him. He does not bid us bear the burdens of tomorrow, next week or next year. Every day we are to come to Him in simple obedience and faith, asking help to keep us and aid us through that day's work; and tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, through long years of tomorrows it will be the same thing to do; leaving the future always in God's hands, sure that He can care for it better than we. Blessed trust that can thus confidently say, "This hour is mine with its present duty; the next is God's, and when it comes His Presence will come with it."

*Lord, I my vows to Thee renew;
Scatter my sins as morning dew;
Guard my first springs of thought and will.
And with Thyself my spirit fill.
Direct, control, suggest this day
All I design, or do, or say;
That all my powers with all their might,
In Thy sole glory may unite.*

WE ASK THY PEACE.

We ask for peace, oh Lord!
Thy children ask Thy peace;
Not what the world calls rest,
That toil and care should cease;
That through bright sunny hours,
Calm life should fleet away,
And tranquil night should fade
In smiling day;
It is not for such peace that we would pray.
We ask for peace, oh Lord!
Yet not to stand secure,
Girt round with iron pride,
Contented to endure:
Crushing the gentle strings
That human hearts should know,
Untouched by others' joy
Or others' woe;
Thou, oh dear Lord, wilt never teach us so.
We ask Thy peace, oh Lord!
Through storm, and fear, and strife,
To light and guide us on
Through a long struggling life;
While no success or gain

Shall cheer the desperate fight,
Or nerve what the world calls
Our wasted might;
Yet pressing through the darkness to the light.

THANKING THE LORD.

Did I this morn devoutly pray
For God's assistance through the day?
And did I read His sacred word
To make my life therewith accord?
Have I bad thoughts restrained, and tried
To check ill-humour, anger, pride?
Did I my lips from words refrain
Which God offend and good men pain?
Did I with cheerful patience bear
The little ills we all must share?
From evil spared, with favours blessed,
Have I my grateful thanks expressed?
My Saviour God! be Thou my Friend!
Thy comforts, Holy Spirit, lend!
My sins and frailties, Lord, forgive,
And teach me better still to live!

GENTLE PEOPLE.

A perfect and a finished courtesy has always its roots struck deep down into humility; which humility, again, has its roots struck deep down into the grace of God. In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Yea, all of you be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble.

Humility and courtesy are the court manners of the kingdom of Heaven. A true, a finished and an unconscious courtesy is the perfect etiquette of the palace and presence of the great King.

CONTENTMENT WITH OUR LOT.

It is not by seeking more fertile regions where toil is lighter—happier circumstances, free from difficult complications and troublesome people—but by bringing the high courage of a devout soul, clear in principle and aim, to bear upon what is given to us, that we brighten our inward light, lend something of a true life and introduce the Kingdom of Heaven into the midst of our earthly day. If we cannot work out the Will of God where God has placed us, then why has He placed us there?

(J. H. Thom.)

The Ministry and Genius of Isaiah.

✦ F.T.B. ✦

A brief outline of the
historical setting of
the Book of Isaiah.

Isaiah was the greatest of the Old Testament prophets; the outstanding evangelist of the Hebrew race. His name is a compound one; it means "the salvation of Yahweh." The prophet was conscious of his name, and realised that he did not bear it accidentally. Jesha and Jeshuah are among his favourite words, and seem to infer that, like Abraham, he lived by faith in the day of the future Jesus, who is the personal salvation of Jehovah (John 8, 56; Hebrews 11, 13).

His father, Amos—no relation to the prophet of that name—appears to have been a citizen of Jerusalem. The social position of Amos cannot be defined, but Isaiah seems to have held high rank, for when Hezekiah, King of Judah, enquired of him, he sent a deputation of his chief officials (2 Kings 19; 2). His prophetic ministry extends through the reigns of four kings, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, covering a period of at least forty years. Isaiah's prophecies have much in common with those of the other great prophets of the same period, Amos, Hosea and Micah.

Many pieces of prophetic history are interwoven in the book of Isaiah. That these pieces are from the pen of Isaiah is probable on this account, for prophecy and historiography were from the beginning never absolutely separated. The Chronicler refers to a portion of these historical pieces as incorporated in the book of Isaiah (2 Chron. 32; 32). He also informs us that Isaiah was the author of a historical monograph which embraced the whole reign of King Uzziah (2 Chron. 26; 22).

His prophecies are divided into two parts: chapters 1-39 forming Part I, and 40-66 Part II. Some modern scholars insist that Part II was written by an unknown author who lived in Babylonia about the close of the Exilic period. This unknown writer has been referred to by the names of the "Deutero-Isaiah," the "Babylonian Isaiah," and the "Great Unnamed." Needless to say, the most spiritually minded evangelical scholars do not share this view. Luke, the writer of the Third Gospel, knows nothing of a "Second Isaiah." He

states that there was delivered unto Jesus the book of the prophet Isaiah. Jesus opened the book and read from the sixty-first chapter (Luke 4; 18). John speaks of Jesus doing many signs, yet without convincing the people "that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake." John then records the opening verses of Isaiah, chapter fifty-three (John 12; 38). Paul does not share the modernist view, for he only speaks of one Isaiah. One of the chief difficulties of the modernist school is the inability to comprehend how Isaiah could prophesy concerning Cyrus, King of Persia, 174 years before he reigned.

"The question," says Prof. A. B. Davidson, "is one of fact and criticism exclusively, and not a matter either of faith or practice." The thoughts of the great Jewish Expositor, Samuel David Luzzatto, in Padua, are much to be preferred. He said: "As if Isaiah had foreseen that later scepticism will decide against the half of his prophecies, he has impressed his seal on all and has interwoven the name of God, 'Holy One of Israel,' with the second part, just as with the first, and even more oftener." Isaiah makes mention of the phrase, "Holy One of Israel," no less than seventeen times in the second part of his writings, and twelve times in the first.

It is convenient to divide Isaiah's ministry into five periods, which, although unequal in length, are marked each by features peculiar to itself. The first three may be said to be Assyrian in outlook, the fourth Assyrian and Babylonian, and the fifth Babylonian.

The first period extends from the death of Uzziah, about 740 B.C., to the beginning of the reign of Ahaz, and is dealt with chiefly in Isaiah, chapters 1, 5; 9, 8-21; 32, 9-14. Like Amos, Isaiah appears here mainly as a preacher of righteousness and judgment to come. His ministry begins at a time when Israel had forsaken God and placed their confidence in worldly prosperity, warlike resources, superstition and idolatry. Middle-class luxury, oppression of the poor by wealthy

merchants and tradesmen, wantonness of women, excess in festive drinking, and perversion of moral distinctions, abounded on every hand. He portrays this tragic condition of the spiritual life of Judah in these words: "And the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city" (Is. 1; 8). He describes their waywardness in these words: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider" (Is. 1; 3). Isaiah traces all the manifestations of national corruption to a single source; absence of a religious spirit, or the knowledge of God, in the men of his time. This truth he graphically describes in the unique story of the vineyard (Is. 5; 1-7).

The second period covers the critical period of the Syro-Ephraimite invasion of Judah, about 735 B.C., and is described in chapters 9, 8-21; 5, 25-30; 17, 1-11; chapters 7 and 8; perhaps also 9, 1-7. This period finds Isaiah in an entirely new rôle, that of a political adviser. This fact can be better appreciated when we look at the contrast which in this respect he presents to Amos and Hosea in the North. Like Isaiah, they looked forward to a future time of blessing for Israel, yet their writings contain no hint of political direction for the leaders of the state. It may be said here that Isaiah revives this political function of prophecy which had been in abeyance since the days of Elisha.

One of the outstanding events of this period is the impressive interview between Ahaz and Isaiah as a result of the invasion of Judah by the combined forces of Syria and Ephraim. By this unbrotherly act the Northern Kingdom sealed its own doom. Both it and Syria fell a prey to the advancing Assyrians under the leadership of Tiglath-pileser. Isaiah, chapter seven, sets out the interview between God's prophet and the faithless Ahaz. Isaiah assures the king that the conspiracy will come to nought, and holds out a promise of deliverance on the condition of faith in Jehovah. Ahaz replied: "I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord" (Is. 7; 12). Isaiah then continued the conversation, and gave utterance to the remarkable promise concerning a coming king in these words: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Is. 7; 14). The king's unbelief is answered by the threat of an

Assyrian invasion.

Isaiah did not accept the king's decision as final, but made an appeal to the people at large. From the court he delivers his messages in the form of a series of oracles which are contained in chapter eight. They probably extended over a period of some months. Isaiah could see that the Syro-Ephraimite conspiracy would be destroyed by the king of Assyria. He endeavoured to impress this encouraging fact upon the minds of the people by the erection of a motto: "To Maher-shalal-hash-baz" (Is. 8; 1, 2). Months later he gave the interpretation of the motto in connection with the birth of a son to whom he gave the motto as a name (Is. 8; 3, 4). The people did not believe him, his message fell on deaf ears. The prophet was right. Damascus was overthrown in 732 B.C., and Samaria some ten years later. Judah, however, did not become a theatre of war between Assyria and Egypt.

The rejection of the prophet's message by the common people marks a temporary cessation of his public activity (Is. 8; 16-18). The Lord hid his face from the house of Israel, in that he withdrew the guidance of the prophetic word which had been so coldly received. The next period is marked by the strange absence of any record of Isaiah's reflections on the events with which it is associated, namely the fall of Samaria in 721 B.C. This event is foretold in several of Isaiah's most striking prophecies. Read Isaiah 5, 26-30; 8, 1-4; 17, 1-11; 28, 1-4. The fall of Samaria must have profoundly affected Judah, especially so when it is realised that the Ten Tribes comprised the larger portion of Jehovah's people. This following by the proud boast of the Assyrian: "Shall I not, as I have done to Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her images?" should have had a very chastening effect on the heart of Judah (Is. 10; 11). Judah seems to have concluded that if Jehovah failed to avert the doom of the Northern Kingdoms, there was no assurance that He would protect her. This may have been the cause of the desperate struggle which afterwards took place to throw off the Assyrian yoke.

We now come to the most eventful stage of Isaiah's career, which covers a period from 720 B.C. to 701 B.C., during which time Hezekiah is king of Judah. It must be remembered that, throughout his prophetic career, Isaiah had always urged upon Judah the need for a position of isolation and absolute dependence

upon Jehovah. Ahaz absolutely refused to be guided by the prophet, and, fearing the consequences of a Syro-Ephraimite conspiracy, tendered his allegiance to Tiglath-pileser, who promptly responded to his appeal (2 Kings 15; 29).

The first hint that Hezekiah might endeavour to free himself from the pact to which his father was a party, might be found in the short oracle of Isaiah 14; 29-32, which is thought to have been the year of Hezekiah's accession to the throne. The next time that unrest is witnessed in Judah we find the Southern Kingdom in the black books of Sargon. It has been suggested that Isaiah, chapters 28-31 consist of the prophet's protests against negotiations on the part of Hezekiah with Egypt with a view to a revolt against Assyria. It is interesting to note that the originators of this revolt against Assyria in favour of an Egyptian alliance were anxious to keep the prophet in the dark in regard to their plot (Is. 29, 15; 30, 1). They did not succeed. Isaiah draws attention to their attempt to outwit the Almighty (Is. 29, 15; 30, 1-12; 31, 1-2).

Isaiah then resorted to an even more drastic attempt to turn public opinion against rebellion. For three years he walked the streets of Jerusalem "naked and barefooted" as a sign of humiliation which awaited not only Egypt—the power with which certain statesmen of Judah sought alliance—but the power of Ethiopia at the hands of Assyria (Is. 20; 2, 4). To quote the words of Dr. Skinner: "Isaiah consistently upheld the maxim that the safety of the state lay in abstinence from all attempts to recover its independence, and in quiet resignation to the will of Jehovah." There is no reason to suppose that the prophet held out any hope that such a course would spare them from the trial of an Assyrian invasion.

In this, as in other periods, we find Isaiah against the spirit of unbelief and unfaithfulness which inspired Judah to seek deliverance through human wisdom and effort and alliances with surrounding heathen states. It seems clear that Isaiah expected the defeat of Egypt and Ethiopia at the hands of Assyria (Is. chap. 20). He foresees a great expansion of the Assyrian empire under their victorious king, Sargon. Isaiah also realises that Assyria is an instrument in the hand of Jehovah to fulfil a divine purpose. But, as one historian asks: "How could an immoral force (Assyria)

be used for moral ends? When and where and how would the Assyrian overstep the limits of his commission and appear in open conflict with the will of Him who had raised him up? And when this point was reached, how would Jehovah rid himself of the formidable tool He had fashioned to execute His strange work on the earth?" This is the subject-matter of Isaiah, chapter 10, 5-34, which covers the major portion of the period under review.

The contrast should be noted between Jehovah's purpose in raising Assyria up and the unholy ambitions of that despotic world power (Is. 10; 5-15); the annihilation of this mighty military power under the metaphor of disease and conflagration (Is. 10; 16-19); the encouraging message to the faithful remnant in Israel (Is. 10; 20-27); the destruction of Assyria under the very walls of Jerusalem (Is. 10; 28-34). The picture ends with the attempt of Assyria to overrun the earthly seat of Jehovah's visible government in Jerusalem, as he stands over against the capital, "swinging his hand against the mount of the daughter of Zion" (Is. 10; 32). His armed forces suffer a mortal blow, and Judah is saved from the Assyrian terror. "The Lord God of Hosts shall lop the boughs with terror; and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down and the lofty one shall be humbled" (Is. 10; 33). Thus is the epic defeat of the Assyrians under Sennacherib foretold by Jehovah through the mouth of His faithful prophet. This prophecy was fulfilled in 701 B.C. Other references to this defeat are to be found in Isaiah 14, 24-27; 17, 12-14; and chapter 18.

Isaiah felt that the hour had arrived when Jehovah would destroy His enemies, and thus vindicate the truth that He was indeed the "Holy One of Israel." This was probably the gravest challenge to the power of God since the day when Samuel exclaimed: "Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God; for there is none like Thee, neither is there any God beside Thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears" (2 Samuel 7; 22-24). Read also Isaiah 28, 7; 31, 5, 8; 30, 27-33.

In order that we might obtain a clear impression of this crisis, it is necessary to briefly review the policy of King Hezekiah. He had formed the opinion that Sennacherib's enterprise against Babylon had considerably weakened his armies. On the other hand, Egyptian might under the influence of the Ethiopian Kings of Napata appeared to be in

the ascendancy. The traditional Egyptian interest in the Plain of Esdraelon—a triangular plain that breaks the Central range between Galilee and Samaria—was now likely to increase. Just as the close of Tiglath-pileser marked a change in the foreign policy of Judah, so the close of the reign of Sargon, also a king of Assyria, witnessed another change in the policy of Judah. The prospect of freedom from the financial yoke of Assyria, imposed during the reign of Ahaz, king of Judah, together with the visit to Jerusalem of a mission of the envoys from the Ethiopian kings of Napata, caused Hezekiah to believe that the psychological moment for action had arrived. From this time onward, Hezekiah acted swiftly. He fortified Jerusalem and placed in protective custody in the capital Padi, Assyrian vassal king of Ekron. The toil of the king was unavailing. Jehovah did not intend Judah to think that, within herself, she had the power to deliver herself from impending disaster, or that her ends could be accomplished through alliances with heathen kings.

As soon as Sennacherib, king of Assyria, was free from Babylonian commitments, he lost no time in directing his attention to the powers with whom Hezekiah had associated himself. They were all soundly defeated, thus leaving the road to Judah clear for a full-scale invasion. The puppet king, Padi, was surrendered by Hezekiah and restored by Sennacherib to his throne. The campaign against Judah then followed. The record of Sennacherib—now in the British Museum—and that in 2 Kings 18; 13-16, are in broad agreement, Hezekiah was defeated and subjected to a heavy fine.

Certain difficulties arise when comparing the foregoing account with Isaiah, Chapters 36 and 37. Of the various explanations that have been presented, it is generally held that after the capture of Ekron, Sennacherib set about the systematic reduction of the cities of Judah. Separate corps had the responsibility of capturing the capital. The Arabian army which Hezekiah had enlisted to his cause was easily defeated. Realising that further resistance was futile, Hezekiah sued for peace, which he obtained at the price of a very heavy fine. Assuming that he did not include the surrender of Jerusalem in his peace overtures, Sennacherib must have repudiated the agreement and gone back on his peace terms, for a siege of Jerusalem followed.

Hezekiah realised the helplessness of his position against so formidable a foe. In his extremity he went into the temple, and humbly and earnestly appealed to God for protection against the opposing forces. He beseeches God to "see and hear the words of Sennacherib which he had sent to reproach the living God" (Isaiah 37; 14-20). Isaiah was commissioned to reassure Hezekiah that the Assyrian army would not lay siege to Jerusalem, nor "shoot an arrow at it, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it" (Isaiah 37; 33).

Hezekiah's extremity was God's opportunity. Sennacherib's army perished in a night; the angel of the Lord performed his work swiftly, suddenly, and in silence (Isaiah 37; 36). Of the miraculous destruction of this mighty host, it has truly been said that "it is one of the outstanding examples of pacifism in practice."

An historian has summed up the crisis of the fate of Jerusalem in these words: "The crisis of Jerusalem's fate becomes the occasion of that final revelation of the majesty of God to which Isaiah had looked forward from the beginning of his work, and which he with increasing distinctness connected with the overthrow of the Assyrian power. The whole history of redemption converges to this one event; it is the consummation of Jehovah's work of judgment both on Israel and on Assyria, and the inauguration of the reign of holiness and righteousness and peace reserved for the purified remnant of the nation."

THE BOW OF PROMISE.

The ancient Peruvians had a legend to the effect that the sea was prevented from overflowing the land and drowning all the inhabitants only by virtue of the rainbow, the two ends of which were continually pressing upon the ocean and holding it down. This legend is quoted on the authority of Francis Lenormant, the French archaeologist. To those who are acquainted with the Biblical story of the Flood the story has some interest when it is remembered that Gen. 9: 12-26 tells of the rainbow being given as a sign of God's promise never again to destroy the world with water. Some dim memory of those days immediately after Ararat, handed down through the generations, has survived in this legend and creates a connecting link between Father Noah and his son, and the Peruvian Indians of South America.

HEAVEN'S PACIFIC CHARTER

× A. O. H. ×

An outline for the newly interested.

The Grecian philosopher Plato, four hundred years before Christ, recorded a story which was already old in his own time; a story of a great continent in the centre of the Atlantic, from which a horde of ruthless warriors poured over southern Europe and north Africa, their career of conquest proceeding unchecked until they reached the little land of Greece. The courage and tenacity of the Greeks overcame them, and after a fierce conflict the aggressors were driven back to their island, which, with all its people, was overwhelmed by a gigantic convulsion of Nature, and disappeared for ever beneath the sea.

From the days of this legendary "Lost continent of Atlantis" to the more matter-of-fact story of the Atlantic Charter drawn up in 1941 between Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Winston Churchill in the middle of the same ocean is a far cry, but the same story of aggressive warfare and stalwart resistance links them together. The Atlantic has carried the fleets of warring nations since men first began to sail its waters, and to-day it lives up more than ever to its grim reputation.

Men looked upon the Atlantic Charter as the guarantee of a "New Order." Its eight points were hailed as the principles which should set society upon a firm basis; and yet, when as yet the ink is hardly dry upon the paper, voices are raised in criticism, and men begin to point to anomalies and weaknesses which, they say, deprive the Charter of any real value, and will render ineffective the work of its sponsors. Even its most ardent advocates admit the existence of serious difficulties in the way of its execution, and as the bitter struggle in which the nations are engaged lengthens and intensifies, men's hearts begin to fail them for fear as they foresee the things which are coming upon the earth.

Is there no way out? Is there no Charter of Freedom for oppressed and suffering humanity, one backed by power sufficient to overcome all obstacles and enduring enough to bring into operation a "New Order" giving all men the wise and just government which is so greatly desired?

There is.

God, Who at sundry times and in diverse manners has revealed His purposes to men devoted to His service, did once, in the long ago, draw up an "eight-point charter" defining the conditions of that "New Order" which He purposes to introduce upon earth in the time of man's extremity—a time which cannot be far away. That charter was written, not upon a battleship in the Atlantic Ocean, but on the tiny island of Patmos in the Eastern Mediterranean. It was given, not to powerful and renowned statesmen, who, despite their masterly handling of this world disaster, are at best exponents only of the "wisdom of this world," but to a saintly old man, who, through the course of a long life spent in the service of Christ, had done much to establish in the Roman world that faith by means of which alone men will achieve lasting life and happiness. Not an "Atlantic" charter, born of war and perhaps bearing within itself possibilities of future calamities, but a "Pacific" charter born of peace, and destined to come to full fruition in the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ upon earth, a kingdom in which universal brotherhood makes possible the age of everlasting peace.

It is said that the Pacific Ocean received its name when the Portuguese explorer Magellan, entering upon this new sea which no European had ever navigated, found the storms and gales of the Atlantic give place to a placid calm in which all creation seemed to be at peace. How fitting a picture of humanity's emergence from the terrors and darkness of this "present evil world" into the light and satisfaction of that "world to come, wherein dwelleth righteousness," which is to be the lot of humanity upon earth at the coming again of Jesus Christ. "Heaven's Pacific Charter" will surely give greater confidence for the future than the highest of aspirations of mortal men unsupported by the power of God.

Heaven's charter is unconditional. It does not depend upon military victory or the co-operation of this nation or that one. It does not require the concurrence of vested interests, the support of popular votes, the blessing of

ecclesiastical institutions. It depends for its enforcement upon the almighty power of God Most High, and His own fixed intention to establish order and harmony in a world which lost both at almost the beginning of man's existence. The greatest and most powerful ruler the world has ever known will control the nations in the day that God intervenes to save mankind, but His rule will be one in which every right-minded man will willingly acquiesce, for it will abolish sin and death and every manifestation of evil, and at the conclusion of that momentous work the great King, Jesus Christ, will do what no human dictator does willingly; He will hand over the government of this world to restored, perfected, ever-living men, secure in the knowledge that from thenceforth for ever they will govern themselves and their affairs in perfect amity and concord, and the shadow of strife and warfare darken the earth no more.

This is the "New Order" which our Heavenly Father has planned. Now for the "Eight-Point Charter" which He has drawn up to define the programme which must be completed in order to bring it into effect.

The Charter is recorded in the visions of the Book of Revelation. The symbolic imagery of that wonderful book is outside the scope of this treatise, but let it be remarked in passing that John the Revelator was seeing in vision the time when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11: 15). That "far-off Divine event, to which the whole creation moves" was far off indeed in John's day, nearly two thousand years ago. In every generation since then, earnest, watchful Christians have been looking and waiting for the coming of God's kingdom on earth, and praying daily: "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Many, in times past, have harboured premature expectations and experienced disappointments at their failure, but slowly the signs have hardened into certainties, and to-day the consensus of enlightened Christian opinion is that the time is very near when the ancient petition will be answered.

The vision which pictures the proclamation of the imminence of God's kingdom may be finding its fulfilment, then, in our own day; and the terms of the Charter which immediately follow will in that case be of immediate interest.

And here is this Eight-Point Charter:

"We give thee thanks," say the heavenly heralds in Rev. 11: 17, "O Lord God Almighty . . . because:

- (1) "Thou hast taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned.
- (2) "And the nations were angry.
- (3) "And thy wrath is come.
- (4) "And the time of the dead, that they should be judged.
- (5) "And that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets.
- (6) "And to the saints.
- (7) "And to them that fear thy name, small and great.
- (8) "And shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth."

Surely such a charter is worthy of examination!

The first point in the programme is the assumption of world control by the powers of Heaven. The Most High has never given up His right to rule in the world of men, but because men have turned away from His laws and followed the counsels of their own hearts He has left them for a time to their own course, knowing that experience is always the best teacher, and that mankind, having as a whole rejected His counsel, must learn by bitter experience the "exceeding sinfulness of sin." Governments of every description, "gods many and lords many" have had their opportunity to control the administration of human affairs, and all have come far, far short of the ideal. The nation of Israel, four thousand years ago, was selected for special training by God to give a demonstration of the result of Divine supremacy in national life; but they fell to fighting between themselves, and to relying upon the power of their arms instead of upon God, and the demonstration failed. The same principles have been uppermost ever since, with the result that the whole earth is now in a state of chaos. Nearly all men agree that a totally new basis for society must be found. Now the time has come for the Most High God to intervene more actively, and to take to Himself the power of control which is rightfully His, commanding stillness to the nations whilst He proclaims the reign of earth's new King.

How will the proclamation be made? Where will the new King set his capital? Sober study of the Scriptures in these latter days has convinced many that the Saviour will not return to earth as a man as in the days of His flesh. He took upon Himself human

nature for a specific purpose—"for the suffering of death"—and since He was exalted to the Father's right hand He has resumed that spiritual nature which was His before He came to earth. Hence, when His return takes place, it is as a glorious spirit being, invisible to human eyes, ruling through chosen human representatives, who, according to the prophecies, will have their centre at Jerusalem. "Out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2: 3). This present terrible period of trouble upon earth will have chastened the peoples of earth so that many will be ready to say: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us" (Isa. 25: 9).

The second point: "And the nations were angry." It is hardly necessary to point to the manifest fulfilment of these words in the present time. Never in all history have the nations been so angry as now. Commercial rivalry between them, continued over many years, has been the cause of suspicion and enmity; trade compacts and barriers have brought ruin and disaster to many peoples; in desperation, nations have become flagrant aggressors in their determination to secure a share of the riches of the earth for themselves; and so this terrible war, which bids fair to lay waste all the pleasant places of the earth, is the outcome. Christian ethics and ordinary morality have been almost totally rejected by some countries and are largely discounted by all, and men fight each other with every device of destruction their ingenuity can devise. Press and radio alike pour out a ceaseless stream of invective and propaganda directed against the opposing side. Truly, the nations are angry as never before.

So logically to the third point: "Thy wrath is come." Too often have men thought of God as an angry, malicious Deity, having no interest in man except to save a few for heavenly glory and consign all the rest to everlasting woe, the earth and all its works being burned up. To-day we see more clearly. "The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all **unrighteousness**" (Rom. 1: 18), not necessarily against man, and in this Time of the End it is the evil things and institutions of earth, those that have blasphemed God and oppressed humanity, that are to experience the full force of God's outraged wrath, and go down into a destruction from which there will be no recovery. There is a vision in the Book of Revelation (chap. 14) where the grapes of

the "vine of the earth" are gathered and flung into the winepress of the wrath of God. In this way is pictured the utter overthrow and hopeless destruction of every power and system, whether social, political or ecclesiastical, that stands in the way of God's righteous government, preparatory to the reign of absolute righteousness which will be inaugurated by Jesus Christ.

Point four: "And the time of the dead, that they should be judged." In olden days the Day of Judgment was pictured as a dark, gloomy, terrifying day. The Bible declares it to be a day of rejoicing and happiness. All that are in their graves are to come forth and hear the voice of the Son of God (Jno. 5: 28). All who have ever lived on earth will return in new beauty and health of form and feature, and find that a full and fair opportunity of learning of Christ and accepting Him is to be vouchsafed to them. No matter how sad and dark and hopeless the past life, Jesus died for all, "A Ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. 2: 6), and now the due time has come, "the time of the dead, that they should be judged."

Point five: "And that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets." These are the "great cloud of witnesses," as the writer to the Hebrews calls them—men and women of the days before Christ, who manifested such sterling faith and loyalty in the midst of unparalleled trials and persecutions. "Stoned, sawn asunder . . . of whom the world was not worthy." These "Ancient Worthies," or "Old Testament Saints," as they are sometimes called, will be called forth from the grave to be "princes" in the new earth, and to administer the laws of the new Kingdom; and right worthy men and women they will be, well fitted for the task of ruling earth's masses in peace and uprightness.

Associated with these "princes," but in the heavenly sphere, are those who are mentioned in point six. "And to the saints." The "saints," or "holy ones" of the New Testament, the disciples or "Church" of Christ, look for a hope and a salvation which is spiritual and not material, in heaven and not upon earth. Paul declares in I Cor., chap. 15, that those who are thus faithful to their life-long covenant to be "dead with Christ" are to be "changed" from earthly to heavenly conditions. "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years," says the Revelator, and since the Lord Jesus Christ Himself will

rule the world from His spiritual dwelling, the Church, His faithful followers, will be translated to that same place, that they might be with Him. The hope of the saints is to be made "like Him," and to "see Him as He is."

But this does not exhaust God's store of blessing. He has a feast of good things in reservation for all men, "whosoever will." What of the remainder of mankind, who have not yet accepted the Redeemer. Point seven provides for the giving of "reward" to "them that fear thy name, small and great." The Millennial Age which is dawning will be a long period of missionary endeavour which will result in every human being coming to a knowledge of the Truth (1 Tim. 2; 4), and enjoying a full, fair opportunity to yield himself to the Lord Jesus Christ. "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained" (Acts 17; 31). In that thousand-year day of judgment ample opportunity will be given to every man to accept the grace of God in Christ.

What is the reward? Nothing less than everlasting life upon a restored and perfect earth. No more death, no more disease, no more pain. No crime, no violence, no tears, no sorrow. The nations will have long since beaten their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks. "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. 2; 4). The world's work will be carried on by willing hands—no laggards, no idleness, no unemployment. There will be an abundance for all, wisely and efficiently distributed—no starvation, no destitution, no "poverty in the midst of plenty." Messiah's kingdom is indeed to be

**"A day of light and gladness,
Such as earth has never known."**

But what of those who even after the abundant opportunities of the Millennial Age refuse to bow the knee to Christ; decline to come into harmony with righteousness; continue

still in sin, for the love of sin. Point eight—the last point—of the Charter declares the fate of such. "... and destroy them that destroy (Greek—*corrupt*) the earth." God, who made the earth and man upon it, has a right to demand that His creatures observe the laws of their being, which are also at the same time the laws of righteousness. The continued existence of men who refuse to play their rightful part as citizens of God's kingdom can be a source of happiness neither to themselves nor to others. The sin that remains in them must inevitably end in death, and so, before the end of the Millennial Age, any who may refuse to abandon sin and accept the Lord Jesus Christ, and in Him come to true righteousness and human perfection, will have come to the end of a life of which they can make no proper use, an end which makes impossible any resurrection. For the incorrigible sinner the laws of God hold nothing but eternal death; but those who know the love and wisdom of our God know also that not one soul will ever be thus lost until the Eternal Father has put forth everything within His power to reconcile the erring one to Himself, and is compelled at length to turn aside from the one barrier He cannot and will not break down—man's own free will.

So ends the Charter—the grandest and most comprehensive guarantee of ultimate life, security and contentment which has ever been offered to man. Nothing can thwart its execution; it is established by God Himself, and its execution is backed by Divine power. Already some of its provisions are going into effect, and soon, very soon, "all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God."

**"And it shall be said in that day,
Lo! THIS is our God.
We have waited for Him,
And HE will save us.
THIS is the Lord.
We have waited for Him.
We will rejoice and be glad in His salvation."**

(Isa. 25; 9).

God hide thee in the secret of His presence,
God keep thee in the shadow of His wing,
God fold thee in His arms of tender mercy,
God shelter thee from every evil thing.

"The glory of the unedited Gospel is that while all men might understand it, the clever could still never exhaust its meaning."

(Dick Sheppard).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANONYMOUS.

We would acknowledge with sincere appreciation the receipt of an anonymous donation of £1 (April) and of 15/- (May.)

BAPTISMAL SERVICE.

A baptismal service has been arranged by the Forest Gate friends for Whit Sunday, June 13, at 11.0 a.m., at the Adventist Church, Boundary Road, Walthamstow. Friends wishing to avail themselves of this opportunity are desired to write Bro. F. H. Guard, 74 Princes Avenue, Woodford Green, Essex, as quickly as possible. After the service friends will take lunch together at the Y.M.C.A. Halls, Woodgrange Road, Forest Gate (bring own food), and there will be meetings at 3.30 and 6.30 Bro Ralph Walton, of Coventry, will be the evening speaker.

RUGBY.

An interesting and novel meeting of Coventry and Rugby combined classes took place at Rugby on April 10th. For a few weeks both classes had practised some of the simpler musical renderings of the Psalms, ready for the combined meeting. A few introductory words on the particular Psalm to be rendered were first given by various brethren, followed by the united singing of the Psalm with solo parts duly fitting in. There were two sessions, both Praise Services, Rugby presiding in the afternoon and Coventry similarly in the evening.

Between the special renderings numerous of our well known hymns and choruses were sung. Surely we as students of God's word should be able to sing with feeling and understanding. Such seemed to be the case; it was an experience to hear our brethren sing.

THE BOOKROOM

"A little life of Jesus," the well-known children's book, is again in stock at 2/6, postage 6d.

A few copies of "God's other book, dealing with the Creation story in a suitable manner for the older children. 1/6, postage 4d.

Two additions to our stock are Stalker's "Life of Jesus Christ" and "Life of Paul." These are both very readable books and should meet a need. Price 2/6, post 6d.

A few odd copies of "Watch Tower Reprints" are available at 3/-, post free per volume. Vols. 1, 2, 3 and 5 are available.

ENGLISHMAN'S GREEK CONCORDANCE.

This is the title of a very comprehensive work which may be of interest to students now that "Youngs" and "Strong's" concordances are unobtainable. It is primarily a Greek concordance to the New Testament but is so arranged that it can be used by anyone familiar with the Greek alphabet and the form of Greek words such as is to be seen in, for example, the Diaglott. The work is in six sections, as follows:—

1. A vocabulary giving every Greek word in the New Testament with its English meaning.

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4. An alphabetical list of all English words in the New Testament with the Greek words from which they are translated.

5. A similar alphabetical list of all the Greek words with the English words into which they are translated.

6. A concordance of various readings (variations in different manuscripts).

This last section is only of use to the student of New Testament origins.

The complete volume measures 10ins. by 7ins. by 3ins., and weighs 5lb. We are keeping a few copies in stock, price 27/6, postage 10d.

SPECIAL BOOK REQUIREMENTS.

It is recommended that friends who wish to obtain "out-of-print" books, such as books by Bro. Russell no longer published, or Young's Concordance, second hand Bible translations, etc., notify us of their requirements. We keep a list of all such "wants," and when occasional copies of such books come into our possession we are able to offer them to the friend whose name appears next in order for that particular book. We prefer this method of that of open announcement in the B.S.M., since in the latter case it not infrequently happens that several requests are received when only one copy is available, and some are perforce disappointed. A postcard will be sent when the book required is available and friends have the option then of deciding whether or not to take advantage of the opportunity.

An extract from Pamphlet No. 16 "The Bible a Sure Guide."

No other book which the world has ever known has such a history as the Bible. Its origin and authorship, its antiquity, its wonderful preservation in the midst of the unparalleled and continuous opposition which sought to destroy it, as well as its diversity and teaching, make the Bible the most wonderful book in existence.

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look for such corroboration of its statements as reason, its harmony with other known facts and subsequent developments may furnish. This is the evidence of reliability upon which all history must rest. To such evidence the world is indebted for its knowledge of past events and present events as well, except such as come under immediate observation. He who would cast away Bible history as unworthy of credence must on the same ground reject all other history and, to be entirely consistent, must believe nothing which does not come under his own personal observation.

If its statements, thoroughly understood, are contradictory, are proven untrue by a positive scientific knowledge, or by subsequent developments, it may reasonably be concluded that the entire book is unworthy of confidence and should be rejected.

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TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH—

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come to "all people," and they find access to Him.

—1. Cor. 3; 16, 17. Eph. 2; 20-22. Gen. 28; 14. Gal. 3; 29.

That meantime the chiselling, shaping and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these "living stones," elect and precious, shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with His glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.

—Rev. 15; 5-8.

That the basis of hope, for the Church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,"

Heb. 2; 9. Jno. 1; 9. 1 Tim. 2; 5-6.

That the hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see Him as He is," "be partaker of the Divine nature," and share His glory as His joint-heir.

—1. Jno. 3; 2. Jno. 17; 24. Rom. 8; 17. 2 Pet. 1; 4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be "kings and priests" in the next Age.

Eph. 4; 12. Matt. 24; 14. Rev. 1; 6; 20; 6.

That the hope of the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and His glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.

Acts 3; 19-23. Isa. 35.

Bible Students Monthly

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correspondence should be addressed to—

Bible Students Committee
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Telephone : VALENTINE 1502

Benevolent Relief Fund

matters should be addressed to :

Mr. G. A. Ford
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M.s.s. for publication

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▲ "MANY MANSIONS" ▲

— A.O.H. —

A looking forward
to things to come.

"In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you" (Jno. 14; 2).

If there are so many mansions in the Father's house, why did our Lord find it necessary to go away and prepare a place for His disciples, that where He is, there we may be also? Were none of these mansions good enough?

In all God's creation there are many homes for living beings, many stations of existence, both spiritual and material. Look up into the starry heavens; behold the magnificent array of stars, some of them attended by planets like our own. Here in this great universe there are untold myriads of possible abiding places for living creatures. Sir James Jeans, speaking before the Royal Institution in Nov., 1942, and giving the very latest considered conclusions of astronomers on this subject, said "the chance of a star, in the nebulous state, having given birth to planets before attaining to the sun state is considerable. A fair proportion of the stars must, then, be accompanied by planets. Of these a substantial fraction are likely to be in a physical state not very different from that of our own earth, and so capable of maintaining life like our terrestrial life; it is possible that such life is far more abundant in space than we used to think." Bible students may not agree readily to the last sentence; it is more likely that these other planets are being prepared for future races of men made in God's likeness, when the drama of sin and death has been enacted once for all upon this earth. But it does seem that many "mansions" in the skies, existing from of old, "or ever the earth was," have been and are being prepared for the further purposes of God; nevertheless, none of these terrestrial mansions can ever be a fitting home for the glorified Christ company. Made like unto their Lord, clothed upon with spiritual bodies even as He, possessed of powers and attributes far above the human, there must of necessity be, somewhere, a home prepared for them which is of like quality.

What, then, of the spiritual world, of which our visible universe is but a material counterpart? Long before the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters and commanded

light to be; long before the particles of which sun, and moon, and stars are made, had begun to come together, God Most High reigned upon the throne of His holiness. His first-born Son, the Logos, rejoiced "always before Him" (Prov. 8; 30), and ten thousand times ten thousand glorious celestial beings lived their lives and carried out their varied occupations and vocations in sinless purity before Him. That world of theirs, so impossible for our human brains to imagine or visualise, must have a more glorious counterpart to everything that gives us pleasure or sustains life here on earth. Those angels do always behold the face of the Father (Matt. 18; 10). Could it not be, then, that among those heavenly hosts and in the order of things in which they live, and move, and have their being, there may be found that superbly glorious home to which the King will lead His Bride when the day of union shall have come?

Perhaps not even that!

All these planes of being, with their varied homes and worlds, belong to the Old Creation—that creation which commenced when the Most High, in the solitude and silence before Time began, gave life to His first created Son, and through that Son created a spiritual world, and varied forms of spiritual beings to fill that world; then, turning His gaze downward, through that same Son brought into existence a material universe, finally making man in His own mental and moral image and likeness, in form of flesh adapted to the earth upon which he was to live. All this constitutes the Old Creation, the First Creation, the one brought into existence by God Himself through the instrumentality of His beloved Son, "by whom also He made the worlds."

This creation, with all its mansions, is, or will be when sin is banished, complete in itself. Our Lord Jesus, by virtue of His obedience unto death, has been granted the inestimable privilege of bringing into existence a New Creation—something the like of which has never been seen or known before, either upon earth or in heaven. Spiritual beings—yes, but on a higher plane than spiritual beings have ever been constituted before.

Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, became

the first of this New Creation. His followers who are called to follow in His steps are promised that, if faithful, they too shall share in the glories of that New Creation. More, they are even now, while yet in the flesh, members of that New Creation, if they have become dead in Christ and have been buried with Him in His baptism and have risen again to walk in newness of life with Him. Not yet clothed upon with the "body," the outward organism in which the new spiritual life and identity finds itself at home, and through which it can be manifested in its own surroundings and to its fellows, but, nevertheless, a "New Creation." "If any man be in Christ, there is a New Creation. Old things are passed away; behold! all things are become new" (II Cor. 5: 17).

So it is not surprising that this New Creation, endowed with immortality, which previously had been the prerogative of God Himself, should need a new kind of home of a nature that the Old Creation had never needed and never seen. Yes, many mansions there have been in the Father's house, but none just suitable for immortal beings. The Bridegroom must needs go away and prepare a place exceeding the most glorious spiritual condition previously known, just as the spiritual we do know exceeds in glory the earthly.

May we not, therefore, imagine our Lord after His ascension commencing a new creative work in just the same manner that, ages ago, He came as the personal representative of His Father to superintend the work of earthly creation? May we not think of a difference, too, in this later work? In that first creation He worked with His Father, carrying out His Father's every command. "When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he drew a circle upon the face of the deep . . . Then I was by him, as one brought up with him . . ." (Prov. 8: 30). In this new creation, the bringing into existence a new order of things which is to be exclusively for the habitation of His Bride, may we not think of Him as using His own power, power given Him by the Father in consequence of His faithfulness to death; and designing this new "home" Himself, conscious always of His Father's kindly interest and approval in all that He is doing?

If this be so, what joy must fill the heart of the Heavenly Bridegroom as He comes to call His Bride to her new home. With what

deep satisfaction must He then contemplate the imminence of the day when He shall "see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied" (Isa. 53: 11). The new home ready; angels in heaven eager to witness the great event; the Heavenly Father Himself awaiting the presentation of the Bride before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy; what wonder that it is said that the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, and that His beloved shall be "caught up" to meet Him in the air, so to be ever with Him. Who knows the wonders of that marriage feast, when the wisdom of all the ages, and deepest confidence respecting the work of the future, shall be imparted to those to whom it is given to sit around that festal board?

Here it is that the picture of the Bride must merge into that of the anointed and glorified Christ company. From that wedding feast there will come forth, not one, but many radiant souls all possessed by an all-embracing and overpowering love for their Lord and their Leader—the Head of their house. That home is to be their headquarters, their homeland, from which they will go forth to carry out the wonderful works which are to be their portion to all eternity.

The wedding feast is limited in time. The world of men will be passing through the severest phase of the world's final trouble while these wonderful scenes are being enacted in heaven above. The Church will have gone from earth; all will have been taken to be with their Lord, to be presented to His Father, to become accustomed to their new environment and their new powers, and to receive their final instruction for their first great work, the Millennial conversion of men upon earth. But they may not linger around the festal board, for the cry of sin-sick humanity resounds to the heavens, and the whole creation, groaning and travailling in pain together, "waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God" (Rom. 8: 19-22).

So the cavalcade sets out. The Lord Who had come to the earth for His saints, and taken them to Himself, now comes to the world with His saints, and there is no man who knows it not. We do not know, we cannot say, what coming and going there may be between that place which is our home, prepared for that purpose by our Lord, and this place which for a thousand years is the scene of our labours. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, and our deepest thinking can only furnish

us with a shadow of the reality.

Perhaps, though, we can visualise, dimly, at the end of the thousand years, another great gathering in the spacious halls of that "prepared place." The work with mankind is over. Evil has spread its wings and flown far away; never again will its shadow darken God's fair realm. The sinners are no more; all the earth is at rest, it breaks forth into singing. Listening angels have heard the sublime words, echoing from High Heaven: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The cherubim which for long ages have stood on guard with the flaming sword, keeping the way of the Tree of Life, now wing their flight back to the Throne

of God, their long vigil over. The sons of God who wondered, and shouted for joy, when the foundations of the earth were laid (Job 38: 7) are shouting again for joy to behold this triumphant conclusion to the Divine Plan of the Ages. And away up in that highest home of all the Lord Jesus Christ and His Church commune together. The further plans of God are spread out to view; works of creation mighty beyond imagination, designs for the enrichment of God's glory and superabundant happiness for creatures yet to be born, happy service and unceasing joy in each other's fellowship and in the presence and companionship of our glorious Lord; age after age without end, to all eternity.

THE BRIDE'S ADORNING.

A discourse on the work of preparation.

A.S.

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying: Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

Thus does the inspired Apostle, being in the Spirit on the Lord's day, give account of the tremendous ovation which is called forth from the heavenly hosts upon this, the greatest occasion in the history of heaven and earth.

"The Lord God reigneth." Prophets of old have foretold the wondrous events which will accompany this great occasion; and the more we consider their utterances, the more do we long for the time when this cry shall go forth throughout heaven and earth.

"The marriage of the Lamb is come," What visions of rapture appear before the eyes of all who hope to be present at this great event, as they await that mystic union with their beloved Lord and Head.

"His Bride hath made herself ready." What are the thoughts and emotions of the remaining members of this select company as they wait patiently for the call to take their appointed place in this, the most privileged

and honoured assemblage of all time?

The first and second phrase of this passage cannot be fulfilled until the third is accomplished, so, as we await with eager expectation for these cries to go forth, we do well to turn our attention to the more immediate matter of the preparation of the bride.

In the natural picture, we see that much preparation and labour of love is necessary before the actual marriage ceremony takes place.

In modern times, both the prospective bride and bridegroom prepare the home together, while the preparation of the wedding garment is the portion of the bride-to-be.

In Palestine, in John's day, the matter was a little different. The bridegroom prepared the new home, to which he would later invite his betrothed, while the prospective bride remained with her parents and prepared her wedding garment. When all was ready, all business was suspended, and the bridegroom travelled to the bride's home, heralded by the singing and playing of accompanying musicians. Later, escorted by the festal crowd, the two would make their way to the bridegroom's house, where the bride, veiled, perfumed and adorned, would be formally received.

Here we have a real picture of the Heavenly Bride and Bridegroom. How many details bring to our minds the various passages in the Word which tell of the journeyings of the Bridegroom, of the cry which greets Him as He returns, and of the presentation of His beloved Bride to His Heavenly Father.

Way back in the beginning of the age, the Master told His disciples that He was going away to prepare a place for them, and that when He had prepared this heavenly home, He would come and fetch them, that they might dwell with Him there (John 14 : 2-3).

Whilst the Bridegroom has been preparing the heavenly home, how has the Bride been occupied these many years? Surely she has been making herself ready for the promised union.

John continues in his record of the vision, "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

We note that, whilst it is customary in this country for the bride to be clothed in white, in Palestine it was, and still is, the custom for the bride to be clothed in a white garment richly embroidered in bright colours. So in Rev. 19 the bride is described as being clothed in fine linen, clean and "bright" (margin)—*bright with embroidery, as portrayed in Psa. 45 : 14-15 (Leeser)*. "All gloriously attired awaiteth the King's daughter in the inner chamber; of wrought gold is her garment. In embroidered clothes will she be brought unto the King."

Much time and labour is spent in preparing this heavily embroidered robe and veil, for it is worked with symmetrical designs of traditional pattern, traced in silk stitching of brilliant colours.

The picture of the prospective bride applying herself diligently and continuously to this work of richly embroidering her wedding garment, working the hundreds of tiny stitches which make up the whole, can be used to portray the Church as she labours to perfect that beauty of character with which she will be perfumed and adorned upon her wedding-day.

We believe that the Bride of the heavens will be composed of many members, so each one can only contribute a very small portion of that "embroidery" which will adorn the bridal robe; therefore, as each member accepts, by faith, the covering of Christ's righteousness, they receive, as it were, a small

portion of this robe, and it becomes their life's work to embroider it according to the Divine instructions.

The essentials for embroidery are few and simple, yet when used with industry and care can produce truly beautiful results.

First of all, a piece of material is required as a basis for the work; next, a pattern traced thereon; then, a good supply of silk threads of various colours.

If we are to make the best use of these materials, it is essential that we have clean hands, a good light, good eyesight, and a large capacity for patient and persevering effort.

In applying this spiritually, we have already seen that the piece of material may be likened to a portion of the covering robe of Christ's righteousness, but we need a pattern traced thereon. This, too, is provided for us in the example which Jesus left as recorded in the Gospels, and amplified in the Epistles. This, and this alone, is the only pattern acceptable to Him who designed the whole; should we attempt any pattern other than this, it would not merge with the other portions, and would be discarded as useless.

The threads of various colours are the many precepts and teachings of the Bible which we gather when we meet together in fellowship, or study the Word in private.

Because of our human limitations, we can only obtain a few strands at a time, so we need to come often to the store, remembering that, unlike earthly stores, there are no closing hours; whether we come by day or night, we are sure to obtain enough to carry on with until we can come again.

All these materials are supplied by our Heavenly Father at no cost to ourselves, but we must come to Him day by day to ask and seek for them, thus showing our eagerness to accomplish the work set before us.

To make the best use of these materials, and execute creditable work, we must have "clean hands." Although we have been cleansed in the precious blood of Jesus, constant contact with the world results in our becoming contaminated, and we need continually to come to the cleansing stream to wash away the earth-stains, lest we should mar our little portion.

We need also a good light to carry out our life's work, but darkness still hangs over the world like a shroud, so we must seek at all times to dwell in that marvellous light into which all the saints are called. This light,

shining out from the inner courts of heaven, is that same light which led, guided and comforted our Lord as He traced, through sorrow and suffering, the pattern of holiness and sanctification which is set before us.

This supernatural light would be of little use, however, if we had not eyes to see; but the eyes of our understanding have been enlightened that we may know what is the hope which His call to us inspires, and having this hope before us, and beholding the riches of our inheritance, we need to exercise this same spiritual sight in applying ourselves to the work of preparing to receive the same, when this wonderful hope becomes a glorious reality.

All these essentials too, clean hands, a good light and clear sight, are provided by the Giver of every good and perfect gift, but it is our part to keep our hands clean, to remain in the light of heaven, and to keep our spiritual vision clear, developing more and more a capacity for patient and persevering effort, not lapsing into the lukewarmness which brought blindness to the Laodiceans, for should our eyesight fail, all the other gifts would be of no avail.

As we toil on through life, we find both helps and hindrances to our work of character development. Not only have we the pattern traced upon our little portion, but we have the example of other imperfect men who have succeeded in completing their allotted portions. Peter, the unstable and impetuous, became calm and immovable; James and John, who would have called down fire from heaven to destroy those who rejected their Master, became true followers of his teachings; Philip, the slow-witted; Thomas, the sceptic; Matthew, the despised tax-collector; Simon, the fanatic, and, later, Paul, the destroyer, all overcame their natural disabilities, and worked out in their lives the desired pattern.

But, someone may say, I have not the same opportunities as they; my little patch seems to consist of just one straight line; how I would like to work out a little more spectacular portion. We should remember that the straight lines are just as essential to the beauty of the pattern as are the more intricate parts, also that, even as in the natural picture, a straight line requires more care and attention, and is more difficult to execute than the more fancy parts. We should remember, too, that the Lord has designed the pattern, and has given us the portion best suited to us.

On the other hand, some may feel that their portion seems to be more like a series of short lines continually running out to the edge; they may be just getting along nicely when they have to break off and start all over again, and may feel that they would rather have as their pattern one of the long straight lines which others seem to work out; but here again we must remember that the design is the Lord's, and that He knows what is best for us.

One day, to our great surprise and joy, we shall find that our broken lines link up with some other portion of the pattern, and will thus contribute to the glory of the robe.

**We'll catch the broken threads again,
And finish what we here began;
Heaven will the mysteries explain,
And then, oh then, we'll understand.**

Sometimes we may feel that our surroundings are a hindrance to us in our endeavours to prepare for the future life; we may find our elbows constantly jogged, as it were, as we try to form the tiny stitches which make up the pattern. It is, of course, those nearest to us who do this, and we may be inclined to remonstrate, or even retaliate, but we must remember that they too may be struggling just as hard as we are, and we should look the other way, just to make sure that we are not jogging the elbow of the one next to us the other side.

On the other hand, we may have to work out our portion alone in the wilderness; that peculiar yet painful paradox of loneliness while surrounded by friends, relatives or brethren may be our experience. We may be in difficulty with our little patch, yet no one is at hand to help us, and we may become weary and discouraged, and wonder why we should be thus placed.

Surely it is in such experiences that we learn our utter dependence upon God, and learn to tap the vast resources of power which are stored up in heaven.

**Sometimes we need companionship,
Sometimes "the wilderness,"
How sweet to feel He'll know and give
The state that most will bless.**

Another factor which may seem to hinder us is that the light by which we work is not diffused all around, but only illuminates just the portion immediately before us. This is not really a hindrance, but rather the wise provision of a loving Father. He kindly veils our eyes lest we should look ahead and see what lies before us; if we could see, we should

probably lay down our work in despair; as it is, we need only to fix our attention upon that which is immediately before us, having no time to worry about the unseen future.

So the work must go on day by day; in joy or in sorrow, through pain or pleasure, in the company of others, or with Jesus alone, until each tiny stitch is rightly placed and correctly formed, and worthy to be a part of the glorious robe of the Bride of Heaven. Then, and not before, shall we be able to lay down our needle.

In the natural picture, constant application to fine needlework brings on a strain; eyes become red, the sight dimmed; the head aches, the fingers become cramped, and the limbs become tired. So, in the spiritual picture, constant application to this work of character development brings on a strain, and sometimes we may feel tempted to lay down our work for a while, but, as we saw at the beginning, if we are to execute really good work which will be acceptable to our beloved Bridegroom, we shall need a large capacity for patient and persevering effort.

Even so, as we approach that part of the pattern which the Lord traced with the crimson stain of His own precious blood, we may feel the strain becoming greater. Feeling weary and exhausted, our eyes dimmed with tears, so that the pattern is but dimly seen, we must struggle on, remembering that it was at the cost of His own life that our Bridegroom was able to complete the perfect pattern, of which such a tiny portion is ours.

When, at last, our work is complete, it may seem to us of very little use, indeed of itself it will be poor indeed, but when in the hands of the Master it is skilfully joined to the other portions, each so shapeless and incomplete, the

glory of the Church will be made manifest, and she will be ready to be presented, spotless and without blemish, before the Lord of Heaven, clothed in the robes of glory and beauty in the preparation of which we have been privileged to have a tiny share.

HER CROWNING GLORY

On her wedding day, the Palestinian bride is further adorned with a head-dress ornamented with gold pieces of high value. This reminds us again of Psalm 45: 14, "All gloriously attired awaiteth the King's daughter in the inner chamber; of wrought gold is her garment."

This fitly pictures the crowning glory which will be the portion of the Bride of heaven. When the Church has finally made herself ready, she will have proved herself worthy of the greatest of all honours—the golden crown of life immortal.

Then, when all the toil is over, all the shadows dispelled, all the loneliness and weariness forgotten, the Church, resplendent in all the graces of the Spirit, will rise from poverty to untold riches, from the darkness of earth to the blazing glory of heaven, from a dying earthly existence to undying and immortal life. Thus, united for all eternity to her beloved Lord and Bridegroom, shall she be ushered into the very presence of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Then the heavens will resound with the pæons of praise which the faithful John heard ringing down the ages so long ago — "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready."

A Reminiscence of Nahum

Nahum the Elkoshite (Nahum 1: 1). It is generally assumed that Elkosh in Palestine is indicated, but in fact Nahum was a prophet of the Northern Captivity, and his home town was Elkosh in the mountains of Assyria, where the Ten Tribes were taken and settled by Shalmaneser. Elkosh to-day has a synagogue which possesses a notable shrine, claimed to be the tomb of Nahum.

"Nineveh of old is as a pool of water; yet shall they flee away," cries Nahum (Nahum 2: 8). A rather obscure expression; just what does it mean? A passage in Wigram's "Cradle

of Mankind" supplies the answer. Standing on the heights just outside Elkosh, he looked down across the level plain towards ruined Nineveh, 40 miles away. "It was a weird and striking effect that we witnessed from it next morning. The clouds lay low and horizontal above the plain beneath us; and many of them seemed to have sunk on to the ground, and looked exactly like lakes under the level rays of the rising sun. As his orb rose higher they lifted, and dispersed into wreaths of vapour." So must Nahum, seeing the same phenomenon thousands of years ago, seen in that effect a picture of the doom of the great city of wickedness.

THE QUIET TIME

 C.T.W.

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

"The Lord is My Shepherd; I shall not want."

Psalm 23 : 1.

The paraphrase of P. Gerhard forms a good commentary on this verse. "The Lord, who rules all the ends of the earth with His power, the fountain of eternal good, is my Shepherd and Guardian.

So long as I have Him, I am in want of no blessing; the riches of His fulness most completely replenish me." Those who, on reading the words, **THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, I AM IN WANT OF NOTHING**, are inclined to say "How shall I know that the Lord is MY Shepherd? I do not find He acts so friendly a part to me as corresponds to what the Psalmist says; nay, I have ample experience **TO THE VERY CONTRARY**," are directed by Luther in the following words into the right way: "The prophet has not at all times been so happy; he has not been able at all times to sing as he does here. He has at times been in want of much, yea of almost everything. He has felt that he possessed neither the righteousness, nor the consolation, nor the help of God; still, as often as he turns himself from his own feeling, and lays hold of God by His promises and thinks, 'It may be with me as it may, yet this is the comfort of my heart, that I have a gracious, a compassionate Lord for my Shepherd, whose word and whose promises strengthen and comfort me; therefore I shall be in want of nothing,' and he has written this and other Psalms for the very purpose of assuring us that in real temptation there is no counsel, help or comfort to be found, unless we have learned the golden art of holding firm by the word and promises of God and deciding by them in opposition to the feeling of our own hearts. Thus assuredly shall help and comfort follow and we shall be in want of nothing.

DAY BY DAY.

*Charge not thyself with the weight of a year
Child of the Master, faithful and dear.
Choose not thy cross for the coming week
For that is more than He bids thee seek.
Bend not thine arm for to-morrow's load
Thou may'st leave that to thy gracious God.
Daily only . . . He saith to thee,
Take up thy cross and follow Me.*

JOY RUNS DEEP.

Remember the distinction between happiness and joy. . . . It is no play upon words that sees the connection between happiness and that which happens—the hap, the circumstances of life. St. Paul could not have felt very happy when he said he was sorrowful; and yet he said "sorrowful yet always rejoicing." We are never told to be happy always; that would be impossible. Happiness today on the surface of our life is like the calm of the wave; unhappiness would be like the turbulence of the waves to-morrow. But joy is like the bed of the ocean, independent of any changes on the surface. It is "Rejoice in the Lord always," because joy is a condition of soul in relationship with God in Christ.

BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM

Wherever there is a faithful following of the Lord in a consecrated soul, several things inevitably follow, sooner or later. Meekness and quietness of spirit become in time the characteristics of the daily life. A submissive acceptance of the will of God as it comes in the hourly events of each day; pliability in the hands of God to do or to suffer all the good pleasure of His will; sweetness under provocation; calmness in the midst of turmoil and bustle; yieldingness to the wishes of others and an insensibility to slights and affronts; absence of worry or anxiety; deliverance from care or fear—all these and many similar graces are invariably found to be the natural outward development of that inward life which is hid with Christ in God.

"He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the Light of Life."

(John 8 : 12)

*A tender child of summers three
Seeking her little bed at night,
Paused on the dark stair timidly.
"O mother, take my hand," said she;
"And then the dark will all be light."*

*We older children grope our way
From dark behind to dark before,
And only when our hands we lay,
Dear Lord, in Thine, the night is day,
And there is darkness never more.*

*Reach downwards to the sunless days
Wherein our guides are blind as we,
And faith is small, and hope delays,
Take Thou the hands of prayer we raise,
And let us feel the light of Thee! —Whittier.*



The Potter and the Clay.

T.H.

3. The Potter selects his clay.

The Apostle's argument concerning Divine election begins with Abraham, and continues in the experiences of Abraham's Seed. All the illustrations (save one) offered by Paul in evidence come from the experiences of that Seed. Even that one exception (Pharaoh) is introduced into the argument because of its relationship to Abraham's Seed.

God's choice of Abraham and his seed to be His people is the broad foundation upon which the principle of election is built, and its history is the sphere where the elective principle is applied. Election, in its every phase from beginning to end, centres and operates in Abrahamic and Israelitish experience exclusively. Even the election applied to the Christian church is no exception to this fact, for the Church (in Christ) is Abraham's Seed, and is selected to occupy a special place in relation to the Abrahamic Covenant.

The first man among men to become God's elect (or chosen one) was Abraham himself. The call of God inviting him to leave his home and kindred and migrate into the land of God's choice was the first act in the long-continued system of Divine choosing which in course of time came to be called "election." And the Divine intuition which knew beforehand what it intended to do, and who it intended to call, or choose (as here in Abraham's case), is an exhibition of the principle underlying all Divine fore-knowledge. God fore-knew Abram—that is, God was fully cognisant of Abram's character before He approached him in Mesopotamia. More than that, God was able to estimate aright what Abram could and would become under His guiding hand. Divine fore-knowledge saw the possibilities in that worthy patriarch's life, and on the basis of that preview invited him to further intimacy with Himself. When Abram became responsive to the heavenly call, he became the sole recipient of a special Divine care and over-sight, which in directing Abram applied itself to a specific purpose having distant ages as its goal.

In the call of Abraham God began to open the pit from which He purposed to dig His clay. But, when God called upon Abram he



"Hath not the Potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" (Rom. 9; 21 R.V.)



had no son. The over-ruling act of Providence kept Sarah childless during her virile years—till maternal hopes were dead. Realising this, Sarah sought to procure a son by other means, but God told them explicitly that this child of Abram could not inherit the promises nor enter into the purpose for which Abram had been called. Ishmael, though Abram's son and the darling of his heart, was set aside and "by-passed" by Almighty God. The only child who could inherit his father's heritage must come from Sarah when all hope was dead, as gift from the Most High. And high heaven also exercised its prerogative to choose his name, when God said "call his name Isaac," and "In Isaac shall thy seed be called" (or named). Divine choice deliberately chose Sarah's son, and just as deliberately excluded Hagar's child.

When the next generation was on the way—born from a mother of God's own choice—the Divine preference was again expressed. Of the two babes about to be born, before either had done good or ill, the rights of primogeniture were over-ruled, and the younger child was chosen to inherit his grand-sire's privilege. Paul takes these two instances to point his argument. What does he mean thereby? Evidently this. He wants his brethren to know that participation in God's purposes is a matter of pure grace on God's part. And where all the motive is of grace, can the receiver say the giver nay, or stipulate that the gift must be bestowed in the receiver's preferred way, or bestowed not at all? Ishmael, though Abram's son, was by-passed and set aside. Isaac, also Abram's son, was accepted and made heir to his father's inheritance. Could Abram complain of that?

Esau, though Isaac's child, was passed-by and disinherited. But Jacob, also Isaac's child, was selected and constituted the heir of the promises! Could Isaac find cause of grievance there?

God had been faithful to His promise, and permitted Abram's privilege and blessing to pass to Abram's seed. God had been faithful

again to Isaac, and allowed the promises to pass to Isaac's seed. In this He graciously fulfilled all which He led the patriarchs to expect, but reserved to Himself the right to choose how He should confer or direct His gift.

God could look further down the years than Abraham or Isaac could. He knew the possibilities of each case, and in placing Isaac and Jacob in preference to Ishmael and Esau in relation to His eternal Plan, Divine Wisdom made no mistake. Let the history of Ishmael's progeny, and Esau's descent through the centuries vindicate or challenge, if it can, the Divine choice.

Again, and from another point of view, when Divine **Mercy** comes in to meet man's need, is it unrighteous in the Merciful to say: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion"? When none can press a claim against the Merciful, can any charge the Fountain of Divine grace with evil or malicious intent if He chooses **one** amongst them all as recipient of His mercy and compassion? Shall the Giver of unmerited grace, Who, for distant purposes yet to be fulfilled, elects to give to one, and withhold from another, the tokens of His grace, be accounted unjust or unfair in the distribution of His bounties? Ought it not to be beyond the bounds of cavil or reproof that the full right to choose and endow His elect is solely and exclusively God's prerogative, and belongs to none beside?

But, apart from this, it can be shown that the declared purpose behind all God's selective processes could be justified before the whole congregation of heaven and earth. When the Most High swore an immutable oath to Abraham it was openly declared so that all heaven and earth might know that the chosen seed had been selected, that through it all the non-elect nations of the earth might be blessed. In that case, Isaac was to become a channel of blessing for Ishmael; and Jacob should be a river of grace for his disinherited brother Esau, and Israel shall then hold out her hands to Ishmael's seed and Esau's progeny.

If, then, the All-merciful has mercy to bestow on all, shall it be denied to Him to do it in His own way and time? If the chosen one receives the merciful gift to-day, and the "by-passed" one in a better to-morrow, can any voice in heaven or earth say the Bounteous One is not kind and just?

The chosen of to-day is first blessed to be-

come the channel for to-morrow's flood. Abraham's seed may be the "first-born" among the nations of the earth, but the blessing is just as sure to all the other nations of the earth as it is to Israel—the only difference is in the way and time of its bestowment. And if God shall choose one specific way above other probable or possible ways, is it not His privilege so to do?

Having guided the trend of events through the first two generations, God then took the twelve tribes of Israel as His chosen people. He directed their course into a land of bitter experience and raised up a despotic ruler who oppressed them severely. This cruel king was raised up to the throne that he might challenge Divine Power and so suffer in consequence that the name of God might be published abroad in the earth.

To achieve this end God "hardened Pharaoh's heart," by removing one plague after another till Pharaoh felt safe in challenging the God of Israel repeatedly. But he found out that he could not challenge Jehovah with impunity, nor hold the people whom God had come down to set free.

This captive people was to be constituted in a most spectacular manner the elect people of God. Many times in after days they were told that they were God's chosen people, separated from the nations of the earth, to live its life in communion with God. He gave them His laws to teach His way, that they might be a people prepared to serve His purposes.

In view of the remarkable origin of this people from the child of Promise, it could be construed that that miraculous origin alone entitled God to consider them as His clay. Apart from that Divine interposition in Sarah's life they could not have had existence at all. Their very life was the result of a Divine gift. Again, the restoration of Isaac from the altar constituted an act of grace. Otherwise, again, they could not have known the joys of existence. Moreover, the dedication of Isaac to the altar (on a principle well-established in Holy Writ) implied the dedication to God of Isaac and all who were to be born from him, or at least, as many as God should desire to take.

Thus, this could be considered the place whence God began to dig His clay. With this thought the words of Isaiah seem to agree: "Look unto the rock whence ye were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye were digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and-

unto Sarah that bare you, for when he was but one I called him and blessed him, and made him many" (Isa. 51: 1-2). From the historic shaft of this Abrahamic pit God has brought up His clay, and piled it ready for its working up into vessels for God's glory.

How appropriate is Jeremiah's picture of the Potter at his work to this creative work of God. "Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house and behold, he wrought his work on the wheels. And when the vessel that he had made of the clay was marred in the hand of the potter, he made it again as another vessel as it seemed good to the potter to make it."

How simple is this illustration. A lump of clay was taken from the working-trough and placed on the revolving plates, while with deft fingers the potter began to work it into shape. But the clay would not work up to the intended design. It became spoiled in the potter's hand. He then crushed the clay together again, and worked it till more pliable. Then he put it on the wheel again, and made it another vessel, this time succeeding in making it up according to his desire.

"Then the word of the Lord came to me saying, 'O House of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter?' saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel" (Jer. 18: 1-5). This is the prophecy from which Paul borrows his forceful illustration of the potter and the clay. And by the homely parable the Divine teaching becomes quite clear. God was the Master Potter who had taken clay dug from the Abrahamic pit, and had subjected it to discipline and manipulation. He placed it upon

(To be continued)

the forming-wheel to mould it into a goodly vessel in accordance with its purposes. But Israel would not come to shape. It lacked plasticity and pliability. It would not respond to the Divine working. The vessel was marred in the Potter's hand.

But the same clay was crushed up again, and worked and tempered over again, and is to be returned to the wheel. This time God will make it a vessel according to His desire. In the better days yet to come with "better things" all around, Israel will take shape and become a vessel of mercy to a needy world.

How appropriate to that better time are the words of Isaiah when he says: "But thou, Israel, my servant, and Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham My Friend, thou whom I have taken hold of from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the corners thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art My servant. I have chosen thee and not cast thee away . . ." (Isa. 41: 8-9). "But now, thus saith the Lord that **created** thee, O Jacob; and he that **formed** thee, O Israel; fear not for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine" (Isa. 41: 1). "Called," "redeemed," "formed," "created," suggestive terms indeed, showing that God first selected Israel, and then formed them to be His people; His servants and witnesses.

Thus the election and formation of Israel as the people of the Lord accords completely with the Divine principle of calling an elect nation to be the channel of blessing for all the non-elect peoples of the earth—showing that the process of election is the prelude to the operation of Free Grace for all who will take the gift of life from God's bounteous hand.

The Seer and the Scene.

A study in the framework of Revelation.

— T.H. —

To John, the last surviving member of the Apostolic band, was given the transcending honour of recording the Lord's last words to His waiting Church. Kept alive to a good old age, this bosom companion of Jesus was chosen by the exalted Lord to be the personal recipient, and authoritative channel for the last disclosures which were to come from

heaven, to guide the followers of the Lord across the dark wilderness that lay between them and the day of His Return.

By him the Canon of Holy Scripture was made complete. Every strand of God-given Truth, from the very earliest times—the times of Enoch and Noah—renewed or increased throughout all later years—Abrahamic,

Mosaic, Davidic or prophetic, were brought to a focus and set together as the well-fitting parts of a great design. To these pre-Christian strands were added the deeper and fuller themes of the Christian Revelation—the prophecies and principles of both Jesus and His Apostles—and brought to a common converging centre, balanced and harmonious. Words, phrases, and scene-pictures from this or that ancient prophet, interspersed by those of the greatest of all Prophets are woven and run in together into one complete tapestry of exquisite design and glorious finish.

To this old Saint and Apostle, whose mind was saturated through and through with all these ancient and modern Scriptures, was this honour given to receive from His Master's hand the final disclosure, which was at once the completion and the key to all revealed truth. All that God had hitherto spoken was here gathered up, and set, part to part in its proper and relative place in the scheme of Revelation.

Banished (so it was supposed) to the bleak inhospitable Island of Patmos by the Roman authorities, there in its quiet privacy the Lord vouchsafed to John His last words, and showed him "things to come" for nigh three thousand years forward down the stream of time.

"I John . . . was in the Isle called Patmos, for the word of God; and for the testimony of Jesus" (Rev. 1; 9).

So John explains it.

Two views are possible regarding these words. Either John was suffering punitive banishment because of his past faithful testimony, or else Divine Providence had directed his affairs to bring him to Patmos, **in order to receive this last chapter of the Word of God**, and hear again, for the last time, the testimony of his beloved Jesus. Perhaps both views may be correct. As the Revelation was made to him, we find him saying repeatedly—some 38 times in all—"I saw"—or "I John saw."

At every new turn of the scenery we find this phrase. Again, from time to time, John says: "I heard" or "He talked with me." "I John saw" knits the whole book together into one complete unit. John saw it all. No other man's experience is interwoven with John's. Probably no other man the wide world over was so "en rapport" with Heaven and holy things as this companion of the Lord's earthly days; and none so fit as he to loose himself from earthly scenes and become engrossed "in spirit" with these things of the

Lord.

From five various locations it was given to him to see the changes of the moving panorama. First (chap. 1) it is as though he were on holy Temple ground, watching a venerable Priest attending his lamps. Next (chap. 4), he beholds a door set open in Heaven, and a voice calls him up into that loftier place, to see things from that higher aspect. Then he finds himself standing by the storm-swept sea (chap. 13; 1), and there beholds the happenings of another world-order—a world of brute force and ruthless severity. Afterwards he is carried apart into a wilderness place (chap. 17; 3), there to see another saddening sight, ending in the destruction of an impure woman and an unholy city. Finally, he is transported into "a great and high mountain," there to see a glorious Woman united to her Husband; and a Holy City come down to earth, to be the centre of dominion and authority among men, whose blessed administration wiped away all tears, removed all sorrow, and eliminated all death.

These five vantage-points have each their setting, each their particular scenes, and mark each a turning-point in the narrative, showing us different aspects of the Plan of God as it moves from group to group; from stage to stage; from Age to Age. First, the Priestly care for His Candlesticks—the Church; next, the judgment scenes (chap. 4-11), and the deliverance of the alienated inheritance (denoting the presence of the Son of Man), till the earth is free and rejoicing in God; then, the Empire of the Beast, as it brings in the final stage of Gentile power and Gentile Times; afterwards the fallen and perverse ecclesiastical system, which has been the ally and consort of the earthly power; and finally the Kingdom of God as it spreads and dominates throughout the earth.

What a range of scenic-picture passes before our eyes! From the high and lofty setting of the rainbow-encircled throne, surrounded by its lowlier "elder"-thrones; to the petty pomp of the kings of the earth! From the unsullied purity of the Bride, the Lamb's wife, down to the soiled and earth-stained garments of a fallen faithless spouse; from the super-royal splendour of the investiture of the Lamb, to the sordid beast-like dominion of the seven-headed, ten-horned beast; from the glories of that sin-free, death-free world to the squalor of this "vale of tears"!

By what means these things came to view,

we cannot exactly say. Jesus has sent His Angel to set and move the scenery from point to point. Strange to say, even John himself at times came to be part of the scene. He saw himself invited here or there; he heard himself addressed; he saw himself weep; he took and ate of a book; he beheld himself fall down to worship. That an Angel came down from the glorified Lord to communicate these things to John must be admitted beyond question. "He sent . . . His Angel to His servant John" (Rev. 1; 1). The fuller revelation given by the Most High to His glorious Son was passed on through the mediumship of the Angel to the mind of John. But it was all performed by "signs."

One thing (the sign) stood for another (the reality). A candlestick represented a Church, a "star" the presiding elder of a Church; a Beast symbolised a government; and so on, throughout the various parts of the vision. Impressions of these things were produced on the sublimated mind of John, and to his enraptured gaze they seemed as real as in nature's scenes. In like manner Ezekiel saw Jerusalem's streets and Temple, when far away by Chebar's banks. In like manner Paul was caught up, into the third heaven, and heard unutterable things. Whether in the body or out of it he knew not. So John was "in Spirit" on the Lord's day—a condition wholly loosened from the earth—transported by means of the Heavenly Spirit "into the Day of the Lord." Not merely on a Sabbath Day, but "the Sabbath Day," to which he was carried to see the scenes of that stupendous day. In his Scripture-saturated mind, with its memories of prophetic utterances, and its recollections of the Master's words, the Heavenly visitor found, as it were, a sensitive, exalted photographic plate upon which it was easy to make and leave its impressions, and to make sights, sounds and words vivid and real as in the mundane scenes around him. The sights, sounds and words thus impressed, however, were illustrative or symbolic of the great themes of God, as voiced at sundry times and in divers manners in the days of the fathers, and by the lips of the Son of God, and his chosen twelve.

If, then, John was thus carried down to stand amid the scenes of the Lord's day, and that the major part of what he wrote had to do with "things to come," then, in very truth,

the thrilling scenes which have so often gripped our childhood's fancy, relate pre-eminently to the Day of the Lord—the Parousia and Apokalupsis of our beloved Lord. When we come to examine with care the actual contents of the book, we find them harmonising exactly with the thought of the Lord's unveiling. It takes as its central themes the same great issues which other parts of Scripture assign to the Day of the Lord.

It is Revelation from beginning to end; and the main reason that the chief message of the book has been so elusive and mysterious is, that it cannot be understood in advance of that day. Only the historic fulfilment can elucidate the prophetic forecast. But in the fulfilment of this last Book, the fulfilment of all earlier Books will be accomplished. For all point forward to the Day of the Lord. It is that day of which Isaiah speaks when he says that men shall hide in the rocks for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty (Isa. 2; 20), the day which Joel describes as the day of destruction from the Almighty, when the Lord shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice over Jerusalem, making the heavens and earth to quake (Joel 1; 2), the day of which Malachi speaks as the day that shall burn as an oven (Mal. 4; 1), the day of which Paul spake on Mars Hill (Acts 17; 31), and of which Peter tells when the heavens and earth being on fire, shall be dissolved.

Space forbids fuller reference, but the careful student will find the words and phrases of every prophet incorporated in this book, and as they all pointed to the day of the Lord; the day of Israel's recovery; the times of restitution, so does this last glorious cap-stone of the whole edifice of Revelation point to the day of the Lord, and depict the scenes of gladness to some, of sadness to others, and of utter madness to still others, as the Lord is revealed and made manifest in the exercise of His Kingdom power. But in this Revelation it is not as a man, nor as visible to the eye of flesh, but as a glorified spirit being, whose Presence is demonstrated by what He is accomplishing, that He comes to be revealed. John, the last of the Apostles, saw, in ecstatic vision, those sights and scenes the earlier stages of which the "remnant"—"those left over to the presence of the Lord," may now begin to see in actual fulfilment in the earth.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GONE FROM US.

Brother Wilson, of the Leigh (Lancs) class, well known to many in the Lancashire district, passed over to his Lord on 2nd June. He had gone for a little rest to Morecambe and died there suddenly. Our brother was sincerely loved by many, his sterling faith being a source of inspiration to all. He will be sadly missed by many, especially by the class at Leigh, but for him we have confidence that he has received a crown of glory which fadeth not away. The funeral took place at Leigh cemetery on 7th June, Brother Smallman, of Warrington, conducting the service.

Brother F. S. Penfold, an old stalwart of London and well known to many in the South, finished his course on 31st May and was laid to rest in the City of London cemetery on 4th June, the service being conducted by Brother Vaughan, of Aldersbrook. Our brother's resolute faith and encouraging demeanour had always an uplifting influence upon those around him and we feel sure that he has not "run in vain, nor laboured in vain."

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An extract from Pamphlet No. 15 :

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Undoubtedly, we are living in the closing years of the Gospel Age; soon the full number of God's elect will be complete. Then the great time of trouble (Dan. 12; 1-4) will sweep over the earth, and level down society, and prepare men's hearts to seek the Lord. "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's and He is the governor among the nations." (Ps. 22; 26, 27.)

To-day, not only do we see the clouds of trouble gathering for the storm, but we see also the preparation for the coming Kingdom in the re-gathering

of Israel to their ancient land. Soon the King (Christ) will take His great power to reign. The Church will be gathered home to reign with Him. The great multitude to serve before the throne will then take their place. Next will be the restoration of the ancient worthies and restored Israel to represent the Kingdom on earth, then will the whole human family return from the tomb and be brought to the knowledge of saving grace (Isa. 35; 10). Thus all the willing and obedient will have the opportunity of going up the highway of holiness, and receive the reward of eternal life (Acts 15; 14-17. Rom. 11; 25-7. 1 Tim. 2; 3-6.)

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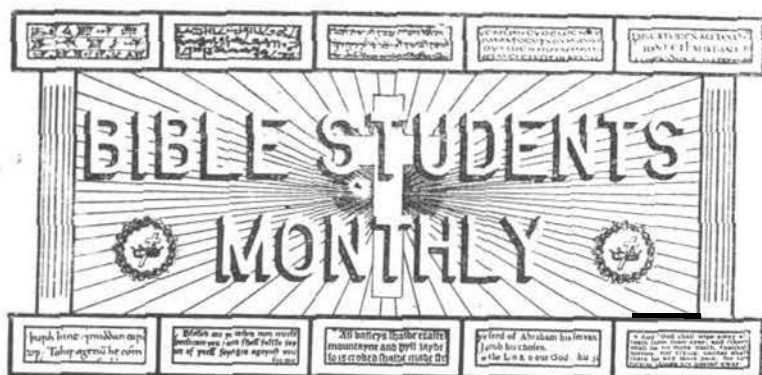
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VOL. 20 No. 8

AUGUST 1943

Circulating among the Associated Bible Students.

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NOTES

Increasing restrictions imposed by the Paper Control Order render it necessary for the size or form of the "Monthly" to be changed from time to time. With a view to making the best use of the space allowed, a closer type of print has been adopted, and by this means and the use of every available inch of space, there is actually very little reduction in the amount of reading matter. With rapidly diminishing opportunities of personal fellowship in meetings and conventions the ministry of the printed page becomes more important, and such difficulties as arise are faced in confidence that our Master will direct the issue according to His will.

Four hundred years ago this year—24th May, 1543—Nicolas Copernicus, the father of modern astronomy, died. To him belongs the honour of demonstrating the earth's motion round the sun, and laying the foundation of our present knowledge of the starry heavens. The system of astronomy accepted up to the time of Copernicus asserted the earth to be the centre of all creation, the moon, planets, sun and stars being fixed to a series of "spheres" moving round it at various distances. Heaven was thought to lie beyond the last "sphere."

Childishly crude it may seem to us to-day. And yet all the might of organised ecclesiasticism was brought to bear against the new "theory" which seemed to strike at the very roots of all that was established and certain. The reason for the theologians' opposition was

not due solely to conservative prejudice. It was the fact that the infinity of the physical universe asserted by Copernicus seemed to leave no place for heaven, and seemed therefore to be akin to atheism. It is saddening, although instructive, to find that Luther poured contempt on the new discoveries, and said that "the fool wishes to overturn the whole system of astronomy."

Three men lived at one and the same time—Nicolas Copernicus, Martin Luther, and John Bunyan. The first was a learned scientist, the second a great theologian, the third a travelling tinker. The scientist's work has been almost completely superseded by a more accurate knowledge of God's material creation; the theologian's labours have been considerably modified by progressive Christian thought; only the tinker's words remain unchanged, conveying as much to this generation as to that for which they were written. Although the theology of the "Pilgrim's Progress" is weak, and a scientific background non-existent, it lives in the hearts of men and women to whom Luther is but a name, and Copernicus not even that. What further evidence do we need of the truth of our Master's saying: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life"? Science and doctrine are both of them aids to a logical perception of God and His plans, but both must be restated in new forms as generation succeeds generation. The searching words of Jesus, alone, and the messages which are expressed in the words He used, are those which live on into eternity unchanged.

The Potter and the Clay.

— T.H. —

4. Vessels unto Glory.

Thus far in this discussion the application of the principle underlying Divine selection has been set forth as it applied to Israel. That application may be called "the Election of the Race." With this application every opponent of Paul would be in full agreement. Every impressive term he used in connection with the doctrine of election would be true of Israel. Abraham's seed was fore-known of God, and was pre-destinated to be the earthly channel of His grace to all the nations of the earth. They were His elect—the seed of Abraham His friend (Isa. 41: 8). This is the elect people for whose sake the days of the great tribulation are to be shortened or restrained (Matt. 24: 22). This is the elect people, which, after those days of tribulation are ended, are to be gathered together, from every quarter of the heavens (Matt. 24: 29-31). That will be the re-gathering and re-moulding of the "set-aside" portion of God's clay. To-day we have the benefit of the historical testimony that that portion of the clay was set aside as Paul intimated it would be. It has been set aside in blindness and hardness of heart to wait while other things have been completed by the Master Potter. God did not cast Israel away. This Paul states explicitly. They stumbled and fell, so that others might enter the privileges of membership in Christ, so that another and more precise election, an election of grace, might take effect.

A Remnant according to the election of grace was to be moulded and prepared to become Israel's deliverer—her Messiah—in due time when all its members had been conformed to the image of God's dearest Son. Paul illustrates the existence of this Remnant by a reference to an experience of Elijah, who, seeing the northern nation of Israel fallen away in gross idolatry, thought he was the only faithful servant of Jehovah left in the land. In his sad complaint he said, "Lord, they have killed Thy prophets, they have digged down Thy altars, and I am left alone, and they seek my life." But God informed him that that was not the case. "What saith the answer of God unto him? 'I have left for Myself

"Hath not the Potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" (Rom. 9: 21 R.V.)

seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.' Even so, then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace" (Rom. 11: 1-5).

Thus, the lump of clay had been divided, and a small portion selected for a special purpose, while the national mass had fallen away. Thus, Paul establishes his point decisively, and has demonstrated that God not only has the right to choose His clay, but also to divide it up and apply it to the purposes which please Him best.

The doctrine of an elect Remnant within, or gathered from, an elect nation was shadowed forth in the ancient history of Israel, by the separation of the Levitical tribe from among their brethren. After God had separated Israel from the nations to be His peculiar people, the Divine prerogative expressed itself again and separated Levi from his brethren to appear before God on their behalf. Of his own determinate counsel He chose Levi, without seeking Israel's consent and sanction thereto. Out of Levi, God again applied His selective prerogative, and separated the house of Aaron from his Levitical brethren, to be His special servant for a special work. This selection was based upon God's fore-knowledge of Israel's needs, and was carried through entirely in accordance with His own pre-determined purposes. This also was a case where from the same lump of clay—Levitical clay—one vessel was chosen to higher honour, leaving the remainder of the mass to occupy the honour to which it had previously been called.

This selection of the house of Levi—and particularly the house of Aaron—is the framework upon which the New Testament doctrine of Election is built. The very language used by the Apostle to describe its phases and stages is borrowed from the Levitical constitution. And only with this Levitical constitution in his mind can the student of the New Testament counterpart comprehend the depths of meaning and shadings of thought expressed by Peter and Paul in their reference to fore-ordination, pre-destination and election.

"For whom he foreknew, he also fore-

ordained to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren, and whom He fore-ordained them He also called, and whom He called them He also justified, and whom He justified them He also glorified " (Rom. 8 : 29-30).

Thus writes the Apostle Paul in words of great force and insight.

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to the elect . . . according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1 : 2).

Such are the words from Peter's pen.

These are the most direct and specific phrases in the New Testament, setting forth the stages in the process of selection, and of the experiences involved in the equipment of the elect for the work to which they have been called. It may be to some advantage to strip the language used (in our Versions) of some of its Calvinistic austerity by substituting other words for those around which Calvinistic and Arminian advocates fought so fiercely in other days. Fore-ordination and pre-determination sound much harsher and forbidding than the word "pre-arranged," but in essence they mean the same. "Select" or "chose" have a milder sound than their equivalent "elect," but their meaning is the same.

Carrying the New Testament phrasing back to the institution of the Aaronic service, it may be said, first, that this priestly service was instituted exactly as it was pre-arranged by God. It was all fore-known by God, and pre-determined by Him before the pattern of the Tabernacle was shown to Moses in the Holy Mount. It was thus arranged before the foundations of that "kesmos" (arrangement or order) were laid. Thus Aaron and his house were fore-known of God in connection with that service from before the foundation of that world.

When God commanded Moses to take Aaron and his house apart and prepare them for the Priesthood, those whom He had fore-known had now been "called" to their sacred office. Appropriate vestments, after a ceremonial washing, were put upon Aaron and his sons. These vestments were exclusively for priestly wear (see Lev. 8 : 6-9, 12-13). Here the fore-ordained and called persons were made clean and clothed in robes symbolic of righteousness. "Those whom He called, He also justified . . ." For what purposes then were they called and justified? The answer "to ap-

proach the 'Glory.'" And what was that? First and foremost, it was the mysterious glew that constituted the pillar of fire by night and the pillar of cloud by day (see Lev. 9, 6 and 23; Ex. 16, 10; Ex. 24, 16-17; Ex. 40, 34-35; Num. 14, 10 and 22; Num. 16, 19 and 42).

Then, after the Tabernacle had been dedicated, that Divine Light came to dwell between the cherubim in the Most Holy place (Ex. 40 : 34-35). All the preceding stages of Aaron's call were preliminary to and preparatory for the purpose of approaching this "Glory." To Israel, as their High Priest, he was the emblem and representative of this Glory. None else but he might draw near thereto, and none but he might withdraw from its presence to serve and bless Israel. The sanctity of that Holy Light was set forth in his robes, and in his holy estate. He was to Israel the token of that Glory in living flesh. Thus was he "Glorified." Again, whom God did foreknow him He called, and him whom He called, He also justified, and him whom He justified, He also "glorified."

Thus the selection and service of the Priesthood in Israel (the election within an election) constitutes the framework on which the Apostle's great theme of Christian election is built.

Taking Peter's words also back to their origin we have the same basic facts as their framework too. "Elect . . . according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father in (or by) sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" are Peter's words. Here, again, "election" is according to the fore-knowledge of God, but is manifested forth by the impartation by God of His Holy Spirit, and by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. This reference is to the consecration of the Priesthood (Lev. 8), and the ceremony by which they were inducted into their sacred office. "And the Lord spake unto Moses saying Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments and the anointing oil . . ." (Lev. 8 : 1). This indicates that God foreknew Aaron as the candidate for the High Priesthood, and his sons as his under-priests.

It also shows that God pre-destined them for this service. "And he (Moses) poured of the anointing oil (symbol of the Holy Spirit) upon Aaron's head, and anointed him to sanctify him . . . And Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, upon his gar-

ments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments with him, and sanctified Aaron, his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him" (Lev. 8; 12, 30). Here the sprinkled blood and oil are emblems of consecration, and show that these foreknown and pre-destined chosen men were sanctified (set apart) to the service of their God, as ministers for their nation. The sprinkling of the oil and blood set a visible seal upon the foreknown and pre-determined purpose of God concerning them, and was to be taken as the sure token that God had called them to and equipped them for their sacred office.

Thus, again, the purpose inhering in their election was that the chosen company should be the channel of God's favour and mercy to those who had been passed-by, and remained numbered among the non-elect. A small section of the nation had been taken and prepared for a higher purpose than the rest—"of the same lump" God had taken clay and made it a vessel unto greater honour.

Again, since Apostolic days, God has been taking clay—mainly clay from the same lump—to make for Himself a vessel unto greater honour. Another higher and better Priesthood is on the wheel, and is being worked into shape for its high destiny. In spite of Rabbinic or Pharisaic remonstrance in Apostolic days, God has exercised His sovereign prerogative as the supreme Master-Potter, and has made for His purposes a vessel through which His grace will flow—a vessel foreknown long ago, and pre-determined from ancient times to receive its fashioning; a vessel elect and precious; foreknown, called, justified, and glorified. No matter how it hurt Pharisaic pride or roused Rabbinic ire, the Potter exercised His sovereign right and of the same lump has made a vessel suited for higher honour, leaving the remainder of the clay in hardness of heart to bide His time till He shall make it also a vessel of honour, though by comparison a vessel of lesser honour.

The Potter's great design first matured in

the character of His dear Son, but that worthy Son is to have a brotherhood of faithful souls conjoined with Him in His calling. Known unto God from before the world, this brotherhood was pre-determined to be conformed to His likeness—to be linked with Him in His sufferings so that they might share in His glory.

In his letter to Rome, Paul tells us in the magnificent phrases of his argument, of God's fore-knowledge and pre-determination to create a family of sons—a family of many brethren, all of whom will have been conformed to the image of His Son. To reach that glorious estate each of these brethren will have been called and justified and glorified. Together they were all foreknown to God, not as individuals, but as a class or brotherhood.

Peter's words help us to specify the actual time in each believer's life, and the processes by means of which he becomes the elect of God. When the Holy Spirit is given, and the blood of Jesus is applied, then each consecrated believer is set apart to the Will of God, and becomes one of God's "elect." Then, and not before, does the accepted believer enter within the circle of God's elect. That brotherhood was pre-determined long ages ago, but who should enter into it was left to the workings of time and Providence.

Thus, irrespective of Rabbinic remonstrances or Pharisaic questionings, God has exercised His sovereign right over His clay, and has taken one part of it to make a vessel unto the highest honour. But He will satisfy every willing heart even of the residue, when He has made of the remainder a vessel still unto honour, though of lower honour than the first.

"O, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God; How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past tracing out!"

"But unto us God has revealed them through the Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor. 2; 10).

THE END

"O man, is there aught that, possessing the friendship of God, thou canst not compass? Doth not thy soul strain to Him as the mountains strain unto the sun and the waters of the sea to the moon? Verily thou dost move forth in the light of His strength, in the unquenchable brilliance of His boundless majesty, as a great star, lit by the beams of a still

greater sun, launches forth into the million-lamped avenues of the night. As a ship is moved by the bright waves of the morning, so art thou urged by the breath of His Spirit. Verily thou art of God as a child is of its father. What then hast thou to fear, O son of such a Father?

(Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah).

THE QUIET TIME



C.T.W.

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

Millennial Dawn

Only those who have risen early and have watched the dawn of a spring day in the country can appreciate the feeling of exhilaration which such an experience can bring. Even while it is yet dark overhead the first flush of light appears in the east, and trees and buildings become silhouetted against the horizon; one hears the first twittering of the birds and the faint lowing of the cattle stirring lazily in the meadows. As the light strengthens the dark silhouettes become familiar objects clothed in their natural colours; the twittering of the birds becomes a full-throated song; the ducks waddle noisily to the pond and the impatient cattle call loudly for attention. Soon the roar of tractors fills the air, and the waggoners with their teams contribute to the ever increasing volume of sound. By the time the sun's bright orb has risen above the horizon the world is awake and a new day has begun.

So it is in the Millennial Dawn. The darkness of unrighteousness and injustice has long overhung the world, but those who were on the mountain top when the day dawned experienced a great thrill as they saw the truths concerning restitution and the Day of Jehovah as dim silhouettes against the horizon, and how their hearts leapt as the ever increasing light revealed them in their brilliant colours.

The increasing light stirred the souls of men long dormant under the suffering of slavery and servitude, and with the increase of knowledge came the clash between rival factions, reaching the uproar which fills the earth to-day. This is the awakening, not of a country village, but of a world so long indifferent to the laws of righteousness and justice.

As the light strengthens and the healing beams of the Sun of Righteousness steal into the cold and barren recesses of men's hearts they will learn that the law of love is transcendent above all others. So the brave new world for which men are longing will appear not by the plans and efforts of men, but by the power of Him who creates all things well. Those who have eyes to see and ears to hear feel a great exhilaration of spirit as they take

note of the signs and portents that betoken the dawning of the Day of Jehovah.

"Wanting No Good Thing"

Psalm 34; 10 says: "They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." Though we know that the good thing intended here is what is spoken of in verse 22, "none shall be desolated," or in John 14; 23, "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him"—for this is a good thing indeed—yet that which most readily comes to the mind in reading these words is some earthly good thing which we may desire. We can think of some of the Lord's dear ones who are greatly burdened with trials and difficulties, and who seem to have far more than their share of illness and suffering, and it would indeed be hard to make unbelievers realise these were "not in want of any good thing." Though this is not easy to explain by cold logic, yet the testimony of the poorest and most destitute brother or sister in Christ is: "I have wanted no good thing." The following, by Alexander Peden, dated 1682, surely explains this position:—

I remember, as I came through the country, that there was a poor widow woman, whose husband fell at Bothwell. The callous soldiers came to plunder her house, telling her they would take all she had: 'We will leave thee nothing,' said they, 'either to put in thee or on thee.' 'I care not,' said she, 'I will not want as long as God is in the Heavens.'"

To-morrow is God's

There is only one way to live in peace—it is by leaving to-morrow in the hands of God, and faithfully serving Him to-day. Faithfulness to-day is the best preparation for to-morrow. Protect to-morrow by faithful living to-day. We may not boast of to-morrow, but we may boast of God who will take care of the morrow. Faith never boasts about the coming days, but faith rests in God who governs them.

CHRISTIAN ZEAL

W.A.D.

"Be zealous, therefore, and repent."—Rev. 3: 19

Zeal is a wonderful quality of passionate enthusiasm, and when manifest in the service of Christ it brings great blessing to the zealot and at the same time redounds in praise to God. Zeal implies whole-heartedness and determination to do with one's might what the hands find to do. As we look back upon the gigantic efforts of the harvest-time, so we cannot fail to recognise the presence of Christian zeal in large and overcoming measure, begotten of love for the Lord and for His Truth.

It is comparatively easy to be zealous in any cause for a time, but the race in which we are running cannot be won by fits and starts, but by patient continuance in well-doing. It is only they who endure unto the end who will be saved.

Zeal must be directed by knowledge

Zeal may be harnessed for either good or bad ends, and, in consequence, it may easily be misdirected. The outstanding example which comes to mind is that of Saul of Tarsus, who, in later life as the Apostle Paul, wrote of himself, "concerning zeal, persecuting the church" (Phil. 3: 5). At the material time, he had no faith in Christ, and his zealous disposition was manifest in relentless persecution of the early Christians. In due time, the Lord appeared to him on the Damascus road with His arresting message: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest" (Acts 9: 5), and then followed his conversion, whereupon his zeal was turned in the opposite direction, as he thenceforth espoused the cause of Christ.

Another outstanding example is that of the typical people of God. Paul wrote of them: "I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge" (Rom. 10: 2), and in consequence their zeal was inevitably misdirected. In this, as in other matters, they are an example to us that we should not fail in the same way.

This clearly demonstrates the importance of doctrine to the end that we may know the Father's will and then direct our zeal along right lines in the performance of that will. We cannot have too much doctrine so long as we use it aright so that the Truth has its sanctifying effect upon the heart and mind (John 17: 17). In our day, too, so much light

has been shed upon the pathway of the consecrated, and, while directing their zeal, it should also increase that zeal by reason of loving gratitude for such rich blessings received in this harvest-time of the Gospel Age.

Our service for the Lord should know no limits, and we should be ever on the alert to perform His bidding, using every opportunity that comes our way, in harmony with His revealed will. Christian zeal should be manifest in various ways, as will be shown later.

Lukewarmness of Laodicea

It is very significant that the message to Laodicea is marked by lukewarmness. This is a feature which the Lord cannot approve in His Church, hence He says: "I know thy works; that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3: 15-16). We must not for one moment think that this cannot apply to us because it refers to "Christendom," for the same conditions can and, indeed, have developed in our own fellowship. Indeed, verse 19 of the same message does not apply to a tare class, but to wheat. The Lord never loved the tares, but he says, "as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." Chastening is an evidence of sonship as seen in Hebrews 12.

From one standpoint it is strange that zeal always flourishes amid persecution. This is exemplified in the early Church during the time of the cruel Pagan persecution. When Constantine professed to embrace the Christian faith and the persecution ceased for a time, the salutary influence in the direction of piety and self-abnegation was removed, and the Church became slack and worldly-minded.

Think of the zeal of the early days of the harvest, when there were not all the helps to Bible study that we enjoy to-day. The Emphatic Diaglott had not been published, the volumes of "Scripture Studies" were being written one by one, the various features of Present Truth were gradually becoming clear. With what earnest zeal did the watchers in Zion then search after the light; how each volume as it appeared was hailed with joy and enthusiasm; and how did they show their gratitude to the Lord in consuming zeal as

reapers in the harvest field. To-day, we are all in danger of taking these blessings for granted, and of becoming slack as regards our service for the Lord by failing fully to appreciate our tremendous privileges in His vineyard.

It is helpful frequently to review the past and to take stock of the present in order to ascertain whether we are putting forth our maximum zeal in the Lord's cause. Service for the Lord is our one aim in life to which all else is subservient, and we must see to it that we do not become weary in well doing, knowing that we shall reap in due season, provided we faint not in the meantime. Zeal, moreover, is infectious; it encourages others who may tend to tire in the race, and that is one of the main reasons why fellowship is so important a factor in the Christian, and a vital means of grace.

Forsake not assembling together

Zeal for the Lord will manifest itself in a consuming desire to meet in fellowship with those of like precious faith. We each must recognise duty towards the other members of the Body; we do not attend meetings simply to receive blessing, but to **give** forth blessing to others, and this is a privilege which all can enjoy, not merely those who are public teachers in the Ecclesia. It was for this reason, we remember, that the one talented man was chosen to illustrate talent burials—to show the responsibility of those who have least.

Declining zeal is evident in our day under this heading. Many brethren do not attend meetings, while others meet only occasionally with those of like precious faith. It is often noticed that some attend the Memorial service once a year, and no other meetings at all, yet this was not the case in earlier days. Those who do not meet **regularly** (where circumstances permit) miss a great blessing as well as a privilege.

Some are isolated either on account of health or because they live too far away to be able to meet regularly with those of like precious faith. Such often express themselves in terms which manifest that they are fully with us in Spirit, and those of us within reach of Class fellowship are in danger of underestimating our privileges. This is true of all things. For example, there was a time when Bibles were so scarce that a poor person could not afford to buy one, while even then only the few could read. How they would then have appre-

ciated our privileges, for Bibles can be purchased by all, and the art of reading is general! In the light of this, do we sufficiently value our opportunities for real Bible study, or do we manifest less zeal than those in the more difficult times when they had mainly to remember what others read to them from the Word of God?

Zeal for the Truth

The spirit of enquiry is most pleasing to the Heavenly Father, as seen in His commendation of the beloved Daniel. Reverent enquiry into His Truth arises out of zeal, and this should be manifest in each one of us. If we are really zealous to know, we shall not be satisfied with superficial truths, but will desire to **search** the Scriptures by means of the Spirit, which enables us to understand the "deep things" of God. God will honour our zeal by giving the necessary light to those who wait on Him.

The Apostle Peter gives us some conception of this aspect of matters when he tells us that even the angels desired to look into the things now made known to us. Once again, do we sufficiently realise our privileges, even as Daniel spake of the blessedness of those who came unto the 1,335 days?

In this connection, the words of the hymn come forcibly to mind: "**And may my zeal to judgment brought, prove true beneath thy test.**" This, of course, exemplifies the thoughts given above to the effect that zeal must be directed by knowledge, although we are at the moment thinking of the matter from a slightly different angle, namely, the **intensity** of our zeal as such.

Zeal will contrive ways and means to prosecute deep study of the Word. God has promised the Holy Spirit to all those who ask, and we know that even frail intellect is no real barrier, because the Lord can make up our lack, provided we have the desire to know, that is, so long as we have **zeal**.

Zeal in practical issues

To-day, many of the Lord's dear people are in difficulties of one kind or another, in material as well as spiritual crises. If we are zealous we shall seek opportunities to assist those of like precious faith. Examples come readily to mind of those who are noble patterns of zeal in this direction in tending sick brethren, ministering a word of comfort as the way opens up, and relieving one or other of the burdens which rest heavily upon the Body members.

The solemn question comes to each one: **Am I doing all I can to assist the brethren?** There are ample opportunities to-day, yet sometimes we hear it said that there is so little to do these days. Let us use all our opportunities, and pray to God for more, ever remembering that true love is impelled by consuming zeal. Does not the Psalmist say, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me" (Psa. 69; 9). It is so significant that the Scriptures invariably speak in this fashion, for could we conceive anything more entire than

that behind the expression that zeal "hath eaten me up"? Our consecration must be full; our sacrifice offered even **unto the end**; we must **do with our might** what our hands find to do; and we must never be weary in such well-doing. There are the Ancient Worthies to inspire as a "great cloud of witnesses," there are the zealous efforts of the saints of the Gospel Age, especially those who were martyred and who translated the Scriptures at their peril because of zealous love for Him, and above all there is the perfect example in our Lord Himself.

"LET HER BE COVERED"

A Comment on I Cor., chap. ii.

A few months ago the Archbishop of Canterbury ruled that a woman or a girl need not wear a hat in church, in this bringing to an end a custom which has been maintained virtually without change for many centuries. It may be appropriate, therefore, to give the subject brief consideration at this time.

Paul writes in I Cor. 11; 5 and 13: **"Every woman that prayeth or prophesyeth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head; for that is even all one as if she were shaven. . . . Judge in yourselves. Is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?"** He also puts in a strange word (vs. 10): **"For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels."**

First of all, we need to notice that Paul was not talking about hats, which were not in use in his day. He was referring to the long veils, or mantles, in which Eastern women enshrouded themselves when in the open air or in any place of public resort. These veils completely covered the face with the exception of the eyes, and it is this complete concealment of the features to which Paul refers. There were two definite reasons for Paul's prohibition, neither of which have any application in this twentieth century. It will be remembered that the Christian church was gaining a footing in a pagan world, and sought to show by the purer and holier lives of its adherents the power which resided in the faith of Jesus Christ. To this end the Apostles were careful to counsel the avoidance of any custom or practice which might bring reproach upon the body of believers.

It was usual for woman devotees of paganism to throw off their veils and dishevel their hair when under the stress of strong emotion in their worship. This practice was sometimes carried to extreme lengths, and the woman would relapse into a trance, and exhibit all the symptoms of demon obsession. The damsel who brought much gain to her masters by soothsaying, and who, meeting Paul and Silas, called out: "These men be the servants of the Most High God, which show unto us the way of salvation" (Acts 16; 17), was one such example. It would be in the highest degree undesirable that any suspicion of such practices should rest upon the Christian assemblies, and hence Paul's instructions that the Christian women remain veiled. He said that to be unveiled was as bad as being shorn or shaven, a reference to the fact that priestesses at the pagan altars usually had their heads shaven, and the repute of these priestesses was such that Paul found it necessary to dispel any impression that the Christians had similar priestesses associated with their worship. In the background hovered the sinister forces of Spiritism, and it is this fact which explains Paul's allusion to the woman having "power" on her head "because of the angels." He was referring to the fallen angels. It was a Rabbinic belief that the wearing of the veil by a woman was a safeguard against the evil spirits, who, as in the days of Genesis, chapter 6, still sought to ensnare "those whom they chose." The word rendered "power" is "**exousia**," which means "authority," and Paul declared that

the wearing of the veil by a woman became a sign of her submission to the authority of Christ, and there should be no suspicion on the part of strangers that she had any part or lot in the practices for which the pagan women were notorious. Paul's use of the word "power" to denote the veil reveals his familiarity with the Old Testament scriptures, for the Old Testament word for "veil" or "mantle" is "**radid**," which comes from the idea of spreading out or prostrating on the ground, hence introducing the idea of submission. In the Old Testament, therefore, the wearing of the veil involved the thought of submission; the woman subject to the authority of her husband, or, if unmarried, to her father or the men folk of her house. In Paul's epistle this thought is carried to a higher plane, and the veil is made a symbol of submission to Christ—for woman stands on an equal footing with man "**in Christ**," where there is neither male nor female.

It is obvious that these pagan considerations have not now applied for many centuries, and

the Archbishop has recognised the anomaly of insisting upon the wearing of hats in church by a generation which has largely discarded them for ordinary use. Nevertheless, whilst rejoicing in the liberty which is ours as Christian believers in these things, we need to remember that the spirit of Paul's injunction still holds good. It was to avoid the behaviour of Christian believers and their assemblies falling into disrepute that, by the leading of the Holy Spirit, he established the rule. In our own day we must regard this as still important, and if the abandonment of a custom which has the sanctity of centuries would lead to misunderstanding and reproach upon our assemblies, it is our Christian privilege to maintain the tradition, not of necessity, but that the Truth we uphold be not lightly spoken of. Here is an instance of Paul's words "all things are lawful, but all things are not expedient" (1 Cor. 10: 23). Happy are we if we take care that our brother is not stumbled in that which we allow.

“THINE — — MINE.”

T.H.

A discourse based on
Jno. 17: 10

"Meum"—"tuum"! "Mine," "thine"! The adjustment of the relationship of "mine" and "thine" is one of the major problems of this sad old earth. Some men possess much, others have very little. Some nations control large territories, others have not enough for their needs. Cynics classify the two conditions as "the haves" and "the have-nots."

National laws exist which establish to "the haves" a "right-in-law" to hold and enjoy what they possess. International agreements, considered to have the force of law, exist which accord to the holders the right to hold and exploit the territories they control.

Inequality of division often prompts the "have-nots" to ignore the law and adopt violent and unconstitutional means to level up the disparity. The thief breaks in, and steals—decreasing thus what is "thine," increasing what is "mine." Aggressive nations violate the agreed conventions, and by force majeure, seize with violence, a neighbour's land.

Many say **you** have too much; few will say **I** have enough. "Thine" is usually in excess; "mine" is mostly "a deficiency." And so the old world blunders on from "incident" to "incident," grabbing, grasping, punishing

and fighting—a sordid scramble on an earth that produces more than enough for all, and where, but for the innate selfishness in the heart of man, the peace that goes with plenty should never be disturbed. May God be praised for that coming day when Kingdom grace shall bring "tuum" into even balance with "meum," and the neighbour shall be loved as one's self is loved.

There is no disparity between "Mine" and "Thine" in the heavenly realms. The heavenly hosts have all they need, but "possess" nothing at all. Whatever their higher constitutions need for sustenance, they receive from a bounteous Provider's store. There is no rivalry, then, between mine and thine. All needs are satisfied, and so peace reigns undisturbed—a peace within, with fellow-messengers, and with God. "To each according to his need, from each according to his ability" is thus a modern expression of an equitable and universal law.

It is in the relationship between our beloved Lord and His gracious Father that the perfect balance between "Mine" and "Thine" is seen. In that great "Committal Prayer" on His last night of human life, the perfect ex-

pression of "mutual possession" in "unity of purpose" was uttered by our suffering Lord.

"I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me, and they have kept Thy word . . . I pray for them . . . which Thou hast given me; for they are Thine. And all Mine are Thine; and Thine are Mine, and I am glorified in them."

What profound relationships and what sublime truths are embodied in these words. Is there anything else in the life of man equal to being possessed by God? Is there any message that can fall on the ear that compares with the statement that we are possessed by God? To be owned by the Most High God, and to be told so by Him or by His most faithful messenger, is to experience the sum of all delights. To be cherished and loved, and appreciated by the highest standard of worth Himself, and priced higher than rubies or gold, or the cattle on a thousand hills, is to learn that moral values out-scale all material wealth, and that humble hearts, adorned with the graces of God's good Spirit, have value in the heavenly courts which no product of mine or field can equal.

As Creator original, Almighty God possesses all the earth, with its wealth beneath, and its beauty above. He possesses the sun, and all the suns, with all their planets around them. They are His workmanship, and he owns them all. He framed their laws, and they obey His will. To these He does not say, "Ye are Mine."

As Greater bountiful He clothes the fields in living green. He paints the lily and the rose, and every lovely flower that blows. He fills the fields with ripened corn, and shapely root. He decks the trees with luscious fruit, delectable to both sight and taste. Even to these He does not say, "Ye are all Mine." All these are His, yet He does not proclaim them so. He owns them all, but has no need to stake His claim. To nothing other than obedient hearts does He utter the assurance, "Ye are Mine—and in you is My delight."

How utterly unique, then, is the humble human heart in His sight. He can survey the mighty machinery of the infinities, obeying His commands, and need not speak a word. But when a broken contrite heart bows humbly at His feet, and sends aloft its plea or praise, "Abba Father," looks down from His exalted throne, and says with touching tender-

ness, "My child—My own dear child!"

Again, when the conflict in the human heart is fought against fearful odds, another eye looks down from His heavenly estate. Or when the outer foes maltreat and persecute and do His beloved ones to death, He hears the stifled groan or expiring sigh, and when they cry "Lord Jesus, receive . . ." He rises to accept the charge committed to His care, and says with compassion infinite, "My brother—My very own dear brother!"

Depths of relationship, such as these, with more and more besides, lie embosomed in the Redeemer's words, "Thine, Mine." And these relationships are real and true; are based upon the foundation-rock of very truth; and are more real than any object whose image strikes the eye.

Back there in pre-Christian days before Jesus came down to earth, faithful men sought God when search was difficult indeed. The vaster crowd coming to Jerusalem to appear before their God were satisfied when they had brought their lamb or paid their "temple toll." Attendance on the ceremonial ordinance was enough for them. To feed the altar-flame or subscribe the Temple dues was all they thought they owed to God. Complying thus, the formalistic mind could turn away, and, at need, forget his nation's God. His puny mind thus satisfied, would deem his tawdry ritual was satisfactory to his God. Had he not offered up his lamb and had he not paid all he owed? What more could God require?

But some there were—in comparison but few—who wanted more than this. Not all the cattle on a thousand hills were sacrifice enough for these. They came to seek and find, not merely to present and pay. The deeper movings of their hearts found no delight in spate of blood or reek of burning flesh. Even their presence, in itself, in the city of God gave but little pleasure to their souls. They did not forget Jerusalem, but sacred stones and venerable rites did not satisfy the deep springs that lay within. They wanted God; living contact with the living God. They wanted God at hand, not merely a God who dwelt afar. They yearned for an immediate touch, where soul could commune with soul. The "intermediate" contact had a ceremonial priest between, and the energising power could not pass. They wanted to see Him who is invisible, with the eyes of their hearts. They desired a higher plane, a plane of faith and confidence and not a plane of dead or cere-

monial works.

But it was too soon for that. The day of reformation had not come. The better sacrifices with their better way of approach had not begun.

When the eyes of the Lord ran through the land. He saw the yearnings of their hearts, and heard the deep groanings of their deeper selves. "The Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name" (Mal. 3: 16).

And a great promise was registered on their behalf. "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in the day when I make up My jewels (My special treasure), and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." A great day of searching severity would afford discernment between the righteous and the wicked, between those that served the Lord and those that served Him not, and when the ritual-hardened nation fell, and lost both its Temple and its priest, they who had thought upon His name were spared the pains and dangers of the fall, because a loving Father spared them as sons that served Him well. "They shall be Mine," said the Most High. "Thine they were," said the beloved Lord. "Thou gavest them to Me."

"Those that Thou gavest Me I have kept"—"I have kept them in Thy Name"—"and none of them is lost, but . . ." Thus the faithful Shepherd delivers up, for a moment, His charge to the owner of the flock. The Shepherd was about to die, that the flock might know a fuller life. Meantime, "Holy Father, keep through Thine own Name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may become one with us!"

"None of them is lost, but . . ." Could any more of them have been lost besides the son of perdition? If not, why did the Shepherd thus address His God? Is it not a needless phrase, spoken by a Shepherd who had not needed to bestow special care? If only Judas had been faced with risk, what then had the Shepherd done? If none else were sharers in the risk, how then had they been "kept"? And if they had been kept, from what and to what had they been kept? Had they been kept from a fate like to that of him that fell? And had they been kept for the honour of God's name, and that His God and their God might not suffer loss? He had indeed been no "Good Shepherd" had He lost the members of His flock; conversely, He could not claim

Good-Shepherd attributes were there no dangers to His flock. It were safe-keeping amid dangers manifold that warranted the Shepherd's right to claim the virtues of being a good shepherd in any sense.

If Jesus had not watched them with a good Shepherd's care, why then did He warn and comfort one among His flock by making special prayer on his account. Foreseeing risk and danger in the approaching dark hour, Jesus said, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." "That thy faith fail not!" Then, surely, here were risk to faith, and if faith should fail, then surely all were lost!

"I have prayed for thee" was true good-Shepherd care, and, though Peter for the instant fell, the prayer and warning served him well. One little service more the Shepherd gave this peril-invested sheep—a searching look—and from that look Peter went forth in his shame to weep and turn again.

The inmates of the sheepfold have greatly grown since that night of prayer. The circle of "Mine" and "Thine" has widened throughout the earth. Those that believe on Him "through their words" have increased through the years, until to-day, we share their privilege and fellowship. The Shepherd can still say, "All Thine are Mine: all Mine are Thine." The Shepherd's care still "keeps" the flock when dangers are around. The Shepherd still claims the Good Shepherd's prerogative in that He loses none, who truly are His Father's sheep. Wayward goats He does not make claim to keep. Wolves in sheep's clothing He does not attempt to keep. But sheep of His Father's pastures are His full and constant care, and of these He will lose none. Not that they cannot fall, but because, being sheep, they will hear and heed His voice, and walk in His chosen path.

Beloved in the Lord, will you not weigh those words, "Thine—Mine" and let their binding cords hold you fast when risk abounds, and when worldly charms exert their magnet power to draw you from His care.

Will you also not say, "Thou art Mine and I am Thine"? Will you not say to God, "Thou art my Father, and I am Thy child!"? Will you not say to Jesus, "Thou art my Lord, and I am Thy slave!"? Then shall we know that we are one with them in the blessedness of possessing each other, and can say by night or day—"Meum"—"Tuum"; "Mine"—"Thine," from the bottom of our hearts.

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RUGBY & COVENTRY HOME-GATHERINGS

At time of writing further details of the Rugby gathering arranged for Sunday, August 15, are not to hand. Friends may have full details, however, by writing Brother H. C. Everett, 61 Cromwell Road, Rugby. The gathering will be in the usual meeting place, British Legion Hall; commencing in the morning and continuing throughout the day. We are assured that the "Rugby welcome" awaits all visitors.

Coventry also advise a gathering on Sunday, Sept. 5 at 11 a.m., at Wheatley Street School, Lower Ford Street, co including at 6 p.m. Details from Bro. H. R. Charles, 16 Eld Road, Coventry.

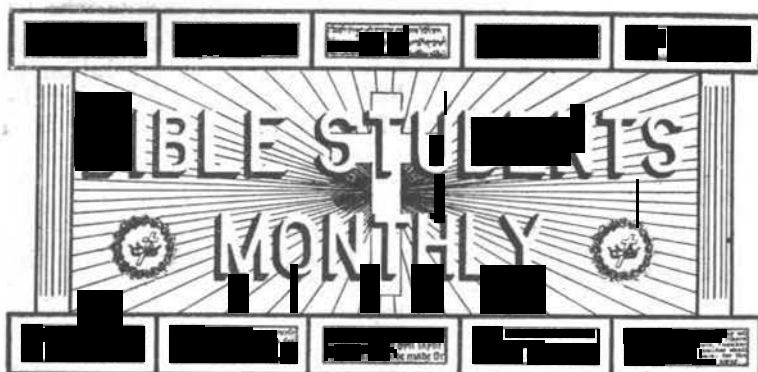
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Many of the friends will remember the book published by Bro. Shearn a few years ago entitled "A Review of the Doctrines." Thinking that some friends who have not yet seen the book would like a copy, we have had a number bound in stiff boards and can now supply same from stock at 1/9 post free.

WANTED.

A request is to hand for two dozen Volume 1 Question Books, for class study. If any friends having spare copies of this Question Book would send same to us, we will be happy to pass them on.



VOL. 20 No. 9

SEPTEMBER 1943

Circulating among the Associated Bible Students.

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NOTES

Amid the many promises which go to make up the outline of that New Order which is foreshadowed to-day to follow the war, there is not one reference to the place of Jesus Christ as King in one's personal life. The new society is to be a Christ-less society; that much is plain despite the fervent assurances from pulpit and ecclesiastical platform that Christians may with good heart give it their support. One quotation from a recent issue of a leading scientific journal is well to the point. "The Christian," says the writer, speaking of the place of religious education in post-war years, "The Christian struggles to preserve a way of life of which the historical expression is for him to be found in the New Testament. More and more is he recognising, however, that the aim of millions (Mohammedans, Buddhists, Jews, etc.,) who are on his side cannot be so described. Hence the interest that is being taken in other faiths." Passing over the tacit assumption that all the Christians are on the side of the Allied nations, which in itself reveals the shallowness of the reasoning, one's attention is arrested by this statement that the life of Jesus is for us only a "historical expression" of the way of life that is good. In other words — and let there be no mistake about it; this is the considered position of people in high places to-day — Jesus did nothing more than set a wonderfully good example of how a man should live. His life was an ideal; His teachings sublime; and so far as is reasonably possible that life and those teach-

ings should be incorporated into civilised life to-day. But since "millions on our side" do not acknowledge this Jesus, but serve other faiths — or none at all — we must combine the good points of their religions in our New Order and so make for ourselves a world religion which will suit everybody and inconvenience nobody.

"He was a good man, but he is dead now. We ought to practise the things he preached, if we can." That sums up the present-day official view of Jesus Christ. There is not the slightest glimmer of understanding of the wonderful power that the risen Christ can infuse into our lives when we give our whole-hearted consecration and devotion to Him. How could there be? These men have never known what it means to "leave all, and follow Him." The whole of their learning, and outlook, and policy, is of the earth, earthly, and even although they may read their New Testament, they see only the picture of a man who went about doing good, and uttered wonderful truths, and seemed to see with marvellous insight into the affairs of men; but he died, and two thousand years have passed, and we must face the reality of the present.

Well, there is our problem, brethren. The greater part of the established Churches are going over to this idea of the "historical Christ." We shall be among the few who are left to contend earnestly for His absolute supremacy in our own lives and consciences. It will not be a popular way; it was not so in the days of the early Church and conditions

now are getting very similar to conditions then. The new order is promising employment, security, adequate food, holidays with pay, all kinds of material blessings, but all at a price. And not the least costly part of the price is the rejection of Christ the King and the enthronement of an impersonal social god in His place. When all the world falls down and worships the Image and men say "Who is able to make war with Him?" shall we have grace and strength to not only keep our Lord enthroned in our own hearts, but like fearless Elijah of old, proclaim abroad the

everlasting sovereignty of our God, and the coming of His Kingdom the only solution to humanity's troubles. Shall we be found calling men to repentance and conversion, that they may turn from death into life, and from the power of darkness to the Kingdom of God's dear Son? There is a torch, the torch of Divine Truth, to be held aloft at all costs. Are we going to be among those who in the midst of the gathering darkness will raise it on high and keep it there though all the world rage against them?

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

In the year 1905 a deacon of the Nestorian Christian Church was on a journey through a remote and wild part of Kurdistan (the ancient Assyria, where the ten tribes were taken as captives). The inhabitants of this land are mainly Moslem, and usually hostile to Christians. At a village called Shernakh he was entertained by the local headman, a Moslem, and was surprised at receiving a request to visit "our Christian lady." Conducted to a private room, he was greeted by an aged woman, who, he found, when a Christian girl in her teens, had been carried off captive in 1845, sixty years before, in a raid on a Christian village, just like the little maid who waited on Naaman's wife (II Kings 5; 2). During all that sixty years she had never seen or conversed with one of her own faith, but by sheer force of character and uprightness had earned the respect of her Moslem captors and become the manager of the household and farm. Her one prayer had been that she might see a Christian priest before she died.

What an example of the power of Christ! Without fellowship, without books, without any of the helps to faith that we possess and take as a matter of course, this sixteen-year-old girl had lived all her days among unbelievers on the strength of that which she had learned in the few short years of childhood. Surely the Good Shepherd must have watched over this child of His through all the years, and given her that which was her sufficiency. The thought comes: if such faith can live on so little, to what faithfulness and constancy should we attain, who have so much!

THOUGHTS ON THEOLOGY

A writer recently suggested that it is quite within the power of an individual devoted to evil for its own sake to **destroy his own**

capacity for repentance. Food for thought here! On the one hand, we hold firmly to the principle that whilst there is the least hope of the sinner turning from the error of his way, whilst there is anything at all left upon which Divine Love can work, God will not let go His hold of the erring one. Upon the other hand, Scripture is clear that there are circumstances in which it is impossible to renew a man to repentance, that for some there is reserved the "blackness of darkness for ever." There is hope of a tree, says Job, if it be cut down, that through the scent of water it will bud and become green again; that is because the life principle has not become altogether extinct in the stump and roots. A plant may wither and dry up in the scorching heat, and while life remains in it, rain will bring it renewed vigour, but if the life has gone, nothing can ever restore it.

May we then conclude that there is something in man, a capacity for appreciating the things of righteousness and goodness and purity, implanted there by God at the beginning, which can be smothered over, but need not be entirely obliterated in even the most degraded of men; but that continued and obstinate hardening of the heart against every good influence in the favourable environment of the Millennial Age can utterly destroy that capacity and leave nothing of the man but an empty physical frame possessing the spirit of life but no preserving influence of good; and that the workings of sin in that physical body will eventually encompass its destruction without hope of recovery? Thus seen, the Second Death is the inevitable result of a man's deliberate stifling of the powers of righteousness which God implanted within him. **"It shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be cut off from among the people."**



A Brother in Adversity.



T.H.



"—whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage."

Acts 21: 15



The story of Paul's life as told in the Acts of the Apostles is the story of a 'great-heart'—the story of a faithful 'man of God.' Yet, heroic though that story is, it is not the whole story. The careful student is enabled to fill up some of its missing chapters by extracts from Paul's own pen.

And though Paul calls them all light afflictions, lasting but a moment, one soon comes to realise that only a man built of moral granite and steel could have endured them. He endured sufferings and privations which would have chilled the ardour and extinguished the love of probably ninety-nine out of every hundred men. We have only to read the scrap of his own autobiography as recorded in 2 Cor. 11: 22-33, to realise how full his life was, at all times of threatening danger and menacing death. All this extensive catalogue of suffering is omitted from the account of his life in the Acts, and much of it had been experienced before he appeared on the scene as the general evangelist to the nations. It is an amazing record, and would make a heartening study to take this catalogue clause by clause and seek to bring out some aspects of the hardships which the narrative records. Five whippings by the Jewish lash, three beatings by the Roman rod, three times wrecked at sea and at the mercy of the waves, (this, remember, does not include the story told in Acts 27.) added to which were perils from both stranger and his own kin; limping footsore over wilderness track or fording with danger some river in spate; travelling from place to place, ill-clothed, cold, hungry and athirst; chased by open foes or betrayed by false friends—these are the things that fell to him every day and at every turn of the road. Something of the fiery ardour of soul, which carried him through all this suffering is shown by his reactions and responses to the frequent warnings on his way up to Jerusalem for the last time. "... behold I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem not knowing the things that shall befall me there; save that the Holy Spirit testifieth unto me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But I hold not my life of any account as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course and the ministry which I received from the

Lord Jesus to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God. And now, behold I know that ye all among whom I went about preaching the Kingdom shall see my face no more" (Acts 20: 20-25, R.V.). Then from his lips fall words of white-hot urgency (which have few equals in Holy Writ) imploring the elders of Ephesus to feed the flock of God and discharge diligently and faithfully the duties of under-shepherds laid upon them by the Lord Jesus.

At a later stage of his journey a man with a gift of prophecy apprised Paul of the dangers awaiting in Jerusalem, illustrating with Paul's own girdle, how he would be bound hand and foot, "So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles" (Acts 21: 20-42). Sorrowing friends besought him not to proceed further on his way, but to tarry at Caesarea, or turn aside to some other less dangerous field of service. "What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus." And when he would not be persuaded we ceased, saying, "The Will of the Lord be done."

Here is an example of unwavering resolution akin to that which dominated the heart of Jesus as He went up to Jerusalem for the last time (Mark 10: 32-34). Knowing what awaited Him, some of the disciples were afraid, inasmuch that they marvelled at Him stepping resolutely ahead of them. Jesus knew the supreme hour of his earthly life was near, and fortified by the approval of His Father, He went unflinchingly along to meet it, and . . . His doom!

It requires the courage of complete conviction to do this. There must be the unwavering assurance within the heart and mind that the intended step is according to the Will of God, and that God will be with His servant right through to the end of the Way. Only thus assured and fortified will men step calmly and quietly into the arms of death. This is the martyr's courage and not the worked-up courage of the battlefield, and comes only from the presence of God in the soul.

That calmly heroic attitude is only one as-

pect of Paul's many-sided make-up. He could face danger better than suspense and uncertainty. He could stand before false brethren or hostile foe better than the unknown reception. This shows us that this 'Great-heart' was a man, much as we are ourselves.

Our text shows him arrived in Italy and on the last stage of the journey to Rome. For two years he had been under arrest at Caesarea, subject to the whims and caprice of the Roman governors there.

Appealing to Caesar, there followed that disastrous and hazardous journey through the Levantine and Mediterranean Seas, until, at last, the centurion and his charges set foot on Italian soil. Then the journey on foot began from Puteoli (a port more than 100 miles down the coast) to the Imperial city. A delay of seven days provided opportunity for Paul to receive a company of brethren residing there, who evidently gave him a cordial welcome, for they "entreated him to stay with them." (Acts: 28: 14.). Apparently also they sent on a messenger ahead of Paul to inform the brethren in Rome of Paul's coming "And from thence (Rome) the brethren, when they heard of us, came to meet us as far as the Market of Appii and the Three Taverns"—a distance of some forty and thirty miles respectively. How would they receive him? Would they despise him for his chain? Would they scorn him for his diminutive and bed-ragged appearance?

For many years he had looked forward to seeing Rome, but he had not then thought of entering it bound by a chain. In the prosecution of his commission Paul had thought of entering Rome, perhaps as the last stronghold of the enemies of the Lord. Years ago he had sent to them the announcement of his intention "I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also, for I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1: 16).

Now, however, when the ordering of his circumstances actually found him nearing Rome, and as he thought of the abject condition in which he was making his approach—an old weather-beaten, grey-haired broken man; a chained prisoner recently escaped from the sea, his heart was heavy within him, and though he had found some friends by the way, he wondered what the brethren of Rome would think and say and do!

As he approached the waiting groups his quick sensitive eye searched their faces, if haply he might read thereby the attitude of their hearts. Strong and self-reliant as he was at other times and in other places, yet he was also exceedingly sensitive to human sympathy, and in these little groups of brethren he found what he sought. Their greetings and welcome were such, that, despite his chain, and the fatiguing nature of his journey thus far, his spirit rose out of its slough of despond and he thanked God and took fresh courage. This welcome restored him to his wonted confidence and helped him to regain the optimism of which he wrote to them years before. His heart began to swell again with hope of achievement in Rome despite the chain, for he knew that he carried in his heart and mind the force and power that could win human hearts even in that proud imperial city.

That is a story from which we of little stature in Christ may gain great comfort. Paul knew that God and his Master were with him. Even as they drifted before the storm the Lord appeared to Paul in a vision and assured him that he and all his sailing companions would be saved, though the ship would be lost. And Paul knew as much as any man alive, the verity of the Lord's presence and comfort in the dark day. Yet notwithstanding that apprehension and uncertainty had gripped his heart as he neared Rome, as he wondered how he would be received by the brethren there. Ought he not to have suppressed his fears and told himself that the Lord was his sufficiency no matter what his brethren did? Was it a proper thing to do, when he wondered what these brethren would say? Was he allowing the coward within to overcome the martyr spirit of his earlier days? Or was he resolute before the bigger thing that lay ahead in Rome only to falter before the lesser things that met him on the road?

Do we not often find ourselves there, beloved in the Lord? Nothing on earth would make us deny or prove faithless to the Lord, but oh! how we tremble at what the brethren will say!

Well, a great-heart giant in the Lord trod that self-same way, and found new heart of Grace for the bigger thing in life, because he found the look and touch of sympathy in his brethren's eye and hand.

This little episode affords a source of comfort to those who are little in their own eyes

and who know with considerable frequency, what it is to feel discouraged by the way. If a man of Paul's stature in Christ — a man in constant communion with his Lord — could feel the bitter effects of adversity, and sink down to zero (or below), there is no need for shame or blame if a more immature follower of the Lord finds himself or herself sinking beneath the load of care. It is not the fact that we sink at times that matter most, but that, like Paul, we can rise again at a touch of Providence and take new courage and press on again.

Perhaps it may be to our greater advantage to view this illustration from the two-fold point of view, that of Paul, and then that of the brethren.

It is possible for any one of us to be like Paul — a prisoner of circumstance. The bonds that bind us may not be forged of cold steel, nor is it necessary for us to be undertaking a journey, like Paul, under compulsion. Some peculiar phase of life, linking us to an uncongenial environment may be our chain, some dominating circumstance beyond our control may have us captive in its train as we move forward to some crisis in our life, and for the time, circumstance proves too much for us, and the spirit sinks and courage fails. A depressed heart magnifies the burden out of its proportion, till it seems to fill both heaven and earth, with no way out to escape its crushing weight. Again, we say it might be any one of us, you, good Brother; you, dear Sister. No one is immune from such circumstance while living in this evil world.

We may not say these things are exactly orderings of Providence in every case, but always, when not Heaven-sent, they are the permissions of that Supervising power. There are secondary as well as first causes in operation in and around us, and unrighteous forces as well as the heavenly messengers may be serving the purpose of Divine Wisdom in the distressing and over-bearing circumstance. But God, the All-merciful and All-wise is watching, and when we have sunk deep into what may seem a bottomless pit, we come to our "Three Taverns" and "Appii Forums."

The smiling welcome from the brethren from Rome was a providence of God for Paul. The smile and welcome were the product of the spirit of God, long active in their lives. It was none the less a Providence because the love of the brethren is a fruit of that indwelling Spirit.

That brings in the other side—the brethren's

side of this little episode. The news that Paul was nearing Rome could have left the brethren unconcerned. "What is that to us?" they could have said, "he should have been more careful and discreet in word and act, and not have brought this trouble on himself." Reasons in abundance for withholding help or comfort could have been found, and Paul could have been left to enter Rome a dejected prisoner, unwelcome and unesteemed.

Instead of imputing blame or deciding that his imprisonment was just, they saw a brother in distress and went forth to show that they were eager to help him in his distress. Even though they could not unlock his chain, nor remove him from the Roman's supervision, there was something they could do. They could meet him on the way — and when they looked into his suffering eyes, their own could smile a welcome and a "God bless you, brother," and let him see that the stigma of the chain was of no deterring consequence to them. Chain or no chain, Paul was their brother, and it was Paul they saw, not his chain.

And so in time of need, one of Christianity's great-hearts, found grace to help, and took new courage to his heart, and sent up his thanks to God because the spirit of brotherhood—the spirit of God and of God's great family—had found expression in the hearts and faces of brethren who hitherto he had never met.

If opportunity to do this self-same thing should come to you, dear brethren in the Lord, what will you do? Will you not lend yourself to Divine Providence to work out its gracious purposes?

The mark of a saint is not perfection but consecration. A saint is not a man without faults but a man who has given himself without reserve to God.

"Christianity is the most encouraging, the most joyous, the least repressive and the least forbidding of all the religions of mankind. There is no religion that gives so large a scope for the high spirits of the soul. There are moments when it enters the deepest shadows and may even be said to descend into hell. But the end of it all is a Resurrection and not a funeral, an ascent into the heights and not a lingering in the depths." (Dr. Jacks.)

THE QUIET TIME

 C.T.W.

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

RIGHTLY ADJUSTED VISION.

The Master's word is, that whoever sets his affections upon earthly treasures will become sordid, selfish, earthly; while he who sets his affections upon the things above will become correspondingly heavenly, spiritual, blessed, generous. We have two eyes and if they be not properly adjusted with relationship to each other our vision of things will be distorted, hence we seek to correct such a difficulty, that we may get the true view of matters. So it is with the eyes of our understanding. It has both a present and a future outlook, an earthly and a Heavenly view. It is important that we get these rightly adjusted so that we may see matters in their true light—see the great value of the future life in comparison with the present one, and correspondingly be guided to the setting of our heart affections there and in general balancing all the interests of life wisely.

THE GOLDEN RULE.

Jesus said, "Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." (Matt. 7: 12). Never man spake like this man." Perhaps the nearest teaching to this golden rule was the maxim attributed to Confucius, "Do not do to others what you would not have them do to you." This latter is a grand teaching but it is far inferior to the former, which is sublime. Christians are not to be negative but positive; they are not merely to follow the standards of others but to set standards; they are to raise up the Lord's standard before the people. It is not for the followers of Jesus to say, "we will endeavour to keep within the bonds of human law," but rather, "we will live according to the Divine law, so far as possible. We will esteem that human law represents the standard of the majority of fallen men and not the Divine standard." Our Saviour tells us that we will be tested along the line of our love for God and for our neighbour.

HE GIVETH MORE GRACE.

(JAMES 4. 6.).

One day at a time, and the day is His day;

He hath numbered its hours, though they
haste or delay.

His grace is sufficient; we walk not alone;

As the day, so the strength that He giveth
His own.

WHAT WITH THE WILL?

Some are born with strong wills; others rather weak-minded. In the world the latter either sink or swim, survive or perish, in the vicissitudes of life, often controlled by the law of supply and demand and the survival of the fittest. The inequalities of birth are frequently accentuated by life's experiences and often disastrously. Some of the strong-willed become merchant princes and managers of large enterprises, and some become thieves and desperadoes—the outcome depending largely upon haphazard channels. The only safe course for any mariner on the sea of life is to take on board the great Pilot, the Lord Jesus. This Pilot will probably rarely guide into a haven of earthly riches or earthly popularity, but, if permitted, He will bring us safely to the proper haven.

Under this Pilot the human will is like a strong vessel with mighty masts and sails or powerful engines. The greater the power, the greater the capacity and the more useful. The proper Pilot will guide us not only safely past the rocks of disaster and shoals of sin, but to the haven of everlasting life and joy and peace and fellowship Divine.

But not merely the strong-willed need this Pilot; the weak-willed naturally need Him just as much, for although they might not run upon the rocks with the same degree of force and make equally bad shipwreck, they are quite as likely to be caught upon the shoals of sin and, in a purposeless manner, fail to achieve anything in life.

He that is down need fear no fall.

He that is low, no pride;

He that is humble ever shall

Have God to be his guide.

I am content with what I have

Little be it or much;

And, Lord, contentment still I crave,

Because Thou savest such.

Fullness to such a burden is

That go on pilgrimage;

Here little and hereafter bliss

Is best from age to age.

(Bunyan).



THE QUESTION BOX.



Q. How do we harmonise Heb. 9; 6, where the High Priest is said to enter into the Most Holy once in every year, with Exod. 25; 22 and Num. 7; 89, where Moses at least is said to have entered into the Most Holy and talked with God?

A. It is recorded that Moses entered the Most Holy only once in his life. It was when the Tabernacle had been completed and erected but before Aaron and his sons had been constituted to minister the sacred things. Moses, as the Mediator of the Covenant between God and Israel, was then the only one who could properly approach God on their behalf, and he did what was clearly the Divine requirement for him at that time, he went into the Most Holy, alone, and heard the voice of God from between the cherubim giving him instructions about the priesthood. The command regarding the reservation to the High Priest of the right of entry into the Most Holy did not come into effect until after Moses had retired from the Divine presence and had instituted all things as he had been commanded. Exod. 25; 22 clearly states that God would meet with Moses in the Most Holy in order to give him these commandments.

According to the 4th chapter of Numbers, Aaron and his sons were to enter the Most Holy when the Tabernacle was being taken down for journeying and were to cover the sacred Ark with the Veil, and wrap that in turn in a blue cloth. Then it fell to the sons of Kohath to carry the Ark to the next stopping place in the wanderings. Not until it was safely covered were they permitted to come forward, lest their eyes should fall upon the sacred emblem and they suffer death for seeing that which no man was permitted to see. In like manner all the sacred furniture was carried by means of staves after being wrapped up, the bearer being forbidden to touch the articles themselves under penalty of death. Thus did God seek to teach the great importance of reverence and respect for those things which have to do with His great Plan of redemption.

* * *

Q. Why does the writer to the Hebrews say, in Heb. 9; 4, that the Incense Altar was in the Most Holy, when the Old Testament declares it to be in the Holy?

A. Many commentators have remarked upon

this seeming discrepancy. In the first place, it cannot be argued that the expression "golden censer" in Heb. 9; 4, refers, not to the Incense Altar, but to a censer which was taken into the Most Holy, for the word used (*thumiaterion*) refers to any article of furniture used for the burning of incense, and is used for the incense altar by Josephus and other First Advent writers. Some have suggested that a slip of the pen on the part of the writer was responsible; Bible students will hardly accept that view readily. The writings were overruled by the Holy Spirit and such slips are hardly to be expected under those circumstances.

It is probable that the writer was not thinking so much of the **location** of the Incense Altar as its position in the symbolism connected with the ceremonial. The golden table and the lampstand both had to do with the priests—picturing the sustenance and enlightenment of those in the "Holy" condition, the Church in the flesh. The Altar, on the other hand, had to do with the presence of God, and on the Day of Atonement the incense was placed on this altar and burned, the resultant cloud of smoke preceding the High Priest into the Most Holy in order that his entry into the presence of God might be acceptable. Hence it was as essential a part of "Most Holy" symbolism as the Ark of the Covenant itself. So the writer to the Hebrews, thinking of the symbolism of the Tabernacle rather than its "geography" would naturally associate the Ark, the Cherubim and the Incense Altar together in his mind, and **think of the Altar as belonging to the Most Holy although it actually stood in the Holy**. In the description of Solomon's Temple it is described (1 Kings 6; 22, when correctly translated), as the "Altar that belongs to the oracle" (the Ark):

The symbolism of Revelation has a similar thought. In Rev. 9; 13, we read of the "golden altar which is before God" and in Rev. 8; 3-5 of the "golden altar which is before the throne." So in Isaiah 6 the prophet sees the Lord upon his throne and an angel takes a live coal from the altar which is before Him. In each of these cases the idea in the mind of the seer is that of the Incense Altar standing in the presence of God, the means by which His people can have access to Him; for the incense represents the prayers of saints.

CHRISTIAN LOYALTY

— W.A.D. —

"Having loved his own —
he loved them unto the end."

John 13: 1



Loyalty suggests to our minds the fundamental conception of faithfulness and as between individuals it is a very precious quality. A loyal disposition is one which is both sincere and constant. The opposite is changeableness which is associated with lack of fidelity and inconstancy. In the world there have been, and there still are, many examples of unusually loyal devotion both to causes and as between individuals, based upon the highest of motives and this can only have our admiration. The New Creature in Christ Jesus must develop this quality of loyal devotion on a still higher plane; as in all things, development must be along spiritual lines of which the natural is but an illustration for our aid in the development of Christ-likeness.

There are countless passages in the Holy Scriptures designed by both precept and example to inculcate this lesson of loyalty. Just to cite one illustration from the Old Testament we can recall the loyal bond at all times existing between David and Jonathan for "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." (1. Sam. 1: 48.). This loyalty (which is one of the aspects of love in active operation) persisted despite the enmity of Saul against David as seen in David's lament when Jonathan was killed in battle "How are the mighty fallen in the midst of battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thy high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women" (2 Sam. 5: 25-6).

Turning to the New Testament we learn that it is only they who endure unto the end who will be saved (Matt. 24: 13). Again, "if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb. 10: 38) because "no man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit (no man is any use—Moffatt) for the Kingdom of God." (Luke 9: 62). We observe the loyalty of Saul's natural disposition redirected into service for Christ as the great Apostle Paul and above all, of course, we note the example of our Lord and Head.

He is our Example.

As we study the earthly life of Christ Jesus our Lord, from the standpoint of loyalty, so we see this noble quality displayed in two distinct and yet closely related respects. Firstly, He was loyal to the last degree to His Father and to the covenant of consecration into which he had entered; secondly, He was similarly loyal to those who followed Him as seen in the testimony at the heading of this article "having loved his own which were in the world he loved them unto the end."

We are privileged to walk in His steps and it is incumbent upon us to copy Him in this as in all other things. Let us examine this theme of loyalty, therefore, from the two standpoints mentioned and at the same time think of it in relation to the **present day**, living as we are in the very closing period of the age.

Loyalty to God and to our Covenant.

It might be thought that those so highly favoured as the prospective members of Christ called with a high an heavenly calling—would never, never be swerved from loving loyalty evidenced in devotion to the Heavenly Father.

The Divine Word tells us and experience demonstrates that it **is** possible to be unfaithful; it is not a scriptural teaching that once saved we are always saved. We need constantly to ponder on the perfect Pattern, as seen in the Lord Jesus, so that our "first love" remains and we are not misled by any of the subtle machinations of the Adversary.

Our Lord committed all of life and its affairs into the hands of the Father and He walked closely with Him throughout His earthly life. Time and again the Adversary sought to ensnare Him, often using some of those He loved most to dissuade Him from the course of suffering and death. He remained faithful, loyal, steadfast to His covenant of consecration, however, even to the end when He could say "it is finished."

As we look back and note the wonderful leadings of the Father, how can we even for a moment question His love? His overruling providences are ever-evident if we are sufficiently watchful to observe them and they

alone should urge us to loyalty. It is none other than the voice of Jesus that we have heard; it is His hand outstretched that has brought us to himself; we have experienced the Father's drawing power to His Son (John 6: 44); and we have accepted the call to follow in His steps of self-abnegation that we may be counted worthy to attain the Kingdom promised. Day by day we have been given grace and strength sufficient, marvellous unfoldings of present truth have been made known to us, and in this day when doubt is evident on every hand we have been given assurance with the certain knowledge of the trend of events. In these circumstances, can we not realise with ever-increasing force that loyalty to Him is the least that we can render for all His benefits? Loyalty implies obedience as well as faithfulness, hence our loyalty must always be directed in harmony with our covenant and all the general appointments of the Divine Word.

In this day of special enlightenment, however, with all its great blessings and privileges, we find that many fail to maintain their loyalty to the Lord just as they lose their zeal and all those features which make for deep spirituality. How can we be on guard lest we grieve the Holy Spirit in this way?

It has already been noted that our Lord maintained constant fellowship with the Father and this was a potent means of assistance. Let us see to it, too, that nothing—whether it be an earthborn cloud or any other impediment—comes our way to hinder communion with the Father and with His Son by prayer, meditation upon His Word, and constant growth in grace. Singleness of purpose is an essential feature of Christian loyalty, hence the Apostle exhorts—“thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” (2. Tim. 2: 3-4).

The other feature mentioned in relation to our Lord was the endeavour, although unconsciously, of those nearest to Him to dissuade Him from loyalty to the cause that He had espoused. In our case, too, we must ever be on guard against the snares of the Adversary. Our spiritual life must be so strong that, in the Pastor's words, even if the beloved brother or sister whose spiritual life first nourished ours should fall away, we would be able to continue appropriating unto ourselves the requisite

spiritual food and nourishment.

Loyalty to one another

The Master promised “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the Age” and He faithfully kept that promise, while in this Day of His Presence He is here in a special sense. He loved His own on earth, even unto the end with a “love that will not let me go.” Such an example should surely urge us not only to loyalty to Him, as explained above, but also to loyalty to one another. Each has a duty to the other—a very **high duty**, too—and loyalty demands that this duty be fulfilled. Let us examine this duty under several headings.

Our duty in the Ecclesia.

Those who are privileged to meet together in Ecclesia fellowship owe loyalty to those with whom they meet. Each one, for instance should do the utmost within his or her power to make that fellowship profitable; all can do something to **energise the spiritual life** of a Class. Whatever privileges of service may open up elsewhere, the duty of the elected officers is firstly to their own Ecclesia and its special needs. As each one loyally gives his quota so the whole Body is nourished by that which every joint supplieth.

Our duty to truth.

Loyalty to the truth is another essential element. “I'm not ashamed to own my Lord, or to defend His cause” must be as true of us when mixing in the everyday life of the world to gain a living as when in the company of those of like precious faith. If we are loyal in this respect then all will know that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him. We must know what we believe and why we believe it, for our faith-structure will never stand in this day of testing unless it is built upon a “thus saith the Lord” in respect of every item. Some appear to think that **clearly-defined** views are “hard” and they speak of “hard truth,” but this surely arises out of a misunderstanding. We must not persecute those who think differently from us, but loyalty to our own beliefs demands a definite witness or the strength of our convictions is in doubt. Paul always demonstrated loyalty of this type because he was “fully persuaded” and He “knew” in whom he had believed, in whose Gospel he was not ashamed.

Loyalty must inevitably bring reproach, for no man can serve two masters and this principle may be applied to every aspect of the

spiritual life. This is the thought behind the hymn:—

Lord, I would loyal prove to Thee.

Let Thy reproaches fall on me,

To spend my days in Thine employ,

Shall be my chiefest earthly joy.

But this does not dissuade the loyalist. On the contrary, he rejoices in any such opprobrium, even as Paul counted himself privileged to be worthy to suffer for the cause of Christ.

Loyal as individuals.

The members of the body must also have a very high sense of loyalty to one another as individuals. Love demands that we seek the best possible good for others and that we **take action** to this end. It should never be too much trouble to assist any one, but especially a member of the Body. Our service must know no limits and we shall **delight** therein

if we are really loyal at heart to one another. In the world we often see fickleness and those who are friends for a time but who then drift away; amongst the Body-members such regrettable features should be unknown, for we are bound together by one Spirit to one Lord and Head. It is often thought, apparently, that this suggestion savours of compromise—the spirit of unity rather than the unity of the Spirit, but this should not be so.

To-day there are ample opportunities for each one to demonstrate heart loyalty to the fellow-members of the Body. Let us see to it that we live up to our privileges in this as in all other respects.

**O, Jesus, I have promised,
To serve Thee to the end;
O give me grace to follow,
My Master and my Friend.**

One Talent Faithfulness

He couldn't sing and he couldn't play,
He couldn't speak, and he couldn't pray,
He'd try to read, but break right down,
Then sadly grieve at smile or frown.
While some with talents five began,
He started out with only one.
"With this," he said, "I'll do my best,
And trust the Lord to do the rest."
Gave forth a world of sympathy,
When all alone with one distressed,
He whispered words that calmed that breast.
And little children learned to know,
When grieved and troubled, where to go.
He loved the birds, the flowers, the trees,
And, loving him, his friends loved these.
His homely features lost each trace
Of homeliness, and in his face
There beamed a kind and tender light
That made surrounding features bright,
When illness came he smiled at fears,
And bade his friends to dry their tears;
He said "Good-bye," and all confess
He made of life a grand success.

"There is nothing of which we are apt to be so lavish as of Time, and about which we ought to be more solicitous; since without it we can do nothing in this world. Time is what we want most, but what, alas! we use worst; and for which God will certainly most strictly reckon with us, when Time shall be no more."

William Penn

A WORD IN SEASON

In our trial's closing hour,
By Thy wondrous grace and power,
Keep us, Father, in Thy love,
Lead us to our Home above.

Father, 'neath Thy searching gaze,
May our lives show forth Thy praise.

When in trouble or in doubt,
From within or from without,
May we on Thy Word rely,
For the strength Thou dost supply.

Holy Father, be Thou near,
When the way is dark and drear;
Joy and comfort then impart
To the consecrated heart.

By Thy Holy Spirit, Lord,
To the Church sweet peace afford,
Grant us in the toil and stress,
All the fruits of righteousness.

As we follow Christ, our Head,
Like our Master, reckoned dead,
Through each sorrow, pain or loss,
Keep us faithful to His Cross.

When this final hour is o'er,
May it find us evermore,
In the Kingdom of Thy Son,
Jordan passed and victory won.

W.A.D.

ERETS ISRAEL

Under the heading of "Greater Jerusalem," a contributor to "The Times" has given some interesting information. He states that the development of the city during the last 25 years is truly amazing; its population has doubled from 65,000 to 130,000, and it has become a centre of government, thought and civilisation, yet the character of the old city has been carefully preserved, even the streets of stone steps have not been widened, but are still passable only by pedestrians, donkeys and camels.

There is a marked contrast between the old and new Jerusalem. The new city spreads around three main arteries called Julian Way, King George Avenue, and Jaffa Road, and forms a suburb of Jewish stone-built villas, flats and shops centred upon the massive fortress which is the headquarters of the Jewish Agency. Before the earthquake of 1927 the residence of the High Commissioner was on the Mount of Olives, but it now overlooks the Wilderness of Judea. The most famous religious shrines, the Dome of the Rock and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which were shaken by the earthquake, and which were tottering even before that, have been restored, and a number of new buildings have arisen, amongst which are a Bible School and a Young Men's Christian Association palace, with its dome bearing inscriptions in English, Hebrew and Arabic designed to symbolise its international character. A classical Franciscan

basilica, splendid with coloured marbles, has arisen by the Garden of Gethsemane, and robbed the garden of part of its gentle shade. On Mount Scopus, the lower spur of the Mount of Olives, stands the Hebrew University, which was opened in 1925. It is 300 feet above the old city, and has a large hospital, nurses' home and medical research centre. It has become a world centre of research and the largest refugee university in the world, and has absorbed much of the exiled genius from Europe.

Much has been done by the Government and the Pro-Jerusalem Society to clear away the ramshackle shops and other mean obstructions that have sprung up along the medieval walls, and to preserve the Mount of Olives from private building. All new buildings in the old city are required by law to be faced by stone from the limestone hills which bronzes in the wind, and by-laws also strictly control advertisement displays. A power house has been built on the outskirts of the city, so that old and new Jerusalem is well supplied with electricity, and a water supply is carried from the river Auja, 40 miles away, up the 3,000 feet of Judean hills.

This famous city, which has figured so prominently in the purposes of God in the past, appears to be making steady progress towards the still more splendid role it is yet to fill in the future.

Neri is a town in Khurdistan, and Sheikh Saddik of Neri had a reputation for wisdom among his fellow Moslems. One day a perplexed true believer presented himself with a problem. He possessed a fine fowl which unfortunately had taken to preaching Christianity. Three times in his hearing it had exclaimed, "The religion is the religion of Jesus!" The bird was produced, and repeated its message, "Din Din el Seyidna Isa," or at least what all present unanimously interpreted as being those words. That it was a miracle none doubted; but was it of Allah or Sheitan (God or Satan)? If the latter, the owner could wring the cock's neck, and the incident would be closed. If the former, ought

he, a good Mussulman, to turn Christian?

The Sheikh considered the matter, and gave his answer. The miracle was declared to be from Allah; and the cock must in no wise be slain, but preserved as an honoured and sacred fowl. But there were many sects of Christians, and each one claimed that its particular version of Christianity was "the religion of Jesus." The cock had given no evidence as to which was the true one, so, until all Christians should agree together, or until the bird should give a more explicit oracle, no true believer need do anything.

A sad commentary upon the divided state of Christendom!

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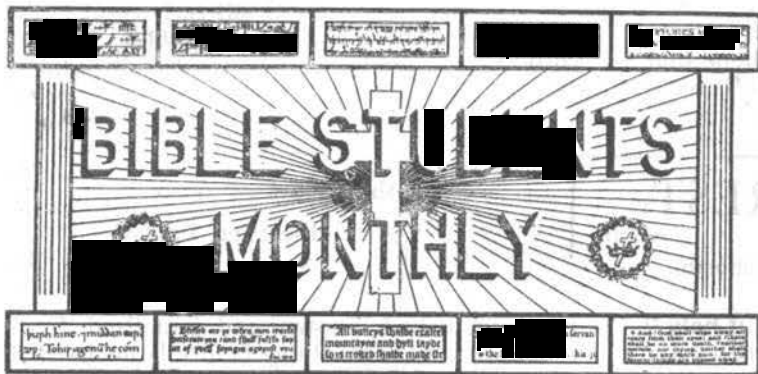
GONE FROM US.

Sister M. E. Vaughan, the beloved wife of Bro. D. P. Vaughan, of Aldersbrook Ecclesia, Ilford, passed to her rest on July 10th in her sixty-sixth year. She had suffered much during the past few years but had borne the trial with patience and Christian fortitude. Embracing Present Truth with Brother over thirty years ago she had consistently walked the Narrow Way with rejoicing and was a means of great encouragement to her family and the brethren. Bro. H. R. Kipps conducted the funeral service at the City of London Cemetery on July 13th and testified to our sister's deep love for the Lord and of her delight to be of service to the Truth and the brethren. About 90 brethren were present.

Sister L. J. Tydeman, of Eastergate, passed to her reward on July 24th, at the age of 74. She had rejoiced in the knowledge of the Truth for twenty-seven years and together with her two daughters had given a faithful witness to the sanctifying power of the Truth. Her call home released her from much suffering and she is now "with Christ, which is far better." The funeral service was conducted by Bro. D. P. Vaughan, of Aldersbrook.

BEESTON.

A home-gathering is to be held at the Old Boys' Club Room, Middle Street, Beeston, Notts, on Sunday, Sept. 5th, from 10.45 onwards. Bros. Froggatt (Mansfield), Holmes (Melton) and Dickinson (Lincoln) will speak. Please bring own food. Cup of tea provided. Details from Bro. H. R. Noble, 9 Muriel Road, Beeston, Notts.



VOL. 20 No. 10

OCTOBER 1943

Circulating among the Associated Bible Students.

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NOTES

A correspondent points out that our August issue was in error in accrediting John Bunyan to the same period as Luther and Copernicus; he actually lived nearly a century later, 1628-1688. We record the correction, glad to remind ourselves of the indomitable courage which led Bunyan, offered his liberty upon condition that he ceased to preach, to reply: "If you set me free to-day, I will, by God's grace, preach to-morrow." Such a man is well worthy to be included among the great cloud of witnesses to whom we look for inspiration in our own time of need.

There are ambitious plans for the creation of a federation of Arab states, to include Iraq, Syria, Trans-jordan, Arabia, Egypt — and Palestine. The Prime Ministers of Iraq and Egypt both are actively pushing this scheme, one object of which is to end all hope of Jewish control in Palestine.

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom . . . yet I will rejoice in the Lord," cried Habbakuk the prophet many thousands of years ago. The same prophet gave us that immortal refrain, "Though it tarry, wait for it; for it will surely come, it will not tarry." We do not see clearly as yet just how the "missionary nation" of the future will enter into possession of the "land of unwallled villages." Quite evidently there is much progress yet to be made. This Arab federation may take shape and appear to sound the death-knell to the hopes of those who look for the restoration of Israel. But it

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will only be a temporary phase. There may be an ultimate federation of Arab peoples purposed in the Divine plans, but not in the lands promised to the sons of Jacob. Who knows but that the political adjustments to follow this war may define separate spheres of influence for the sons of Isaac and the sons of Ishmael, and another very decided step in the establishment of the Kingdom be thus undertaken? Let us give close attention, for surely this is the time when the Lord will do great things.

One almost inevitable outcome of war-time conditions is the increasing non-observance of Sunday. The position was sad enough before the war, but now many factories are working on Sunday, Home Guards must train on Sunday, the war continues on Sunday as well as week-day, and an increasing number of people become directly involved. It is not always easy to see just how much of all this activity can be justified upon account of the nature of our times, and how much is avoidable. Is it any part of our Christian witness to declare before men the issues involved? More personal, too, is the question whether we who try to demonstrate the principles of the Divine Kingdom in our own lives should not re-examine our own position in this respect, and whether we are called upon to make a more positive stand against the influences which are threatening our holy day. Some at least among the brethren may be thinking along this line. It is with these thoughts in view that this issue

introduces a short consideration of the Scriptural principles involved, and in the hope that some of the friends will be sufficiently con-

cerned to send in their comments on the subject.

THE DAY OF REST.

—A. O. H.

I. The Institution of the Sabbath.

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy"

How many, upon reading those words, have realised just how far back in history we must go in order to find the time when men began to keep one day in seven a day of rest? Some think of Sunday as a somewhat tiresome and awkward kind of a day. Others frankly have never thought of it as anything else but a day to be given over to the pursuit of amusement. Still others use it for the advancement of self-interest—continuing to conduct their business affairs or perhaps to labour at their craft for the sake of the double pay usually associated with Sunday work—whilst many unfortunate ones are compelled to serve their employment on Sunday as well as week-day because modern society demands that it shall be so. Probably very few have ever paused to enquire how it was that Sunday came to be instituted at all.

Even to actively professing Christians, to whom alone the text quoted above can have any real significance, the day is, as often as not, associated with recollections of the Law given to Israel at Sinai. They are conscious of a prohibition against engaging in any kind of labour, and of an obligation to devote the day to worship and religious observance. Since religious observance in the days of our immediate forefathers had a tendency to be gloomy and morbid, it may not be altogether surprising that few could find it in their hearts to say with the Psalmist: "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." Perhaps it was for the same reason that men did not enquire particularly into the reasons underlying the giving of the Fourth Commandment, and so failed to realise that it is a fundamental necessity for all men to enjoy a periodic day of cessation from labour.

The custom of observing this weekly rest from the normal occupations of life did not begin with the giving of the Fourth Commandment. That law only stated in formal terms

what men had known and practised from much earlier times. Long before Israel existed as a nation the peoples of Sumer and Akkad, the lands which afterward become Babylonia and Assyria, had incorporated Sabbath observance into their national life. The earliest record of its observance now extant dates back to the days of Sargon of Agade, a ruler whose kingdom extended over the lands bordering the Tigris and Euphrates five or six hundred years before Abraham. In a calendar of the period the word "*Sabbattu*," as the day was called, is explained as meaning "completion of work, a day of rest for the soul," and this day was to be observed five times in each month, viz., the 7th, 14th, 19th, 21st and 28th days. On these days it was unlawful to transact business, labour for gain, cook food, or conduct civil, political and military functions. The whole life of the community came to a stop, just as did that of Israel in the wilderness many centuries later.

There are in existence inscribed tablets discovered at Nineveh, and dating from the time of Abraham which give a Babylonian version of the work of creation. The fifth of these tablets describes the establishment of the heavenly bodies and the ordering of the calendar, and accredits the institution of the Sabbath to God in this wise: . . . "every month without fail he (God) made holy assembly days . . . On the seventh day he appointed a holy day, and to cease from all business he commanded."

Shem, Terah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, then, must all have been familiar with the keeping of the Sabbath, even although no direct mention of the fact is made in the early books of the Old Testament. That the months were divided into weeks we know from Gen. 29; 27-28, and can infer also from Job 2; 13 and Gen. 7; 10, and since the people of whom Abraham came were regular Sabbath keepers, he himself must also have observed this ordinance, which he must have known was hal-

A short series

discussing Sunday.

lowed by God at the time of creation.

These Babylonian records are probably greatly distorted versions of the same historical facts which are set down with such accuracy in the early chapters of Genesis. The extract given above is reasonably harmonious with Gen. 2; 2-3: "... he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made; and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work..." so that in these few words in Genesis we have the earliest written reference to the institution of the Sabbath. And they teach that the first to "keep Sabbath" was the Most High Himself—surely the supreme example!

The meaning of the term "Sabbath"—Hebrew "*Sha-bath*"—is that of ceasing or resting from activity or labour, to observe as a day of rest. It is used in the Bible not only in respect of men, but also of beasts and the land. The ground itself, which is made to bring forth food for man, must have its periodic times of rest, during which it may recover strength and fertility. This is the basic principle behind the observance of one day in seven as a day of rest and worship. Man, no less than the land from which he draws life, needs a periodic cessation from the daily round, that his physical and mental vitality may be recuperated. Without this recuperation he cannot continue to function at normal efficiency, and this fact is well known to medical men and to industrial leaders. A seven-day working week has been proven impracticable, and eventually leads to breakdown.

In the Divine arrangement this necessary break from daily routine has been made the opportunity for greater attention that would otherwise be possible to the chief need of human nature—communion with God. The dependence of men upon their Creator is not often acknowledged nowadays, but the need is there, and spiritual separation from God is a potent factor in the progressive degeneration of the human race. Our Lord Jesus derived His strength by continual communion with His Father, and men will eventually learn to do the same. The Sabbath day of rest, because of its freedom from everyday cares and interests, becomes the natural day for communion and worship in ways which are not so practicable on the other days of the week.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the children of Israel were already Sabbath-keepers when they left Egypt. The evidence

for this conclusion is to be found in Exod. 16; 22-30, in which it is recorded that after crossing the Red Sea and entering the wilderness of Sin (so called after Sin, the Babylonian Moon-god), they commenced to gather manna. Upon each day they gathered enough for that day only, speedily finding that it would not keep overnight (vs. 20). But on the "sixth day" (vs. 22) it appears that they gathered two days' supply, quite spontaneously and without being so bidden, and the rulers of the assembly came to Moses in some concern over this action.

Now, why did they gather two days' supply on the sixth day, when they already knew that the manna would not keep overnight, if it were not that they were already in the habit of observing a sabbath of rest, and their faith told them that they must needs gather two days' supply on the sixth day and trust God to preserve it that night? In the following verse, vs. 23, Moses confirmed the rightness of their action, and laid down the rule that on every sixth day they should gather sufficient for the two days.

It appears that some of the Israelites did go out on the sabbath to gather, and found none (vs. 27), and in consequence the Lord's words came to Israel through Moses: "How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?" This, he it noted, was before the Law was given at Sinai. It seems clear, therefore, that Israel already regarded the sabbath as a Divine institution, and the Law at Sinai merely confirmed the rule.

Perhaps the great feature of the Fourth Commandment given at Sinai was the revelation of a relationship between the sabbath ordinance and God's own work in creation. Exod. 20; 8-10 bade the people of God not only to remember the sabbath day to keep it holy, but told them that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." This connection of the two themes is important, for at any rate it shows that man is bidden to do that which God Himself has already done. It is even more striking to observe that when, upon a later occasion, God repeated this injunction to Moses, He told him that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, **and was refreshed**" (Exod. 31; 17). Does this mean that even the Almighty Himself must needs "cease" from His creative activity for

a time, in order to concentrate His great power for some other creation at some future time? We are quite unable to enquire sufficiently closely into the attributes of Divinity to say, although there is no doubt at all about the meaning of the expression. It is used in Exod. 23; 12, where the servants and domestic animals were to be "refreshed" by the keeping of sabbath, and in II Sam. 16; 14, where David and those with him, weary with their journey, came to a place at which they "refreshed" themselves. (The word is "*naphash*," meaning primarily to take breath, as when fatigued by heavy labour; to breathe or pant strongly; being, in fact, the root from which "*nephesh*"—breath—is derived.) We can content ourselves, though, with the reflection that after six days of incessant creative activity, culminating in the emergence of man, the Most High "ceased" from creating, not for ever, but for a span of time, and from a human standpoint He "rested, and was refreshed." After His seventh day of rest, God surely commences to labour again, although of that labour the Scripture tells us nothing.

The institution of the sabbath, then, lies back in the mists of pre-history. We do not know when it originated. It may have been with Adam in Eden. If its observance is a fundamental requirement of human nature it probably did originate in Eden, and was observed more or less sincerely in all the centuries following. The earliest knowledge we have of its national observance dates back several centuries before Abraham, and even then its institution is accredited to God. The Israelites were sabbath-keepers when they came out of Egypt, and had doubtless inherited the ordinance from their ancestors. At Sinai, the rule was elaborated into a code with minute details of its application to the affairs of Israel's national life.

Briefly stated, the Mosaic laws provided for:—

- (a) A weekly sabbath observance for man and beast (Exod. 23; 12-13, 31; 12-17, 35; 2-3).
- (b) Special additional sabbaths on the

occasion of the great feasts (Lev. 23; 23-32, 24; 15-21, 16; 30-31).

- (c) A seven-yearly sabbath for the land (Exod. 23; 10-11, Lev. 25; 1-7).
- (d) A special sabbath for man, for beast and for the land on the fiftieth year, the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25; 6-12).

In all these observances the close connection between rest and worship is noticeable. The "feast" sabbaths were "holy convocations" to the Lord, when all the people forsake their tents and their occupations and gathered in companies for praise and worship. These feasts were closely connected with the first fruits and the harvest (see Exod. 34), and were designed to lead the minds of men to reflect upon the vital relation between the labours of their own hands and the beneficence of God Who had made those labours both possible and productive. The promise of God was that their observance of the sabbath would enrich and not impoverish their lives—the ground would bring forth enough in the sixth year to last them through the seventh; and enough in the forty-eighth year to last them through the sabbath year and the Jubilee year as well. So sweeping in its scope was this promise of God that it even assured them there would be a surplus of old provisions to be cast forth when the fruits of the next "first" year became available (Lev. 26; 10). There is no possible danger of lack if the Divine law is observed!

So the sabbath became firmly established. Its observance was still a long way from the Divine ideal; still far short of what the sabbath can be and will be when restored humanity has fully accepted the Kingdom of God upon earth, and the nations are walking in the light of the New Jerusalem. From those days in the desert when Israel cried: "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do, and be obedient," men had, and still have, a long way to travel. But the story of the sabbath has unravelled a little more since then, and shown us a fair vision of what will be, when not only the Church of Christ, but all men, have fully entered into the "rest that remaineth for the people of God."

(To be continued.)

"The look of sympathy, the gentle word,
Spoken so low that only angels heard,
The secret act of pure self sacrifice,
Unseen by men but marked by gentle eyes—
These are not lost."

(Forest Gate Bible Monthly.)

Testimony to the Truth.

"The idea of the consummation of all things given us in the New Testament is never that of our being carried away to a distant heaven, but of a return of the Son of Man to a re-created earth, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ."

(Bishop of Chichester.)

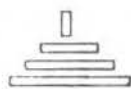


GOD'S POEM

T.H.



A fresh word upon a
familiar text.



A very sweet little thought is obscured from our view by the words of our Authorised Version, which reads in Eph. 2; 10: "For we are His workmanship." The word "workmanship" is used as a translation of the Greek word "poiema." It is from this Greek word that our English word "poem" is derived. It occurs but twice in the New Testament—the other occasion being in Rom. 1; 20, and is there translated "things that are made." "Poiema" is from the basic root "Poieo," which occurs many times, and is translated no less than 353 times by our little word "do." A variety of other words is also used to translate it, but all contain the same idea as the word "do."

According to its general usage, therefore, "poiema" does not necessarily mean "poem," but the fact that the Greek word has been transferred across into our language by the word "poem," and that our English word is very definite and precise in its meaning invests its Greek equivalent with a very sweet and inspiring thought. Very truly "the Christ" is God's workmanship, and as such it must be a sublime and beautiful work, no matter from whatever angle we may view it. Even if we think of God's handiwork as the creation of a Temple, it must be of beautiful workmanship. But there is something exquisitely beautiful in the thought that the Church is "God's Poem"—God's noblest thought couched in its loveliest form.

Among men who use words as the bricks-and-mortar of their creative work the poet uses them with the greatest charm. He is like the man who, taking clay, makes it into Dresden or Crown or other exquisite china. Like common earthenware, it is made of baked clay, but the moulding is more chaste and delicate, and the finished product is more pleasing to the eye. Every word the poet weaves into his creation is at the disposal of every pen, but every brain behind the pen is not invested with poetic power. It is not the mere knowledge of words, nor the ability to choose appropriate words that makes the poet. Each word must be the right word, it must be in the right place; word must balance word; line must balance line; stanza must balance stanza; and the whole thing must flow along

in rhythmic cadence smooth as a limpid stream. The thought which it is intended to express must be distributed evenly throughout, and leave its impression clear and complete as its last word is reached.

We are not seeking to mark the difference between the technique of the good essayist and the poet. Each in his own way must make the right choice of words to express what he has to say, but it may perhaps be safe to say that more people would respond to a noble thought expressed in beautiful verse than in elegant prose. It is not unusual for the sensitive impressionable individual to find his soul pulsating more readily to the rhythm, rhyme and metre of a graceful and well-proportioned poem than to the cadence of a well-written essay. Something in the rhythm of the poem seems to grip and impel the senses along somewhat like the marching tap of the drum or the strong accent of the dance.

When the poem has been born out of the deep experience of some child of God it has become a living thing. It may reveal a Jordan-consecration, a Gethsemane-agony, or a Pentecostal-visitation come to life. It may tell of a secret vitalising contact between the Spirit of the living God with the fervent soul which later fused together the glowing words, and still later used the pen. It is a creation of something more than a string of words or of lovely sounds—something more than rhythm or rhyme of cadence or metre. Behind or within or suffused throughout the words is a Divine thought—a living expression of the Spirit of the Living God brought down into this realm of time and sense, and clothed about with the choicest form of speech the fervent heart of its Author can conceive.

Let us pause for a moment to think of some of the lovely gems of thought which have been forged into living things to captivate and enrich the hearts of men. Think of blind George Matheson's "O Love that will not let me go"; of dying C. F. Lyte's "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide"; of Charles Wesley's "Rock of Ages, cleft for me"; of Miss Havergal's "Take my life and let it be," and a hundred other kindred expressions of praise and prayer and worship, every one gushing forth as living waters springing up from the

deep places of the soul! Do we not feel that here we have something deeper and more compelling than mere words? To recite all these words one by one from the pages of a dictionary would leave no such soul-stirring influence behind. They are all there in "the book of words" for any scribe to pick out and assemble as he will. But it requires more than picking and assembling to make them live. Every poem that makes its impression and leaves its mark upon the suffering generations of men must be written first in blood—by tracings of the heart's blood on the page of the experience of every hungering Spirit-led child of God as he pines and seeks for, and finds fellowship with the Holiest of all, before it can be wrought into shape for the printer's page. It must be the outcome of agony and suspense, or of the throb of pleasure and delight in the secret chambers of "the inner man," before it can take ordered expression for some other sufferer's benefit.

It must have grown out of a deep spiritual hunger, and tell how that hunger was fully satisfied by supplies of grace, before it can feed another hungry soul. There is always a price to pay in tears and agonies before the poet's words can live as vehicles of grace for supplying another life's necessities.

What a sublime privilege it must be for such gifted singers to become the instruments of Providence. Taking, as they do, the basic principles of Divine Care and Christian experience as stated in the Holy Book, yet adapting and resetting them to meet and satisfy the modern Christian pilgrim's need so that they serve the ends of Providence, in throwing new light on the Way, and distilling new Wine into the Cup for the believer's benefit—all this in the most choice and helpful words which humankind possesses. It is indeed a great honour to be used to express the living thoughts of the Living God to living men. And yet (let us guard the point well), though the poet sing the sweetest song in the most charming words, there is more behind the words than there is within. The realities are greater far than the phrase which sets them forth, for the blessed contacts of the believing child with his Loving Father in the sphere of the "higher life" are things that must be "felt not told" (as the Scotsmen say), things that enter not into the natural heart of man.

Consequently, the natural mind may read and sing the poet's words without entering within the sanctum of the holy experience, or

realising that another world—a higher world—lies beyond the range of the poet's song, that only the anointed eye can see, and only the spirit-begotten mind can understand. To-day it is impossible for the natural mind to comprehend the mysteries of the Spirit of God. But in another, better day God intends that men shall understand, in part, if not in full—enough to win and chain his heart to the Throne of God. To that end God is writing the story of His Love and Travail in the experiences of the Christian Church. God is creating His greatest work—He is composing a great Poem, every word of which is the right word (a chosen word); every word of which is in its right place; every word of which will tell of the deep passion of His Soul. Every word of this Divine Poem is a living soul, bought out of sin and death at a great price; chosen by the Creator of Holiness, then balanced and adjusted, soul with soul, to rhyme and harmonise with the Divine Poet's thought, and with each other, so that the whole company shall be perfect in its cadence, spirit, rhythm and metre.

Every child of God is placed "in the Body" to-day as it has pleased God to place him, but this is only the temporary draft of the poem. The human poet may have need to change or revise his first choice of words, or vary their place in the line or stanza before he is satisfied. The Divine Poet may have need to change His words, or revise their positions before His Masterpiece is complete. But He will set them at the last in the Body Celestial in the position where they will best manifest His Thought and Purpose. They will together constitute the greatest living manifestation of the Spirit of their Creator, a revelation for all time of the Sacrificing Love of God during the dark ages while sin reigned supreme, and a Gracious Creator worked and waited for the return to righteousness of His erring human son.

This patient, long-suffering Spirit of the Eternal God will be written deep into the very constitution of His Elect, and will tell to the countless myriads of this world, and of other worlds to come, the deep sense of loss experienced in the heart of God, and of the great things He was constrained and prepared to do to win back the sinner from his evil way.

Every soul, therefore, in that exalted Christ—that is, every word in His then finished Poem—must express with emphasis the very truth all that the Divine Poet has ever felt towards

His fallen son, and toward the destructive and abhorrent principle of sin. Every word must ring true to the intent of the Divine Heart, and say to the wide circles of both heaven and earth (and to many worlds yet unborn) exactly what the deeply-yearning Love of God would have it say.

When Frances Ridley Havergal had completed her stirring consecration hymn, every word was weighted down with clear and precise significance. Every word is clear and emphatic in its meaning. No one can ever mistake what she meant to be understood. After dedicating all she possessed, life, hands, feet, voice, lips, wealth, time, intellect, will, heart, love, she reaches the great climax: "Take myself, and I will be Ever, only, all for Thee." Here is an array of simple words, direct, precise and emphatic, which concentrates everything into the most intense dedica-

tory prayer—an attestation of surrender, full, entire and for ever, of every gift and power to the service of her God.

God desires every word of His Eternal Poem to be thus expressive of His purposes and of His Consecration too, to the great task of uprooting sin and death, and evil in every form, and of establishing Righteousness and Truth for evermore.

Let everyone who reads these words ask himself (herself): Am I the word which God will choose when the days of the rough draft is ended, and He brings forth His Poem complete, to tell to countless ages the Story of His Love?

Shall I be the right word, in the right place, imbued through and through with the right Spirit, so that men may read and understand that the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind?



THE QUESTION BOX.



Q.—Is "public witness" still part of the Church's commission?

A.—Undoubtedly it is. The commission of every Christian is to preach the Kingdom of God so long as life shall last, and to go on preaching it though the world crash in ruins around him. So soon as our Lord had "appeared in the presence of God for us" the Holy Spirit began a gigantic work in the world of men, a work which will not be completed until the Millennial Age has ended in the reconciliation to God of "whosoever will." We are now ministers of reconciliation, and are called to exercise the present duties of that office until the end of our course, and to take up the future duties of the same office when we have been raised in the First Resurrection. When the disciples were commanded to speak no more in the name of Jesus they replied: "Whether it be right to hearken unto men more than unto God, judge ye; but we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." So with us. Both as individuals and as a fellowship, it is our privilege to go on proclaiming the "acceptable day of salvation" to the High Calling and the coming Times of Restitution to all who will hear. This does not mean that we are necessarily endeavouring to convert people to our own precise way

of thinking in order to swell the number of our own fellowship; rather should our aim be to convert men and women to faith in Christ, and leave Him to lead them where He will. That is the true "public witness."

* * *

Q.—If death was the penalty for eating the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3; 3), how would it have been possible for man to "take of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever"? (Gen. 3; 22).

A.—The Hebrew word rendered "ever" in this passage is *olam*, meaning a long but indefinite period, and not necessarily including the idea of everlastingness. It is probable that the eating of the tree of life would have prolonged man's life to considerably greater lengths than has actually been the case, and with man in his fallen state this would in turn have increased man's indulgence in evil to a much greater degree. The shortening of human life was therefore an act of Divine mercy—he lives long enough to experience the "exceeding sinfulness of sin," but not so long that he is likely to become depraved beyond hope of reclamation. God's words to Ezekiel regarding the men of Sodom and Gomorrah illustrate this fact.

THE QUIET TIME



C.T.W.

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

BE OF GOOD CHEER

"In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Our Lord's words should comfort us, as they have comforted His people in the past centuries: There is no suggestion that we can escape similar tribulation. Indeed, if we escape the sufferings of Christ we will be denied a share in His coming glories. Hence, we should not desire to escape tribulation, but rather go on courageously, nevertheless, not too boastfully, not too courageously, but in meekness, in fear, in trust of the Lord's promises that He has overcome and is able to succour us in temptation's hour, and will do so if we but abide in His love and seek His protection. It is in view of this promised aid that we are exhorted to "be of good cheer." "Greater is He that is for us than all they that are against us." Not only will victory be ours, but, more than this, it is ours already. "Nothing shall by any means hurt you." What may seem to others to be injurious to us, must, under Divine supervision, work out blessings.

A HIGH IDEAL

Endurance is one of the strong Christian ideals. "He that endureth to the end," Christ said. "Endure hardness," wrote the Apostle Paul. "We count them happy who endure," are the words of James. We see and feel our grief; let us try to see the excellence of endurance. It is easier to write this than to practise it. Yet all the time we know that it is a medicine of the tonic order.

Behold, we count them happy which endure.

—James 5; 11.

The Past is our sanctuary:
The Present is our opportunity:
The Future is our hope.
The burden of the Past thou need'st not bear,
Lay down thy load: Christ beareth it and thee.
The burden of the Present, He will share:
Uplift it: Christ uplifteth it with thee.
The burden of the Future is His care,
Leave it to Him who never leaveth thee.
Behind, beside, before thee, He is there.
Oh well is thee, and happy shall thou be.

(G. W.)

CALM AMIDST THE STORM

Victor Hugo has a poem in which he describes a little bird resting on the frail branch of a tree which is swaying in the tempest, threatening to break with every gust and hurl the little creature into the void. Yet amid it all the bird sings, because it knows that it has wings. Let us sum it all up; He who fears God fears nothing.

Whoso hearkeneth unto Me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

—Prov. 1; 33.

"BLESS THEM THAT CURSE YOU"

Tradition taught that neighbours should be loved and enemies hated; but the Great Teacher said that enemies also should be loved and blessed, even though they returned persecution and injury. It was this new and high order of teaching which marked our Redeemer's utterances as different from all others.

The cultivation of this spirit of love for enemies, as well as for friends, would mark the followers of Jesus as children of God, as having the Heavenly Father's spirit-disposition. He sends the sunshine on sinners and on saints, and the rain comes down for the just and for the unjust. It is difficult to estimate the amount of harm done to our minds by the traditions of the "dark ages" respecting God's intention to torment eternally His enemies—all except the elect. Thank God these teachings are not found in His word! They made our forefathers heretic-burners.

Admittedly, love is a glorious and God-like quality, but if it extend only to those who love in return, how would it be worthy of any special reward? Do not the heathen, yea, all men, love after this fashion? If we are courteous merely to those who are courteous to us, wherein are we superior to sinners? The followers of Jesus, the pupils in His school, are to take the highest standard of excellence for their pattern—their loving Creator. They are to strive for perfection such as His. They are to attain it in their hearts, and, so far as possible, outwork it in every thought, word and deed of their fallen flesh.

"BUT GOD IS ONE"

A discourse upon
Gal. 3; 20.

T.H.

This very simple statement in Paul's letter to the Galatians is one of the big conundrums to the expositors of the New Testament. One noted commentator says that there are no less than two hundred and fifty different explanations of it in Christian literature. Another writer, also of considerable reputation, gives the number as four hundred and thirty, all of which show varying shades of difference at one or more points of the argument. It is just amazing to us, as simple students of Divine things, to be told that it is possible to have such a wide variety of opinion about the meaning of just four simple words.

All this variety of opinion is due to a different interpretation of some part of the context, and the relationship of that part of the context to the text; for it is owing to their varied understanding of the context, that all their applications of the four words of the text arise.

Some of these Christian writers see in these four words a reference to the Unity of the Godhead, saying that, although there are three Persons, yet those three Persons are but one God. It requires some dexterity in the usage of language (in view of the special nature of the context) to evolve this idea—still, it has been done, and stands on record as an attempt to explain four simple words.

Others interpret these four words in line with Deut. 6; 4: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one—Jehovah." In principle, that interpretation is true. But it is quite another matter whether Paul uses these words in just the same sense and setting that Moses did. Moses used them as a challenge to, and refutation of, "idol" claims, and assured any man disposed to idol worship in Israel that they had only one God, not many (as other nations had)—One God, whose name was Jehovah. Paul's argument is a totally different one. He is discussing the question of Covenants into which God had entered with certain men, and had made a strong contrast between the Covenant made with Abraham—a Covenant of Promise—with that made with Israel—a Covenant of Law and Morality.

The main point of the question under discussion is the "inheritance" of the promises,

and the blessings therein contained (see vv. 16 and 18), and whether it was possible to "inherit" them under the Mosaic or Law Covenant. This discussion had arisen because the Galatian brethren were showing signs of turning away from their simple faith in Christ to an observance of the ceremonies and precepts associated with the Law.

Certain Judaizing teachers had gone out from Jerusalem, and were following Paul around, dropping into the little churches which he had founded, and telling them: "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses ye cannot be saved" (Acts 15; 1). These teachers wanted to settle and incorporate the movement initiated by the Lord, and carried forward by Paul, as one more of the varying systems of thought embodied in Judaism—a broader and more tolerant form of Phariseism, a blending of the new wine of Nazareth with the older wine of Sinai. They wanted the teachings of the Lord to be applied as a patch to cover the threadbare garments of Mosaism.

This was the burning question which was keenly debated at the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15; 6-29), and when both sides had been heard the question was decided by the resident Apostles and Elders there in favour of the Apostle Paul's contention that it was not necessary, nor in accord with the voice of Providence, to compel Gentile believers to be circumcised or to be made subject to the Law.

Some of these teachers, even after, and in spite of that unanimous authoritative decision in Jerusalem, continued their subversive work and had found their way into the little churches of Galatia, and were persuading the immature believers there to blend their belief in Jesus with an observance of Mosaic ceremonies. This is the form of misleading teaching which Paul refutes in his letter to his dear Galatian brethren.

If the "inheritance" which God bestowed upon Abraham, for himself and his then unborn Seed, were to be obtained by Law, then it could not be of Promise; so reasoned Paul. In such a case Christ could not profit anyone, in any way. This was a position that could not admit any blending of the old with the

new. It was a case of "all" or "none." It must be "all law" and "no promise"; or "all promise" and "no law." There was no middle position where Promise and Law could amalgamate—in other words, there could be no compromise between Christ and the Law.

As proof of this he shows that the beneficiary and heir of Abraham's inheritance could not, at one time, be both Sarah's son and Hagar's as well. Each woman's child was exclusively her own, and nothing could be done to make them otherwise. But it was Sarah's son who could become heir to the inheritance—so Paul shows to the Galatian brethren (and to us) in his allegory in Chapter 4.

Now, if God intended the inheritance to stand upon the Word of His Promise, why did God add a Covenant based upon Law to that previous Covenant, based upon a Promise? Paul answers that by saying that it was added in order to reveal sin in its true nature, as a thing exceedingly abhorrent to God, and this revelation could be made only by defining which of man's actions were right and which were wrong according to the Divine immutable standards of morality. Concerning those which were wrong, God had said, "Thou shalt not . . ." (Ex. 20 : 1-17). Concerning those which were right, God (through Moses) had said, "Thou shalt . . ." (Deut. 6 : 4-6), thus laying the "wrong" action under prohibition, and according the "right" action His approval and blessing. God prohibited the wrong action, and defined its performance as disobedience and sin. It was for this purpose that a Covenant based on Law was superadded to a Covenant based on Promise. But that condition of a Law Covenant superimposed upon a Promise Covenant was not intended to be perpetual and unending. It was added to last "until"—until the True Seed implied in the Promise should come; until the greater "Isaac" should be complete (compare Chapter 3 : 16 and 29).

In the act of super-adding that Law Covenant to the original Promise Covenant, "it was ordained by angels in the hands of a Mediator." The angelic part of its construction is of little moment, but the Mediation part is of great importance in Paul's argument.

Here, of course, the subject is the Law Covenant (vv. 19-20), for of these two Covenants only the Law Covenant was established

through a Mediator.

And on this point Paul says, "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one," or, in the better rendering of the Diaglott, "Of one party, however, he is not the Mediator." No mediator is required in a uni-lateral or one-sided arrangement, such as that made with Abraham, because Abraham was God's already-proven friend.

There must be two parties involved to call for the services of a Mediator, and he must negotiate equally with both and for both in turn. Hence, in negotiating the Law Covenant Moses had to place God's proposals before Israel, and return Israel's answer to God before sealing the Agreement (or Covenant) with blood (Ex. 19 : 7-9). It is this Law Covenant which is the subject to Gal. 3 : 19-20). That means that we must find two parties thereto, for both of which Moses had to mediate. Israel, as the receivers of the Law, was one of them. God was the other.

The difficulties in the text arise from the two words "BUT" and "IS"—"BUT God IS one."

No difficulty would have arisen had it read, "**And God was one**," that is to say—Israel **was** one party, and "**God was one**." That statement would have been quite accurate according to the historic facts, but it would not have answered the question from the Galatians' present point of view. Nor would it have revealed how the same God could have undertaken responsibilities towards a people, under two such dissimilar Covenants as the Promise Covenant and the Law Covenant.

Originally Israel inherited from her illustrious Father the Promise of God, "I will bless thee and thy seed after thee"—but the super-added Covenant added to that Promise the word "if"—"I will bless . . . if . . ." This was where Israel failed. She did not observe the "ifs"—the conditions of her later Covenant. Consequently, she could not claim the blessing on her own account till the claims of the Law were taken out of the way. This is where the righteousness of Jesus for the believer comes in.

Christ is the "end" of the Law to the believer—that is, He served the same purpose to the believer as though he had kept the Law. And belief in Christ brought the believer from under the Law, so that he was "not under the Law, but under Grace" (Rom. 6 : 15).

But Christ was **not** the end of the Law to the Jewish unbeliever. Whether the unbeliever was a full-blooded Jew, preferring the bondage of his Law to the liberty he would have found in Christ, or a subverted proselyte who turned away from Christ to observe the Law, he was still under the claims of the Law, and the Law still had a "curse" among its penal provisions to inflict upon those who broke the terms of the agreement. They remained still unredeemed from that curse, and could hope for no release till that Covenant was superseded by a new and better Covenant. That old Covenant did not die after Calvary, nor relinquish its claims upon the consenting Israelite, but it has no blessing now to bestow.

The old-time sacrifices have been superseded and withdrawn because better sacrifices are under way, hence all who prefer to consider themselves, whether involuntarily (as the Jew), or voluntarily (as the Galatians were proposing to do) under its claims, can only reap its curse and bondage in return. They have no atonement sacrifice to cleanse and cover over their sins.

Paul was showing the Galatian brethren that the mediated Law Covenant had lost any worth or value it may once have had, and was now utterly and completely worthless as a source of blessing, yet in the very nature of things God is still a party to it, and could not be otherwise, till it is superseded and taken out of the way by a new and better Covenant. God **is still** one party to it. And although He is the God from whom Abraham obtained the Promise Covenant, and who stands pledged to bless Abraham and all his Seed, still, because Israel blindly clings to her Law Covenant as a means of attaining Life, God can only heap up censure and blame against Israel, till the days of the great change-over to better things has arrived. All this comes of preferring the

mediated Covenant and still desiring to remain under the two-party agreement. Christ Jesus could redeem the Jew from all its claims, and keep the Gentile believer from ever knowing or experiencing those claims, but if they still preferred Moses to Christ, well, then, God is still a party to that Covenant, but He cannot bless or help the other party in any way. He can only view them as under the curse of the law. Only in the light of such a fact can Paul's words in 1 Cor. 16; 20 be understood: "If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema" (*accursed*). It was so contrary to the usual sentiments of Paul to speak like that, that nothing other than inexorable facts would make him pronounce anathema upon any man. He would not thus speak except in accordance with Divine Law—with full Divine approval.

The basis of the great uncertainty underlying the 250 (or 430) interpretations of this simple text lies in the fact that all these expositors think that the Old Law Covenant is null and void and has no further validity, and that the New Covenant has begun to operate. That is not so—for the New Covenant was never promised to the Christian Church. It was promised only to the House of Israel and the House of Judah. As neither of these Houses stand in New Covenant relationship with God, it is thus obvious that the Old Covenant is not yet superseded and dead. God is one party still, to a Covenant which has only censure and punishment to mete out. That is why the House of Judah (the Jew) is still suffering to-day, and must continue to suffer till Moses is taken out of her way, and Christ sets her free from her bondage to the Law. In no other way can we adequately explain those four simple words,

"But God is one."

LOVE'S PRAYER.

Dear Lord, I want to understand,
The love that prompted Thee,
To suffer grief, and pain and loss,
For such as me

O Lord, that I might really know,
That deep abiding love,
And feel it drawing me to Thee,
Dear Lord above.

O Lord, no joy could fuller be,
Than this; to know that Thou
Who loved so well, art wanting me
To love Thee now.

So may the fragrance of Thy love,
Be ever ling'ring near,
That others breathing it may know
Thou dwellest here.

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STOCKPORT AND HYDE.

A Home Gathering is to be held by the Hyde and Stockport friends on Sunday, Oct 31st, at Barnfield Academy, Hyde, Cheshire. Please write for details, accommodation and programmes to Bro. J. W. Wright, "Gilstone," Bramhall Moor Lane, Hazel Grove, Stockport.

"ERETS ISRAEL."

An item under this heading appeared in our last issue and some may have wondered what the term signifies. "Erets Israel" is the Hebrew for "Land of Israel," and many Jews apply this name to Palestine to-day.

TRANSLATIONS.

Both Moffatt's and Young's translations of the Bible are now out of print and the respective publishers are unable to say when a new edition will be available. Our own stocks are exhausted and we shall no longer be able to supply these study helps. Moffatt's New Testament is still available.

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DEC 2 1943



VOL. 20 No. 11

NOVEMBER 1943

Circulating among the Associated Bible Students.

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NOTES

Planning for peace — familiar expression nowadays. As the war goes through its course and the devastation increases, men are beginning to think of the reconstruction that must follow. So there are conferences and reports ; on education, housing, employment, economic welfare, every phase and aspect of national and international life. Thinking men are getting ready to, so they think, " win the peace."

The mission of the Christian Church is to lead the world. That mission will be accomplished fully in the days of the Kingdom, the Millennial Age ; but that mission is capable of partial discharge during this Age. While men are planning their post-war activities Christians should be planning theirs. The present fashionable gospel of Christian social reform does attract some interest, but on the whole men have little time or inclination to consider the Christian way. There will be more time and inclination when the pressure of war is released ; when disillusionment, the failure of rosy promises, the inability of governments to solve all their problems at once, induce restlessness and despair in men's hearts. Then will be our opportunity to pour in the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness, and preach with renewed effect the message of the Kingdom.

But to be ready for that we must plan now. Mere pious hopes that we shall be found ready will not do. We must survey our fellowship and our beliefs intelligently, and consult together that we may speak together with no

uncertain voice when the time comes. Unless we do this we shall, as a company, be found wanting in the day of opportunity.

We have one great advantage not possessed by every professing Christian. That is the spirit and practice of the consecrated life which has always been held as an ideal amongst us. We have some understanding at least of the truth underlying Isaiah's passionate description of the Servant Nation which is to be God's means of saving all men, by suffering and service. Our lives are wholly devoted to the work of reconciliation, and that is a great asset.

How are we going to plan? Undoubtedly, we must examine our message and the basis of our beliefs, assuring ourselves that we do indeed believe these things, and that the passage of time, the experience of the years, and the signs of the times have served but to show up in clearer and more definite form the principles of our faith and the shape which our expectations for the future now assume. The message must be up-to-date, expressed in the language of to-day, and presented in such a fashion as to appeal to the thinkers among men and women of to-day. This will demand more study on the part of those individuals who can study, discussion and comparison of findings, finally a making known to all the brethren of those things which are agreed to be good — and made known in simple terms that all may understand — so that all may be armed with clear definitions of the message with which

to play their own individual part in the "Ministry of Reconciliation." As with the Lord Himself, we must be able to teach "as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

We need, therefore, writers to make plain and easy the Truth for the readers—questions, with answers to those questions—easily remembered phrases and definitions which, like our hymnbook phraseology, cause the salient points of the Truth to stick in the memory—vivid pen-pictures of Scriptural themes and a clear vision of the course of events constituting the Time of Trouble and the Kingdom that is to follow. From the platform we need the ministry of sober men who "watch for your souls as they that must give an account." From the assembly we need that awareness of the

grandeur and beauty of our faith which overwhelms all petty personalities and brings us together in one family "in Christ."

Only thus can we go forward in the spirit and power of that messenger who once declared, in trumpet tones, a message which must yet be declared again: "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together."

For our post-war message, proclaimed with all the power and all the resources at our command, must be—

"Turn ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

STRANGE DEFECT

The picture of Samuel is one of the most appealing and his character one of the most lovable in Holy Writ. And yet there is a strange thing to record in the history of his life. He utterly failed to train his two sons in the way he himself had trodden with such steadfastness through all his days.

Consider this man's history. Born of God-fearing parents and in answer to persistent and earnest prayer, he surely came into the world with as favourable an inheritance as could be expected. At an early age he was set apart to the Divine service and spent his youthful years in the precincts of God's sanctuary, constantly attending upon God's High Priest. Arrived at manhood's estate, his personal qualities marked him out to be the virtual leader of the nation, and with wisdom and discretion he ruled them and their affairs for the better part of a lifetime. He anointed Saul to be Israel's first king—but it was Samuel who was the power behind the throne, guiding and counselling that impetuous ruler, and when at last Saul's inherent unworthiness brought about his undoing it was Samuel who declared to him the rending of the kingdom out of his hand, and who sought out the shepherd lad David and anointed him to be king in his turn. And yet, despite all these evidences of sterling qualities, his devotion to God and his abilities in leadership, he failed in the training of his own children and they grew up indifferent to the faith and the God of their father.

It has happened so many times. The sons

of Eli were profligates. The son of Hezekiah became an idolator. In our own day we are all witnesses of cases where children of worthy parents, of men who have been towers of strength and well-acceptable teachers in the Church have altogether failed to come in their turn to the Lord Jesus, and have grown up into the ways and the outlook of the modern God-indifferent world. Why is it? Why does a supposedly Christian home, a domestic atmosphere in which a clear knowledge of the Divine Plan is pronounced, sometimes have such little effect that the net result is almost as if the hallowed influence had not been there at all?

It is easier to look back now and decry the fault than it was to realise it at the time. Much activity in the Master's service; a life given up wholly to the consideration and study of "the Truth"; a somewhat unreasoning belief that the end of all things was at hand and that there "is no time" for the young to grow up in the knowledge and way of their elders; these things have conspired to cloud the spiritual vision of many devout souls in this particular respect, and the importance of careful and consistent training of the young, from an early age, in the things of God, has been ignored. Too often, alas, is it suggested that the children should be allowed to grow up without undue bias in a religious direction so that, arrived at years of discretion, they could make an intelligent choice. That point of view was put to John Wesley once. He pointed to the garden in which he

stood with his companions. "Does your gardener allow the weeds and grass to grow undisturbed with your flowers so that when all have matured and seeded you can make an intelligent choice?" he enquired. The Christian ought to know and be persuaded that there is only one way which is right to a man.

and that from earliest years the immature mind needs to be trained along lines which will fit the coming man for his future glorious destiny—whether that destiny, in the wisdom of God, be upon earth or in heaven: for the same training is necessary for both.

THE DAY OF REST.

—A.O.H.

2. The Desecration of the Sabbath

"... until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbaths, to fulfil threescore and ten years" (II Chron. 36: 21).

So was realised the dread prediction given to Moses eight hundred years before, a declaration that if the sabbath arrangements were violated and ignored by Israel, the nation would eventually be driven into captivity and the land lie desolate in compensation for the Sabbatic years in which it had not been allowed to rest. "If ye will not... hearken unto me... I will scatter you among the heathen (nations), and will draw out a sword after you, and your land shall be desolate and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land... because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it" (Lev. 26: 27-43).

There is remarkably little said about the sabbath in Israel's early years. Apart from a few casual allusions the word is not so much as mentioned until the times of the later Kings. This very silence is eloquent; it seems to indicate that as an institution the sabbath system was a normal custom calling for no special mention for quite a few centuries after the entrance into Canaan. We read in Num. 15: 32-36 of the man who was found gathering sticks on the sabbath day, and of his fate; but that was in the wilderness, and thenceforward throughout the time of the Judges and until the days of David there is no intimation whatever of the manner in which the sabbath was observed. After this, however, there are one or two allusions which go to show that it was regarded as a settled institution. I Chron. 23: 31 mentions the sabbaths in connection with David's ordering of the priestly courses, whilst II Chron. 2: 4 and 8; 13 give evidence of the

same in Solomon's time. The exquisite picture of the Shunamite woman in II Kings 4: 23-26 reveals a sincere sabbath keeping, the woman's husband puzzled at his wife's sudden decision to go to the man of God, seeing that it was "neither new moon, nor sabbath." Evidently the Shunamite was a faithful adherent to the law of Moses, and probably many in Israel shared her faithfulness. At much the same time the sabbath was a sufficiently marked day to become the occasion for periodical changing of the Temple guard (II Kings 11: 4-11 and II Chron. 23: 4-11).

During this period, a span of about six hundred years from the Exodus, there is no mention of violation of the sabbath. Israel until the days of Solomon was an agricultural and pastoral people. Industry and trade, and the consequent intercourse with other peoples, had not touched them. It almost seems as if the simple pastoral life is especially conducive to the keeping of God's sabbath rest. Even in England to-day Sunday is observed more faithfully and sincerely in country districts and among agricultural populations than it is in the cities and towns and industrial areas. In harmony with this, it is worthy of notice that it was only after Israel began to lose its pastoral simplicity, and entered into intercourse with other nations, joining in their trade and industry, that the prophets found it necessary to denounce their sabbath faithlessness.

The earliest of such denunciations in the Old Testament is that of Isaiah, who commenced to prophesy in the reign of Uzziah, about six hundred and fifty years after the Exodus. By this time Solomon had been dead for many years, but the taste for luxuriance, ease and other fruits of commercialism, introduced by him, had remained, and Israel was well on the way to becoming the nation of

A short series,
discussing Sunday

traders it has been ever since. Isaiah shows (1; 13) that in his days the sabbaths had become a mere formality; they were an abomination in the sight of God, and He would no longer accept them. Later on in Israel's life (56; 2 and 58; 13-14), in greater maturity, he called Israel to come back to their original sincerity and zeal in sabbath-keeping. "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight . . ." etc. At much the same time Jeremiah exhorted the people to cease from desecrating the sabbath (Jer. 17; 19-27). Ezekiel, a generation later, felt the same burden, as recorded in the 20th, 22nd and 23rd chapters of his prophecy, whilst Amos, contemporary with Israel's early days, has preserved for us a vivid picture of the Israelites chafing under the sabbath law, and mentions the very thing which led to their rejection of the sabbath, their greed for gain. "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit" (Amos 8; 4-7). It seems clear that in the days of Amos and Isaiah, when King Uzziah was reigning, the sabbath was still observed, but in a perfunctory, formal manner. Men were impatient for its passing that they might turn again to the buying and selling which was rapidly creating in their midst an economic system of the same kind that has produced such evil results in the world to-day.

Such evidence as the Old Testament affords, therefore, seems to indicate that Israel observed the sabbath system until the time of the Kings, and that with the entrance of trade and industry and consequent partial abandonment of pastoral pursuits they abandoned the sabbath also. For a few centuries more the nation blundered on from disaster to disaster—for all the great invasions and captivities fall within this period of sabbath rejection—until at last there came the greatest catastrophe of all, and Nebuchadnezzar's armies razed the Temple and the Holy City to the ground, taking away to Babylon all but a few of the poorest, left to be vine-dressers and husbandmen. Even these fled into Egypt a few months later, for fear of the Chaldeans. The desolation was complete, to remain so "until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths."

After the Babylonian captivity there was a great change. Strong influences were at work to maintain an increasingly rigid observance

of the sabbath. When Nehemiah came to Jerusalem he found alien traders in the habit of selling their wares in Jerusalem, and Jews conducting all manner of business, on the sacred day, and sternly forbade such practices (Neh. 13; 15-22). This zeal for the day developed into an extreme fanaticism during the four centuries which elapsed before the First Advent. The records of the Maccabees, those stalwart patriots of this intervening time, show that many Jews even refused to fight their enemies on the Sabbath, choosing to be slain rather than violate the day by lifting weapons. By the time of our Lord the simple commands of Moses had been overlaid by a vast mass of detailed prohibitions equalled only by those governing the English Sunday in the days of the Puritans. To practise as a physician and accomplish works of healing on the sabbath was forbidden; hence our Lord was accused of breaking the sabbath because some of His works of healing were done on that day (see Luke 6; 6-11, 13; 14-17, 14; 1-6, and Jno. 5; 1-16). In like manner it was declared that His disciples, rubbing corn between their hands on the sabbath (Matt. 12; 1-8), were technically guilty of threshing wheat. One wonders to what extent our Lord's injunction, "Pray ye that your flight be not . . . on the sabbath day" (Matt. 24; 20) is not an allusion to the restraining power of "orthodoxy" on those who are "watching for His appearing," remembering that the Rabbis forbade any man to travel more than two thousand paces—about one mile—outside the city on the sabbath!

So was the sabbath desecrated by God's professed people—at first by indifference and hostility, then, secondly, by fanaticism and intolerance. In both cases the results were evil, and in both instances history has repeated itself in this Christian era.

It is obvious that the first Jewish converts to Christianity—the Apostolic Church—would be scrupulous sabbath keepers. The New Testament shows that if they erred at all it was on the side of extremism in this respect, and several times they are counselled not to regard the keeping of new moons and sabbaths as ends in themselves, but only as means of grace. To this observance of the seventh day, however, the early Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, speedily added the special observance of another—the first.

It was on the first day of the week that the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead. So great an impression was made upon the minds

of the first believers by that great happening, the event which changed their lives, that from the beginning they developed the custom of setting aside the first day of the week for assembly together, the breaking of bread or the sharing of a common meal, preaching, prayer and worship. This was quite a different thing from the Jewish sabbath, and was not intended to supplant that institution. It was additional, to commemorate something of an entirely different nature. Traces of this custom are to be found in Acts 20: 7, telling of Paul's visit to Troas, where the first day of the week was evidently the usual meeting day, and in I Cor. 16: 2. For the first three centuries both days were kept by the Christian church, the seventh as a sabbath rest, and the first for assembly and worship. Doubtless, those Christians whose lives were spent in agricultural pursuits and in the country found the ideal more easy of attainment than those who laboured in the cities in one or another aspect of the then industrial system; but the consistent stand made by these early believers for their "first day" of assembly and worship had its reward when the Emperor Constantine, by an Imperial Edict in A.D. 321, made the observance of Sunday, and the cessation of business and trade on that day, obligatory upon all dwellers in cities and towns. We literally owe our Sunday to Constantine!

Shortly afterwards, in A.D. 366, the Council of Laodicea formally released all Christians from any obligation to observe the Jewish sabbath—the seventh day. Quite naturally, therefore, the first day of the week became to Christians the day of rest and cessation from work, the day of prayer and worship, and of the assembling together with those "of like precious faith."

Who can doubt that the secret of much of the power inherent in the early Church, enabling them to "go forth conquering, and to conquer," resided in this sincere and faithful allegiance to the principles underlying the Fourth Commandment? That day spent in communion with God and with each other; that simple ritual of sharing with one's fellows; that pouring out of the heart and soul in an ecstasy of praise and worship before the Throne of the Most High, must surely have inspired them with new courage and fresh strength, and enabled them to withstand with serene confidence the ragings of the pagan power using its cruellest artifices to force from them a denial of their faith. As with Israel,

so with the Christian Church, her best days and her happiest days were those during which the sabbath was observed, and when the blessed day fell into disuse and disrepute the virtue went out of communal spiritual life.

The Catholic Church during the Middle Ages maintained this early insistence upon the cessation of business and labour upon Sunday, exhorting to worship and religious devotion, and holding the day as set apart, in addition, to rest and recreation. This latter aspect was not prominent before, but a little reflection will show that innocent recreation is but the logical extension of rest and relaxation. A great tragedy has been that the original recreation endorsed by the Church has developed into organised amusement, which is quite a different thing, leading directly to all the evils of what is called the "Continental Sunday." It was probably at least partly in reaction to this that the Puritans during the time of Cromwell (sixteenth century) forced the observance of Sunday into the narrow grooves for which it has become proverbial. Every form of recreation was forbidden: Sunday was made to be a day of religious devotion without exception, and severe penalties were laid upon those who contravened the law. This bigoted intolerance was repeated a century or so later in America, where the first colonists, seeking to escape from the religious tyranny of the Mother Country, became just as intolerant themselves. In both lands Sunday observance was quite as circumscribed with ritual and ordinance as was the sabbath in Judea at the time of the First Advent.

The history of this Age, then, depicts three phases in the keeping of the sabbath. The early Church maintained the Divine principle of rest and worship inviolate, gradually transferring the seventh day rest to the first day, until by the end of the fourth century Sunday was firmly established. For the next twelve hundred years the Catholic Church insisted upon the weekly day of rest and recreation, this being followed in the English-speaking countries—not elsewhere—by a Puritan phase in which all the evils of Rabbinic sabbath legislation were repeated. A reaction was bound to come, and the Industrial Revolution of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the consequent growth of big towns and cities, and, later, the increase in travel and amusement facilities gave that reaction its chance. Men and women, herded together in factories and workshops, oft-times compelled by the

new commercialism to spend long days on monotonous or irksome tasks, hailed the weekly break as a means of indulging in diversions denied them during the week. Declining religious faith—and, within the past century, the spread of Darwinism and Rationalism—coupled with the virtual end of the "hell-fire" bogey, cast down the last barriers, and people who had never been given any conception of Sunday other than that of a rather gloomy period of religious devotion turned right about and made it their weekly day of amusement and entertainment.

Commercial interests have been quick to exploit this reaction. Every year witnesses an increase in the number of men and women who must labour on Sunday to provide their fellows, not with necessities, but with luxuries and entertainment. Church congregations dwindle whilst cinema queues lengthen. Not a little of the nervous strain of modern times, and the evils attendant thereon, must be attributed to the frantic rush for amusement and diversion, the excessive travel and holiday-making, so characteristic of our Sundays today. Men do not realise that in their failure to observe the Divine rule of a periodic slowing down of the tempo of daily life, a short breathing space wherein the physical frame can recover its vitality and the mind be refreshed by its dwelling on things higher than of this earth, they are sowing the seeds of their own destruction.

So the desecration of the sabbath goes on. Gone, in the towns; fast going, in the countryside, are those quiet, peaceful days when the factories and mills are silent, the shops closed, and the people "walked to the House of God in company." The present generation is largely oblivious to any special significance attached to the day. They know nothing of its past history; they know only that this is the day when they may cast aside the responsibilities and obligations of the week and expend their energy in every form of diversion the day can be made to hold. The sign of Noah is fulfilled in the land. "They knew not, until the Flood came, and took them all away."

One aspect of the Christian witness to-day, therefore, is a showing forth, by example and precept, of the Divine Will regarding the observance of the day. At a time when the gospel of humanism is preached in active opposition to the gospel of Christ there is need for practical demonstration that the ways of

God, which were made for the benefit of man, are eminently practicable, and in the long run the only ways which will ensure to man the full and free development of the wondrous possibilities latent in his nature.

THE HIDDEN LIFE.

Our life is hid with Christ in God,
Through faith and hope in Him secure;
The path ahead, as yet untrod,
With us He'll walk, unseen, obscure.

Col. 3; 3.

The way to God we found in Christ,
Who lived and died mankind to save;
His healing power our need sufficed,
As peace with God, the Father gave.

Jno. 3; 16. Rom. 5; 1.

And then, by growth in truth and grace,
We heard God's call in Christ, to yield
The life He bought, and in its place
Receive a life that's veiled, concealed.

Rom. 12; 1.

Thenceforth, by things we know and learn
Along life's way enriched by prayer,
We grow from babes to those who yearn
His face to see, His glory share.

Eph. 4; 15.

This closing hour brings joy mid pain,
To sanctify the dead who die;
May zeal and love our faith sustain,
That we may ne'er His Name deny.

Rev. 14; 13.

In Quietness — Your Strength.

A few years ago an interesting fact was brought to light in America as a result of comparative study of the young women in the Eastern Colleges. The investigators' expectation was to find the health of the New England girls far superior to those of Pennsylvania, but to their surprise, the opposite was found to be the fact. Investigation revealed that a large percentage of the students at that time were either Quaker or of Quaker descent. This was the reason. The serene life which is part of the Friend's creed, resulted in greater health than the more robust life of "bleak New England." Surely no better argument than this can be found in favour of cultivating quietness of spirit from the physical point of view.

(Evidence of things not seen.)

THE QUIET TIME

 C.T.W.

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

ABIDING TREASURE (Matt. 6: 19-20).

Who can estimate the value of the heavenly treasures? Their value is past our present powers of reckoning; yet, with an approximate appreciation of them, let us keep our eye upon them and diligently lay up much treasure in Heaven, assured that there, moth and rust cannot corrupt nor thieves break through nor steal. Let our hearts glory in them, esteeming all things else as of minor importance. If our hearts are set upon the heavenly treasures only then the disappointment and trials of the present life cannot overwhelm us, though they may cause us pain and sorrow. The heavenly treasures include all that is pure and good and noble and true. Whatsoever things are true, pure and lovely, whatsoever things are worthy of the aspirations of the spiritual sons of God, these are our real treasures; and let our hearts glory in them more and more.

*"Let us touch lightly the things of this earth,
Esteeming them only of trifling worth."*

Let our treasures be laid up in Heaven and our hearts dwell there.

"Wondrous is the strength of cheerfulness."

(Carlyle)

Happiness and brightness in God's service are great gifts. We are told to make melody in our hearts to the Lord and how can we do this unless we are cheerful and serve him gladly? You must LIVE THE LIFE, not merely do the work. Live a quiet peaceful life alone with God, stayed on Him, and the work will come out of it and you will do it simply, unconsciously.

Think a little less of your sorrow and more of your joys, for the joys will make you grateful and gratitude is in itself one of the most beautiful pleasures of the soul. Being grateful you can take to yourself the blessing "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you" and make it yours, for part of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is to have a grateful heart.

Let your light so shine before men. Matt. 5: 16

Keep your light shining my brother,
That those around you may know,
By the joy of your song
Unto whom you belong,
As on through the darkness you go.

HE THRESHETH HIS WHEAT

When the wheat is carried home,
And the threshing time is come,
Close the door.

When the flail is lifted high,
Like the chaff I would not fly;
At His feet oh let me lie

On the floor.
All the cares that o'er me steal,
All the sorrows that I feel

Like a dart,
When my enemies prevail,
When my strength begins to fail—
'Tis the beating of the flail

On my heart.
It becomes me to be still,
Though I cannot all His will
Understand;

I would be the purest wheat,
Lying humbly at His feet,
Kissing oft the rod that beat,
In His hand.

By and by I shall be stored
In the garner of the Lord

Like a prize;
Thanking Him for every blow
That in sorrow laid me low,
But in beating made me grow
For the skies.

I will rejoice in My people.

"I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people;" saith the Lord by the prophet Isaiah (65: 19.) These words give us an insight into the paternal love of God, which ought to draw us towards Himself. We here behold the close relation which subsists between God and His people; of which indeed we should entertain conceptions far too mean, were we to compare it merely to the relation subsisting between a gracious sovereign and his pardoned criminal subjects, or between a condescending and forbearing master and his servants. We are not only objects of His pardoning mercy, we are incomparably more than this. The Lord REJOICES over His people; He delighteth in them that fear Him and trust in His mercy. He beholds them, not as they are in themselves, but as clothed with the righteousness of their Surety, and beautified with His spirit of holiness. He loves those who are renewed by His grace, even as He loves the express image of His person, for those whom He thus loves are conformed to the image of His Son.



THE QUESTION BOX.



Q.—Who or what is the “voice crying in the wilderness” of Isa. 40:3?

A.—In the first place, the “voice” is Isaiah himself. The second part of the Book of Isaiah, commencing with the 40th chapter, is a treatise outlining the principles upon which God will reconcile the world to Himself, by means of the service, devotion and suffering of a consecrated people, the “suffering servant” of the prophecy. Isaiah was the means used to introduce this theme into the records of the revealed Plan of God, and, knowing as he did that his people were far from understanding the part to be played by sacrifice and suffering in the reconciliation, their minds being full of visions of the glory of Israel’s coming reign over the nations, he realised that in his day he would never be more than a voice crying in the wilderness. Nevertheless, he delivered his message to such good effect that his book became the finest and most detailed exposition of the “sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow,” in the whole of the Old Testament.

The second fulfilment of these words is found in the person and work of John the Baptist, as he himself claimed. He also was a herald of the Messiah, and of the Messianic Kingdom, and although his message reached a wider circle and attracted more general attention than did that of Isaiah, it did not result in the conversion of the nation. It merely prepared a “remnant.” “He was a burning and a shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light,” said Jesus. Nevertheless, he remained long enough to point out the Lamb of God, manifested amongst men, and then his work was finished.

The third fulfilment is manifest in the work of the Church during the Gospel Age, and particularly at its end. Once more the “herald” declares the coming of the King (“There standeth one among you whom ye know not”), and the imminence of His Kingdom. Once more the voice is one which cries in the wilderness, yet gathers together a nucleus which shall be the “people for a purpose” for the incoming Age. Once again the message goes out continuously until the greater John Baptist is able to turn and declare: “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin

of the world.” Although the Church will be glorified before the revelation of Christ to the world takes place, the “voice in the wilderness” message will be taken up and continued by the earthly “people for a purpose,” regathered in the Holy Land, and their message will find its glorious climax in the proclamation of the Law from Zion, when Isaiah’s prophecy will be literally fulfilled.

Q.—After the death of Abel, Cain was afraid that “everyone that findeth me shall slay me.” How can this be if Cain was the only surviving son: for Seth had not yet been born?

A.—The error of supposing the story to imply that there were no other human beings alive at the time of the crime has been made even by the Higher Critics, who, in their standard work (the International Critical Commentary) say that the story is unreliable since it implies the existence of other men when there were no others. A little thought will show that there must have been quite a fair-sized community at the time. We have two definite facts from which to reason. First, Cain was the first son of Adam and Eve. Second, Seth was the next son to be born after the death of Abel. These two points are clear from Eve’s words in Gen. 4:1 and 25. According to the Hebrew chronology, Seth was born when Adam had lived 130 years. The death of Abel must be placed just before this, say, at 120 years from the Creation of man. The birth of Cain would be soon after the expulsion from Eden, say, not more than twenty years after the creation. He would thus be 100 years old at the time of his crime, and Abel anything up to ninety. There is no evidence to show that men in that day, despite their longevity, took any longer to attain maturity than they do now. If we assume that marriage took place at an average age of thirty, and that births occurred to each pair once in five years, a simple calculation suffices to show that at the time of Abel’s death there could be 176 persons in the human community, reaching to the fourth generation from Adam, 54 of these being descendants of Cain and his wife. Such a number is small enough for Cain to be personally known to them all, which explains his fear that “everyone that findeth me shall slay me.”

"Yea, rather . . ."

Rom. 8: 34

It is not always the biggest words of a text, nor even the centrally positioned ones in a paragraph that will carry most weight in the argument. Sometimes words of two letters, by their comparative values, such as "as" and "so," will open wide the door of argument, or close it shut, leaving no doubt in the reader's mind what the writer's meaning was. For instance, "As in the Adam all die so also in the Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15: 22). Whatever may be the full scope of this Scripture its argument turns upon two small words.

The two words of our text also institute a comparison, but throw the balance of importance upon the statement next following. They add emphasis to the assertion that follows them, and increase its importance greatly when compared with the one that precedes them. Paul could have made use of the facts regarding the life and death of Jesus without using these two words. He could have written: "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, and it is Christ that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God . . ." He would thus have been stating the two great facts of Jesus' life as unassailable facts, but, stated thus they would be "in parallel" with each other, and of equal value for the purpose of an argument. But that was not his intention here. Apparently he did not desire them to be of equal value in their application to the main point of his discussion. He was not, at this point, basing his claim to freedom from condemnation on a dead Christ—however acceptable that death of Christ may be—but upon a living and exalted Christ, who had passed beyond the reach of death, and was present at God's right hand to represent Paul and all his brethren there.

Already he had shown the vital necessity of the death of Christ as one of the great essential factors in the work of Atonement and Reconciliation (Chap 3: 25, 5: 6, 12-19, 8: 32), and here (as always, elsewhere), Paul did not underrate or undervalue the worth of that Redemption Sacrifice. Always, in presence of either friend or foe, he gloried in the Cross of Christ, and declared it the one foundation upon which all future hope must be based. It had done for men what no other work had ever done. Jesus by His death had done what no

other man, nor any number of men combined could ever do. Alexander the Great had overrun the world while still little more than a youth—a feat almost without parallel in the annals of time, up to Paul's day—yet what had that conquest accomplished for men? Even among his own people there was none to compare with Paul's gracious Lord. Moses had been God's instrument in giving to the fathers the Law. David and Solomon had given of their great wealth to build God a house, and had employed tongue and pen to sing the goodness of the Lord, and while they had given much to benefit those who loved the Holy Name, what had they given that could be compared with that great price that Jesus gave for man's release? Not all the feats of arms; not all the bright gold dug from the earth, nor all the erected temples upon the earth could compare in its effects upon men with the effects of that dark tragedy on Calvary. That, to Paul's persuaded mind, was the one event that transcended every other event throughout the world, throughout all time.

Yet it was only the first chapter of a great story. It was a chapter gloriously true, but it was not the whole story. It was a truth—a pure unadulterated truth—yet not the whole truth—there was something more! Here, in the argument he was now presenting, it was as the wicket-door leading into a larger auditorium. It was a case of passing through that to this, and it was "this" that really mattered most!

He was writing of God's Elect! He was writing to God's Elect—of those and to those whom God's Love had won over from the ranks of evil and wickedness. They had forsaken the ways of sin and Satan, and turned with all their hearts to God, in order to serve Him, and live in accord with His great purposes towards men. But they found to their great sorrow that the fallen flesh of men (which they still shared with other men—other fallen men) was no fitting instrument through which to serve the living God. Try as they would, and even with the best intent, they could not always do the things they would have loved to do, or say the things they would have preferred to say. They found that even their best attempts came short of the perfect

standard, and how often they had cause to groan and pour out their sense of unworthiness in sighs and sobs! Would God condemn them for these deficiencies and ineffective attempts? Would Jesus chide and rebuke them because they so often missed the mark? Would anyone condemn them and point the scornful finger at their vain attempts to measure up to righteousness?

Yes, there were some who could scoff and scorn and ridicule and condemn! One "accuser of the brethren" always stood ready to heap condemnation on their heads. Along with him was a whole host of wickedness in exalted position, ready to hinder and oppose, to dishearten and condemn, when frailty and weakness marred their best endeavours.

But (and this is what matters most to Paul and his believing friends) these accusers and opponents had no right of entrance to the Divine Court where all these actions—these efforts to please God—were assessed and judged. That Court of assessment was in heaven, at the very Throne of God. Satan and his hosts had no right of entrance there—they were confined to the lower heavens—to the earth's atmosphere. They had no standing as "the-prosecutor-at-the-bar." They had no power of attorney in that Supreme Court.

Therefore, though they might shriek their condemnation above the raging voice of the gale, it had no relevance to the "case" in hand. Who is he that condemneth?" asks Paul. None!—there is no prosecutor in the case.

But there is an Advocate at the bar—"counsel for the defence" is there. And that Advocate was the One who had died for men, but who now lived again! Surely He who had loved men when in their sin, enough to die for them, would not now turn against His followers and display all their guilt before that supreme Bar. No, indeed! He was "Counsel for their defence"—a defence based upon what He Himself had done to satisfy the Heavenly Court on their behalf. His Presence at that Bar was proof enough that what He accomplished on their behalf was acceptable in full and adequate compensation for their blemishes. Yes, Christ Jesus had died for their sins, and made satisfaction complete.

Would Jesus condemn? Nay. He had died for them! But more than that. He was now living for them, and serving their need more than before. Would God from His Throne condemn? Nay. He had already issued His

writ of acquittal! He had already declared the decree of His Court, freely justifying the believer from his sins and weaknesses. The verdict of the Court was favourable to the Advocate and His earthly clients and companions, so that in heaven there was none to condemn.

Other accusers mattered not, let them shout their impeachments loud and long! So long, therefore, as their name and credit stood unimpaired in the one place, and at the one "Bar" that really mattered, all was well with them. And that it stood well in that one place was sure beyond all further question because their Advocate was so fully acceptable to the Judge, who alone was qualified to judge and justify, that He was keeping the Advocate at His own right hand—to remain there throughout the Age, till the whole company for whom He had appeared had achieved the object for which they had been justified.

It is no dead Christ that occupies the centre of God's Plan. It is a living Christ—a Christ over whom death has no dominion or power—a Christ, eternal, immortal and all powerful, who ever liveth to help each generation of His struggling followers along and up the heights to heavenly glory. "I am He that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore" are the words of assurance sent down from heaven to earth, to stand as guarantee that no struggling follower can ever pass from the sight of His watchful loving Eye.

Some of the reputed followers of the Lord make their boast in a Christ who died, and carry a crucifix as token of that death. That is something, but it is not enough. It is not enough that a sacrifice should have been made, or that a Cross and a tomb should be the symbol of Divine Redemption. That alone could not have secured the blotting out of sin. The "Bar-of-all-Authority" was not in session on Calvary's hill, or Gethsemane's tomb, but had placed its throne in the highest heaven. Divine Justice had instituted its own Court, and thither must the "case" of all believers be carried for adjudication.

We may truly rejoice with any or all who rejoice in the great Sacrifice of the Man of Sorrows, but that would be ending the great story in the opening chapter. With Paul we might announce to heaven and earth that all our glory is in the Cross, but we must complete the great account by proclaiming to all our "Yea rather." "Christ died, **yea rather** was raised from the dead" is the vital, energising fact at the heart of God's purpose.

Much is made to-day over the radio of "the historic Christ," and men are asked to make their decisions concerning righteousness on the basis of the teachings of a good man who lived nineteen centuries ago and taught a new way of life. No wonder the world looks coldly on while only one here and there responds to the Great Voice from the past. It needs more than the historic Christ to energise a cold world into life. The rating of Jesus as "the historic Christ" places Him but little in advance of the founders of any other religion or "way of life." The "historic" advocates make the plea that "the Christ" was "God," and from that assumed fact argue that His words should be heard, heeded and followed. Still the world looks coldly on. It cannot understand even that assertion, for it lacks the living power to grip the vital strings of the heart of men in these tumultuous days. Not a "dead Christ," nor yet a "historic Christ," but a "Living

Christ," who has learned compassion for the suffering generations of men, is the one theme, the only theme, that can strike home, arrest and rivet the attention and expectation of the perplexed and doubting hosts of men, bewildered and lost in the mazes of modern thought. But who shall tell them of that Living Christ? And the answer surely comes, only they who can say: "Yea rather, Christ has risen from the dead." Our two little words then contain volumes of sacrificial and dispensational fact, and stand as an expression of conviction that great and vital as the death of Christ most surely was, His resurrection is more vital still, to those who now follow in His steps.

Lives there one child of God to-day, who, knowing and experiencing the tender care of the great Shepherd of the flock, whose heart will not rise up in gratitude and appreciation before God for the great facts covered by our little text—"yea rather"?

THE MINISTRY OF AFFLICTION

Dear Lord, I want to understand,
The reason why Thy wisdom planned
That all Thy saints, who love the Cross,
Must suffer **pain**, and **shame**, and **loss**.

What then the object of the **pain**
Which those who know Thee not, disdain?
'Tis sent to purge and purify
The children of the Lord, Most High.

When then the object of the **shame**,
The lot of all who trust Thy Name?
'Tis sent to prove the zeal and love
Of those whose hope is set above.

When then the object of the **loss**
Which comes to foll'wers of the Cross?
'Tis sent to magnify the gain
Of those with whom the Lord shall reign.

The way of **pain**, and **shame**, and **loss**,
Led Thy dear Lord e'en to the Cross;
And if thou would'st be found in Him,
'Tis suff'ring now, His joy to win.

I thank Thee, Lord, that now I see
The reason of this ministry;
I view the suff'ring of the past,
And know the joy of "peace" at last.

I've tests without, and fears within,
Amidst this alien world of sin;
But I have found the thing I sought—
E'en fellowship with Him who bought.

W. A. D.

ANOTHER USE FOR BOMBERS.

The modern method of combating plagues of locusts is by aeroplane. The pilots fly near the ground spraying the swarms with a chemical compound which kills them quickly. The work is dangerous since planes have to fly close together and a tree or other obstacle may easily cause a crash. At the present time the British, Russian and Persian Governments are co-operating in the systematic destruction of locust swarms by this means, one concrete instance of the manner in which inventions now used for evil purposes can be put to the service of mankind by international co-operation. May God haste the day when "nation shall speak peace unto nation" and work together in peace and harmony for the common good.

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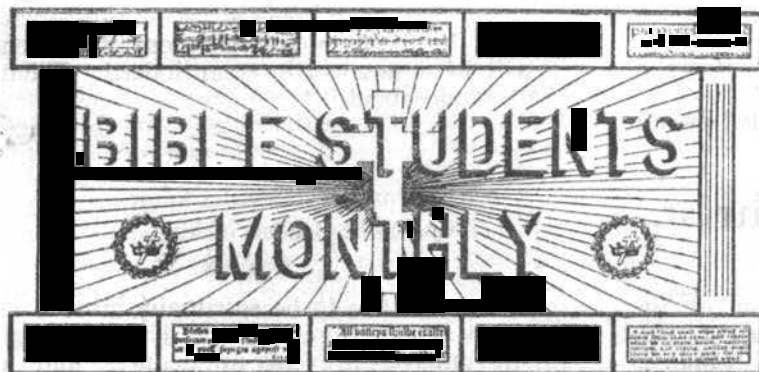
GONE FROM US.

Sister M. J. Isitt, mother of Sister C. T. Ward, (Kettering) and Sisters Maud Griffiths and Phyllis Hermans, both of Canada, passed away on 16th September last at the age of 78 years. She was laid to rest at the little village of Warkton, where so many of our older brethren will remember having shared in her hospitality. She had suffered greatly, but the end was peaceful and among her last messages was one of love to all the brethren. It is our confidence that our sister's labour of love and her patient endurance has not been in vain. "Henceforth there is a crown of glory."

Sister Deurance, wife of Bro. Deurance, of Blackpool, passed away on 25th September after a week's illness. Many of our brethren are acquainted with our brother and their sympathy will go out to him in his loss.

CHRISTMAS CARDS AND CALENDARS.

The Bookroom will not stock Christmas cards and calendars this year. We are glad to advise the friends, however, that Bro. F. Lardent is again supplying the well-known "Christian Home Calendar," reduced in weight to comply with Government restrictions, but still bearing handsome full coloured Scripture pictures for each month with the other usual features. The price is, as before, 3/- each post free. Please send orders to Bro. F. Lardent, 174, Forest Hill Road, London, S.E.23.



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VOL. 20 No. 12

DECEMBER 1943

Circulating among the Associated Bible Students.

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NOTES

The Old Year passes swiftly away, and the New, with all its promise, is at the doors. The pious Jew, keeping his annual Passover, as have his fathers from days of antiquity, murmurs "Next year at Jerusalem"; and two thousand Passovers have passed over the heads of that suffering people since the prayer was first framed. We, in our turn, as Christmas comes and goes, may well whisper to our hearts, "Next year, the Kingdom." We know that it will surely come, but—God grant that it be next year!

But are we ready for the Kingdom? If it comes next year, shall we go forth gladly to take our expected place in its administration? Have we been so loyal to our Master's spirit, so zealous in His service, such exemplars of the unity for which He prayed in the Garden, that there can be no doubt as to our fitness for the responsibilities of that Kingdom when it comes?

Perhaps it is just as well that only God knows the answer. Our own judgment of our fellows, if not of ourselves, may be too harsh. But even so, we must admit in all honesty that in spite of all we may have done, we are in very truth unprofitable servants. The wonderful inheritance of truth which was given us as a stewardship when the hands of a faithful servant of God laid it down nearly thirty years ago has been squandered by many in pointless and profitless debates and arguments. The lofty ideals of a people given over

wholly and completely to the proclamation and manifestation of the standards of the Kingdom have been debased and obscured. We may indeed be a "people for a purpose," but plain it is that many of us to-day are by no means sure what that purpose is.

"Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal 'The Lord knoweth them that are His.' " We do well if we do at least accept the transcendent truth that the names of the Church of the First Born are written in heaven, and nowhere else. We do well to realise that no earthly organisation has the monopoly of the true saints of God. They are to be found in every sect and denomination, and outside organised Christendom as well.

But that fact does not absolve us from our own responsibility as a fellowship from declaring, with united voice, the particular aspects of Divine Truth which have brought us together. Many Christian bodies have their contribution to make in this day. We too can make a very positive contribution, one that is timely and up-to-date as very few messages are today; but before that contribution can be made in any effective manner we must arm ourselves with knowledge, consult with each other on methods, and prepare to receive and instruct those who may evidence live interest in the message. Paul said: "How shall they hear without a preacher?" We may well add, "How shall they believe, except there be in-

struction, and a place of instruction?" If the New Year about to dawn should witness a genuine attempt on our part to get down to practical ways and means of instructing all

men in the things of the Kingdom of Heaven it will be a noteworthy year indeed. What shall we do about it?

The Spirit of Christ.

* W.A.D. *

Love is the Scriptural definition of the character of God and the Holy Word teaches that His only method of dealing with man is by the way of redeeming love. As the Son gloriously reflects the Father—"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14: 9)—so this is the very essence of the Spirit of Christ, in whose footsteps we have covenanted to follow by our consecration vow. Moreover, possession of this Spirit, in a large and over-coming measure, must be the portion of each prospective member of the Body, for of this our text leaves us in no doubt—"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." It is essential, therefore, to understand how we may receive of this Spirit of Christ, to know its precise characteristics, and, above all, to examine its **practical application** in the Ecclesia, while in the wider sense all men should be able to see that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him.

Anointed in the Beloved

When our consecration unto death is accepted, we come into Christ and are constituted members of His Body. We are thenceforth reckoned dead so far as the flesh is concerned and alive unto God as new creatures, begotten by the power of His Holy Spirit to the Divine nature. This was forcibly portrayed in the Old Testament figure of anointing. As the holy anointing oil was poured upon the head of the typical Priest and flowed down to the "skirts" of his garments, so that illustrates how Christ was anointed of the Spirit at Jordan, while at Pentecost that same anointing flowed down to the members of His Body. This is the lesson of Psalm 133, where David also shows that it is from the time we are anointed in Him that we pass from death unto life, for he says—"there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

In the Book of Romans, the writer demonstrates how **different** is the spirit of Christ from the spirit of the world, while it is equally clear that we are either of the one spirit or the other, for there are only two. To be **carnally**

"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his"

Rom. 8: 9

minded is death; to be **spiritually** minded is life and peace (Rom. 8: 6). The Spirit of Christ imparts heavenly-mindedness and a spiritual outlook dependent on fellowship with Him; the spirit of the world, even in the best of men, is purely human, with no understanding of God's purposes and methods.

Love is Kind, but Positive

It is one thing to come into Christ and thus to receive a measure of His Spirit, but it is quite another to **abide** in Him, ever manifesting more and more of His Spirit, until counted worthy to enter the Kingdom as an overcomer. To this end, various trying experiences are sent to each one in order to demonstrate what progress has been made in the School of Christ. Failures should not discourage, but constitute incentive to greater effort in the future, so that **spiritual** growth is made in course of time.

To-day, the Spirit of Christ is often thought to be seen in compromise, refusal to take a **positive** course for fear it may give offence, lack of desire to discuss any doctrines in case unity may be disturbed, and so on. This is wholly foreign to New Testament teaching, for we should be strong, positive, and definite, with a **spiritual individuality** of our own. At the same time, we should manifest kindness and good feeling towards those who differ from us, withal trying our utmost to witness before them the Truth we believe ourselves.

Our Lord's teaching abounds with examples in proof of this analysis of the Spirit of Christ. He lived in a land whose people were intent upon using force in order to conquer the Romans; the revolts while He was still a child were put down with ruthless violence, many of the rebels being crucified. It soon became clear to His fellows that He had the spirit of leadership, yet Christ fearlessly and openly declared His policy as recorded in Luke 4: 18, despite the wrath it engendered. Familiar as they were with the Old Testament Scriptures, the fact that He designedly omitted all reference to the "day of vengeance of our God"

could only increase their surprise and intensify their annoyance. At the same time, He did not force His way of life upon them, but set them a positive example to follow on the basis of love, culminating with the prayer "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23: 34). This apparently foolish way of the Cross has nevertheless inspired noble men and women throughout the Age to adopt the same Spirit of Christ, even as we do to-day. The Spirit of Christ was seen in the positive language used against the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees; also in the cleansing of the Temple;* and in the directness of many of the Master's parables.

In the Epistles, notably among the writings of Paul, we see the same Spirit of Christ. When Paul wrote to the Galatians, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?" (Gal. 3: 1), he was certainly addressing them in positive terms, but that was true love in action, designed to **arrest** their attention. Even the Apostle of love plainly denounced false teaching, as seen in John 2: 9, and in the case of Diotrephes (John 3: 9-10).

The Practical Application

We have contact one with another in two main ways, by means of the **spoken word** and the **written communication**. In both these respects we need to manifest the Spirit of Christ, and we must at all times be on guard against our wily Adversary, who would have us use ungracious words to cause misunderstandings and needless trouble. It is sometimes the case that we receive more courtesy and consideration from those who make no profession, or who are at the best only nominal Christians, than we do from the brethren. This is only accounted for by the subtlety of the Adversary, who does his utmost to set brethren at variance, and to cause those painful experiences through which we pass at times when seeking to help and assist. As we know, however, these things are all over-ruled in order to see whether **we** will continue to manifest the Spirit of Christ, as did the Master Himself, or whether we will become discouraged and fall away. If we are "stumbled" in this

manner, then it is proof that we do not possess the Spirit of Christ in **overcoming** measure, for great peace have they which love Thy law, and **nothing** shall offend them (Psalm 119: 165).

The Spoken Word

Death and life are in the power of the tongue; the tongue may be a tremendous power for good, or it may cause discord and endless suffering. Whether it be on matters of doctrine or on questions concerning general problems of life, we ought to be definite, and we should have no hesitation in making our position clear to others. Zeal for the Truth naturally causes us to witness for our convictions, but that does not mean that we are called upon to be ungracious, or, frankly, to lose our temper.

Some are convinced that Christ has returned in the power of His Kingdom, and that we are living in the days when the Kingdom "set up" is breaking in pieces the Gentile kingdoms as foretold in Dan. 2: 44, and such believe that the work to-day is to declare this wonderful truth in Zion (Isa. 52: 7), but that does not permit them or anyone else, to show **bad feeling** towards those who disagree. Suppose those who cannot agree the Master is present evince bad feeling towards those who affirm the Presence, and who may powerfully defend and prove their affirmation; equally so, suppose the converse to be manifest. If they in either case do this, then it is an opportunity to show to them the Spirit of Christ. The same is true of any other doctrinal differences, whether as between individuals or in the Ecclesia. Withal, we must be positive in our beliefs and possess a strong spiritual individuality.

The Spirit of Christ is not a spirit of condemnation, although it is positive and backed by **intense zeal**. This is a peculiar combination not to be found in any other sphere. Let us ever remember that whether we are right, or wrong, does not excuse us for discourtesy—

Oh! if we could but learn to know

How swift and sure our words can go—

How we would weigh with utmost care

Each thought before it sought the air;

And speak those words which move in love,

Like white-winged messengers above.

The Written Word

In these days of postal communication there are many privileges not enjoyed by the saints in bygone ages. It is as necessary (and sometimes as difficult) to manifest the Spirit of

* Only in one of the Gospels is it said that the scourge was used, and, even then, the original suggests that it was used only on the animals. It was the Master's **striking words** that cleared the Temple of those who defiled it. The use of physical force on the people would, as always, only have attracted retaliation.

Christ in this method of communication. It is easy to write an unkind letter, or to fail to give a brother credit for sincerely good intentions, although he appears to have been misguided, while definite "attack" in the form of a letter is not difficult to certain dispositions.

We ought to weigh the words we commit to writing with even greater care than those we speak, for writing usually imparts added force and constitutes a record. The brother to whom we actually speak may misunderstand our words if carelessly chosen, but those that are written may be read by many and multiply any misunderstanding.

Persuasion, not Force

The Spirit of Christ, which is one of non-violence, uses persuasion and the power of example, rather than force. Even under the Iron Rule of the Kingdom, it will be a case of "whosoever will," and herein has each one a marvellous opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of the way of Christ. If we are treated in an un-Christlike way, never let us use the Adversary's method in reply, for a calm answer supported by Truth is always more effective, as we so often find in our Lord's case. If by weakness of the flesh a brother (or sister) manifests bad feeling, let us **accept his wrath into our love**, ever remembering that evil can never be overcome by evil. In this

way, we may **defeat** bad feeling, for when He was reviled, He reviled not again.

It is true that God in righteousness will eventually punish sin—He is doing so collectively in the present time of trouble, while in due time each man will individually be on trial for life or death. Meantime, however, those who are called to follow in the steps of Christ recognise that suffering for righteousness' sake (as opposed to fighting for our rights) is the way appointed for our own spiritual growth. It is little use to witness for the Spirit of Christ in relation to wars between nations, if we have the same desire to "fight" our brethren and individuals around us. The same principle must guide us in both issues.

Temporary Failures

We all fail of the perfect standard. If, therefore, a brother (or sister) should on any particular occasion show the wrong spirit, it is not for us to quote the text "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" by way of suggesting that such an one cannot be in Christ because of the attitude adopted. If a wrong step has been taken, the one concerned can always apologise, and, with Divine forgiveness, seek to make amends, using such failures as stepping-stones to higher endeavours to overcome the world, the flesh, and the Adversary.

A CHRISTMAS MEDITATION

He came to us; and He need not have come. He had all the Father's creation of angelic realms through which to roam if He wished, countless multitudes of sinless beings to do Him homage and with whom He could have fellowship; but He left them behind. This earth was a dark place, dark with sin and wretchedness, its inhabitants violent, lustful, cruel; and they hated Him. Yet He came.

**"His Father's house of light,
His glory-circled throne,
He left, for earthly night,
For wanderings sad and lone.
He left it all for me—
Have I left aught for Thee?"**

That was why He came. He came for me, that I might be delivered from this dark abyss of sin, and rejoice in the glorious liberty of the children of God. He came for my fellows, too, that they also might be rescued in like fashion. He came to establish His Father's

Kingdom here on earth; that Kingdom which is already supreme in every other sphere of the Father's creation. He came to afford all men a full, fair, free opportunity of eternal life.

**"He breaks the power of reigning sin,
And sets the prisoner free.
His blood can make the foulest clean.
His blood availed for me."**

He came because He was the only one Who could possibly come. He was the greatest in all God's creation, and only the greatest could make the greatest sacrifice. And His sacrifice was the greatest. No creature in all Heaven and in all earth will ever be able to make so great a sacrifice again. He Who was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich.

**"Man of sorrows! What a name
For the Son of God, Who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim.
Hallelujah! What a Saviour!"**

(Continued on page 141)

THE QUIET TIME



C.T.W.

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

THE AGED SAINT

They call it going downhill when we are growing old,

And speak with mournful accents when our tale is nearly told.

They sigh when talking of the past; the days that used to be,

As if the future were not bright with immortality.

But, oh! we are not doing down—climbing higher and higher,

Until we almost see the mountains that our souls desire.

For if the natural eye grow dim, it is but dim to earth,

While the eye of faith grows keener to perceive the Saviour's worth.

These bygone days, though days of joy, we wish not back again.

Were there not also many days of sorrow and of pain?

But in the days awaiting us, the days beyond the tomb,

Sorrow shall find no place, but joy unmarred forever bloom.

TENDERNESS

Tenderness does not mean weakness, softness, effeminateness. It is consistent with strength, manliness, truth, and bravery. It does not show itself alone in the touch, but in unselfishness, thoughtfulness, consideration, forbearance, patience, long-suffering. You may not have much of this world's wealth to distribute, but you may give something better and spend a useful and beneficent life, if you will practise this lesson of shedding around you the grace of human tenderness, in word and act.

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.—Rom. 12 : 10.

WALKING CIRCUMSPECTLY

A Christian life is characterised by a certain alertness. "See that ye walk circumspectly," says Paul, "not as fools, but as wise, redeem-

ing the time because the days are evil." Let me give you two other renderings: "Be strictly careful, then, about the life you lead. Act like sensible men, not like thoughtless. Make the very most of your time, for these are evil days." "Therefore be very careful how you live and act; let it not be as unwise men, but as wise. Buy up your opportunities, for these are evil times."

The word "circumspectly" advises a certain watchfulness, being sure of the proper way. It means "Keep your eyes open." It suggests a particular concern about things that threaten the sanctity of life and conduct.

In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.—Philippians 4 : 6.

Prayer changes things; and yet how blind
And slow we are to taste and see
The blessedness that comes to those
Who trust in Thee.

WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS (Matt 6 : 21)

Oh, how precious will be the Heavenly treasures when we view them in the light of the new dispensation—as glorious realities uncorrupted and incorruptible! With what joy shall the faithful begin to realise them when first they hear the Master's welcome "Well done." Then will follow the welcome of all the glorified fellow-members of the anointed body; and if the jubilant songs of the angels hailed the advent of our Lord in the flesh, can we imagine them to be silent when the anointed body is received into glory, their work in the flesh having been finished? Surely not: If "there is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth" the glad notes of jubilee will be raised very high when the Church shall have finished her course and entered into her reward, and as the tidings spread to earth, through the established earthly phase of the kingdom, all creatures in Heaven and in earth will be rejoicing together

(Rev. 5 : 11-13).

"SEEING THAT YE LOOK FOR SUCH THINGS."

A dissertation on
2 Pet. 3: 14

T. H.

When Peter wrote the words of our text (and its context), he and his brethren were passing through a period of intense strain and testing. His nation was at war with the mighty Roman Empire, having been goaded thereto by the harsh tyrannical measures of the Roman Governor. The clash of battle was slowly drawing nearer to the City and Temple, which once had been accounted "holy unto the Lord," and as the victorious troops advanced, desolation spread over the face of the land upon which, in earlier days, the eye of the Lord had lighted with holy pleasure. Many thousands of the rebellious Jews had been slain, many thousands had been sold into slavery, or sent to the galleys—a fate worse than death. Some local successes had keyed up the Jewish spirit to a state of fanatical daring, and many deeds of heroism, as well as of cruelty, were brought by the revenge-smitten bands of untrained and unseasoned men who ventured forth to contest the day with the disciplined armies of Rome.

For a while the events at Rome, such as the death of Nero, and the accession to the throne of two or three usurpers, prevented intense prosecution of the war. This tardiness of military effort encouraged the Jews to fiercer resistance, many interpreting it as an omen of their own victory. The growth of this fanatical combative spirit made life much harder for the Christian believer. Naturally, on account of obeying their Master's teachings, no Christian could join the ranks of the Jewish armies, nor even lend support to the warlike spirit which swept over the nation. Consequently, they were stigmatised as shirkers—traitors against the national cause, and hated and persecuted the more on that account.

The Christian's lot in those days was a heavy one. Persecuted by Rome and its provincial governors, even to the lion, the sword and the flame; hated, harassed and hunted to the death by their own kinsmen, with the ravages of war and desolation daily growing sharper and more widespread, it is not to be wondered at that these despised followers of a hated cause came to think that the whole realm of nature

was closing in upon them, and that the end of the world was near. Peter himself, in a previous letter, had given vent to an almost identical expression, when he assured his scattered brethren that "the end of all things is at hand" (1 Pet. 4: 7). That this was a prevailing idea among the brethren is evidenced also by the words of John (1 John 2: 18), "Little children, it is a last hour" (not the last time, as A.V.), and also of James, "... the coming of the Lord draweth nigh ... behold the Judge standeth at the door" (Jas. 5: 8-9).

We are not concerned at this time with the precise meaning or application of these words of John and James, but quote them only to show that they held thoughts similar to Peter's, and that it was a current understanding among them all, Apostles and brethren alike. They were not at fault in drawing such conclusions from the events and signs of their day, for who among them could escape from the conviction that if Judah fell and was overtaken by destruction, the whole world must suffer destruction too. To their understanding the world was allowed to exist only because of Judah's position in it, and if Judah fell, which among the nations could stand? They lived and worked and wrote their letters, keenly alive to a sense of impending doom—of a world-order about to crash; of a visitation in terrible majesty of the retributive hand of God.

But they had a better side to the story as well. A new heaven and earth was destined to follow the fall of this present world, in which righteousness would dwell, and men should learn to live in peace and concord in harmony with the Will of God. A King (a glorious Sovereign) should reign in righteousness, and of His Kingdom there should be no end.

These things, too, were according to the common understanding of the Church—the Apostles and the brethren as well. But they had to look through the pall of darkness that everywhere lay around into the dim future to envision that better day. How far the golden

future lay ahead on the stream of time no one on earth then knew. As it was, the desirable day lay further on in the mists of to-morrow, while the pall of darkness and doom, and the inhumanities of their kin filled the whole round of experience for to-day. Faith had to pierce the gloom that pressed close on every hand, and hope could only soar through the leaden clouds where love was hot and endurance strong.

The Apostles did not hide from the brethren the risks and dangers of their day—but spake out fully and with emphasis about the tragic events transpiring, and more fearful consequences impending. But they said, with Peter, "seeing that ye know these things," look forward hopefully, never doubting that the Kingdom of God will come, and that His Will shall be done in all the earth, even though to-day the world is rocking and shaking to its destruction.

One kingdom only was destined to withstand the earthquake shocks, and that was the Kingdom of God—the kingdom of their own hopes and expectations, in whose honours and blessings they knew they would participate. Men can stand mid the rending convulsions which shatter nations and kingdoms only when they know that God reigns above the earthquake and the storm, and that His hand can direct and, at need, restrain the mad furies of the depraved human heart.

And so it was that these dear men of God could stand unshaken and undismayed even though the institutions of their fathers, which, having withstood the shocks of time almost unchanged for one and a half thousand years, were, at last, in dissolution before their eyes. What mattered though the heritage of centuries disappeared if only God, and the Word of God continued unchanged and unchangeable? A stalwart faith, deep-rooted and robustly grown, the product of the great Husbandman's prunings and attentions, could look out on the gathering storm, and face even the crashes of a fearful doom, without wincing, and without even the flicker of an eye. And with their own feet firmly planted on the Rock of Ages, the Apostles reached out to help their weaker floundering brethren also to plant their feet firm on the solid rock.

But even when men know these things, it is always very essential that remembrance should be stirred from time to time. Not only are we handicapped by faulty memories, but even courage and resolution tend to evaporate

and wilt under the strain. This calls for the re-bracing of firm intention; the re-fortification of strong determination, and the quickening of faith, and trust in the power of God. Peter said: "... I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them and be established in present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle to stir you up by putting you in remembrance."

Peter thought it was "meet" to say, amid the gathering storm, "Take courage, my brethren, be strong in the Lord. Commit your way unto Him." And Peter was not debarred by a sense of too much originality from repeating himself again, and yet again, if only their pure minds could be stirred up thereby.

To-day another cycle of God's Times and Seasons is almost run. Another conjunction of the Ages has come with all the stress and strain that these transition epochs bring. Another hour of destiny is about to strike, and tell a seething world that another day—man's day—is nearly done. Again, but this time on a larger scale, the hand of God is lying heavy on the race, and the whole world, not Jewry alone, is about to feel its chastening power. The institutions of men, built by human hands, and run according to human unwisdom, are reeling and tottering beneath its blows. Twice within one generation the nations have bathed their swords in each other's blood, and made ten thousand times ten thousand stricken hearts to mourn. Multitudes of widowed and sireless outcasts have groaned and still groan out their sorrow to the skies—and not yet is the end of the shamble come. The inventive power of man has been harnessed to destruction's chariots, and a thousand dreadful weapons has been the result. The man of science, with all the skill and technique of the laboratory has forged a "great sword," and thereby the dread carnage of war has been increased manifold. Never before, since man began to fight has such terrible destruction been within his ruthless grasp. And amid all the din of exploding shot and shell hymns of hate are rising to the skies—the hearts of men thus keeping step with their destructive implements. "Global war" and "total war" to-day crowns the follies of nineteen centuries, while scorched earth and total ruin mark the ebb and flow of the ungoverned tidal waves of war. From pole to pole the surging current engulfs all nations in its resistless sweep, from the meridian where the day is born in full

circumference, to where the same day dies, every race and people are caught up in the swirl of the everflowing flood—and there is no escape!

Is it true that there is no escape from this universal deluge? For the nations, No! For the believing child of God, Yes! Colossal and widespread though this stranglehold of death appears to be, it is not the biggest thing in the affairs of men. The Plan of God, working onward in its resistless sweep towards its still far-off Divine Event, is greater far, and much more comprehensive in its grip upon the universal state of things. Just in as much as God is incomparably great above man, and heaven is immeasurably high above the earth, so is the Plan of God transcendent in its magnitude above all the works of men, be they bad or good. This is the bedrock of the Christian's comfort in these tumultuous days. If he (or she) can but rise to the height of his (or her) calling to become an associate of Christ Jesus in the honours and dignities He had so rightly won, then he (or she) can stand among the rending kingdoms, and, amid mad passion's tempest blast be at peace in God, and know that His way is best.

It will be the Christian's privilege to know that the voice of Scripture is speaking out again, not merely in that local, temporary and preliminary sense which Peter and his brethren heard when the prophecies were applied to old Jerusalem and to the ill-fated and cold-hearted people whose day of grace was at an end. The Christian may yet come to understand that that unparalleled visitation was the last item in the long series of types and patterns which brought to its climax the whole system of types and shadows of which the priesthood and its sacrifices had been the central core. The acquisition of that understanding, in all its bearings, may then enable the student to see that while the preliminary application of the Old Testament prophecies to Jerusalem and the Jew was strictly in keeping with that kindergarten stage of God's purposes (and was mostly definitely a fulfilment, in part), the greater, completer, and full-scale fulfilment belongs to these later days, and to a wider stage than the House of Judah alone.

The voice of the Living God will then begin to speak again through the words of the ancient prophecies, and make their accents of warning and encouragement become supercharged with living vital power—with the

Spirit of Almighty God. Then they that wait on the Lord will be able to place the events of these tumultuous days into their right and precise relationship to all the long train of inter-related events which belong to this transitional period.

What can we say of these things to-day? We have now endured (nearly) four full years of war conditions. Our liberties and privileges have been greatly curtailed in many ways. Our duties and obligations have been greatly increased. Our food supplies, though still more than adequate, are less varied than before, and tend to become monotonous. The strain of life is heavier and more exacting, fears for the safety of home and loved ones creep into every heart, while the long-drawn unceasing tension frays the nerves and disturbs the mind. Even in the best places in the earth, humanity cannot suppress, at times, the sigh of boredom and weariness, nor check the unspoken wish that all these disturbing happenings were at an end. And when, above all which we ourselves experience, comes the heart-rending stories of those who have lost all they once possessed, and have neither food nor work nor comfort—unwilling victims of the world's dread spasm of inhumanity—then no longer can we suppress the pent-up cry, "How long, O Lord, how long ere Thy Kingdom come to terminate this night of sin and shame?"

The world talks in "millions" to-day—millions of soldiers, millions of money, and millions of sufferers—numbers which stagger and benumb the brain. It is a day of big things, of concentrations, of forces too vast to calculate. The very bigness of it all overwhelms and crushes by its immensity, and we might come to feel that we are but as tiny grains of sand beneath the wheel-tracks of an armada of colossal juggernauts, whose sole purpose was to crush humankind to formless pulp.

It is at such times that the child of God should call to mind Whose he is, and Whom he serves, and that the Hand that shapes his little life can rule the world. He should remember that his spell of madness is but a short interlude upon the stream of time, and that even the whole period of the reign of sin and death is but a small episode in its relation to that mighty Plan, which designs to make the earth (yea, and the things of heaven as well) into one brotherhood, submissive to the

Heaven of Christ and God. Let him think that this brotherhood is the one really "big thing" of measured time, and of an unmeasured eternity to come. It will consist of "millions of millions" of souls, and things, and years. Every willing living soul of man, since the race began and every radiant approved angel of God, with all the wealth of earth and sea and sky, for all the unending ages yet to be, will be the constituent elements of that great fraternity, into which neither sin, nor sorrow, nor death will ever intrude again.

To be in Christ is to be an associate in the "big thing," to be a child of God is to have a place in the universal family, and though these are but the introductory days, **the big thing is beginning to be.** The power of God is creating the foundation of the edifice—a foundation laid in heaven, in the person of His well-beloved Son, and they who know the Lord and share His sufferings are being built up and knit up into Him. No human war or conflict can thwart or retard that constructive work. It goes right on, in war or peace, without concurrence of king or parliament, year in, year out, till the body of Christ is complete.

Then another stage will come, and reach its consummation too, and so, till the whole structure is complete.

One thing only can sully your prospects, brethren in the Lord, and deprive you of your inheritance in Christ. That one thing is your loss of grip or interest. To loose your hold upon the promises and prospects of the future "Day," and permit yourself to sink into the black pit of doubt or unbelief or neglect, is the only way to forfeit the inheritance you have been called to share.

When the long-drawn tedious days, or the overweight of strain tends to stifle your love, or crush your hope, and deaden your faith, call to mind that the promise is sure to those that endure to the end. "We count them happy that endure." "He that endureth to the end shall be saved."

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in His sight . . . beware lest . . . ye fall from your own steadfastness . . . But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"A Christmas Meditation" (continued from page 136)

He came to tell men of His plans for their future happiness, how that even their killing of Him will not frustrate His hold over them. For He comes again to bring them all to Himself. And as assurance of that restoration, He has left His followers behind to go on telling men of the glorious Kingdom which will follow earth's dark night of sin, when men will walk along and up the Highway of Holiness to full acceptance of salvation in Christ. For to Him will every knee on earth bow, as does every knee in Heaven.

**"One offer of salvation
To all the world make known.
'Tis Jesus Christ, the First and Last,
He saves, and He alone."**

He came; and He comes again. Not now as a babe in a manger, but a glorious heavenly Being, armed with all power in Heaven and earth. He comes to gather His Church to be with Him, and only those who are watching for His appearing will see Him thus come. He comes revealed in consuming fire for the destruction of all those institutions of men which

stand in the way of His incoming Kingdom. He comes in resplendent glory so that all men know that He has come, and at once speaks peace to the nations.

"Down the minster aisles of splendour, from
betwixt the cherubim,
Through the wondering throng, with
motion strong and fleet.
Sounds His victor tread approaching, with a
music far and dim,
The music of the coming of His feet.
"He is coming, O my spirit, with His ever-
lasting peace,
With His blessedness immortal and
complete,
He is coming, O my spirit, and His com-
ing brings release,
I listen for the coming of His feet."

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder. And His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.".....

The Gathering at Glasgow, Sunday, 10th October, 1943.

The brethren meeting at the Royal Institute, Glasgow, held a Home Gathering on Sunday, 10th October. Over 100 brethren were in attendance, and about a dozen different places round about Glasgow were represented. A very gratifying feature was that brethren who held differing points of view regarding the out-working of the Divine Plan met in enjoyable fellowship. The morning session opened with a devotional half-hour, after which Bro. Morton Edgar spoke on the subject "Not by bread alone."

The Spirit of God descended on Jesus as He came up from the waters of baptism. He had covenanted with God to give His human life for the life of the world; and God there began His greatest creative work, the New Creation, a Divine family of which Jesus Christ is the Head.

Under the Law Jesus knew the Law and the Prophets; but with the aid of the Holy Spirit He became able to perceive the spiritual depths of the Old Testament. He concentrated His new mind upon His Father's Word during his wilderness experience for forty days.

As Moses was forty days in the Mount to learn of God's ways, so Jesus now learned God's higher ways, in the spiritual sphere. He saw before Him the narrow way of suffering and death, and did not turn back.

At the end of the forty days Jesus hungered; and Satan took the opportunity to tempt Him. Jesus knew how the people of Israel had failed when God proved them by hunger in the wilderness, so that they demanded bread. God was displeased with them, but gave them the manna.

Because Jesus resisted Satan, and was willing to await God's good pleasure, He Himself became that heavenly Manna, which if a man eat he shall never die, as He said, referring to Himself: "This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever" (John 6: 57, 58).

As Jesus foiled Satan by the right application of the Word of God, so we, the sons of God, must overcome Satan by rightly dividing the Word of Truth, and by letting the Spirit of the Word abide in us.

After the morning session there was an interval for tea and fellowship, and the happy faces brought to mind the words of the Psalmist: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." The afternoon session opened with a helpful text and testimony meeting, of which advantage was taken to the full. This was followed by a discourse by Bro. A. D. Kirkwood on the subject "Ye are my friends" (John 15: 14). He said the term friend did not suggest a lower relationship than brother or son. It was not in competition with, but the consummation of, these and any other kinships. The friendship visualised by the Lord was the closest possible, so much so that he wanted to make His continual abode with us. When we are told that this indwelling is by His Spirit it means that it is a real thing accomplished by means of His Spirit. It is a fact that He is "Nearer to us than breathing, closer than hands or feet." The undisturbed sense of the Lord's presence with us at all times and in all places would mean the highest blessedness possible here on earth. It would also result in our transformation into character likeness to Himself. To enjoy this closest possible friendship we must be continually "tuned in" to the Lord's wave length. Warlike conditions make this difficult, and the effort must be exerted to counteract the unsettling influences of to-day. We must not neglect time for unhurried daily prayer, daily Bible reading and meeting for fellowship with the brethren as often as possible. Only if we keep His commandments are we His friends, Jesus says. Summarised, this means His will as revealed to us, including the promptings of His Spirit, which are increasingly perceived the closer our friendship becomes. Only if the prayer of our life daily is "Lord Jesus make Thyself to me, a living bright reality," and we accompany it with obedience, shall we enjoy here and hereafter the fulness of the Father's blessing.

There was no evening session, and the brethren parted with the strains of "Blest be the tie that binds" ringing in their ears and in their hearts, and feeling like saying with Jacob of old, "Verily God is in this place."

A Christmas Bible Study.

(1) The Son of God: Psalms 2; 7, 72; 1, Proverbs 30; 4, Daniel 3; 25, Matthew 3; 17, 17; 5, Mark 1; 1, Luke 1; 35, John 1; 34-50, 3; 16-18, 20; 31, Romans 1; 4, Hebrews 1; 1-5, I John 4; 14, Revelation 1; 5-6.

(2) The Son of Man: Psalms 8; 4-5, Daniel 7; 13, Matthew 16; 13, 26; 64, John 1; 51, 3; 13, 5; 27, Hebrews 2; 7, Revelation 1; 13, 14; 14.

(3) The Holy One, or Saint: Deuteronomy 33; 8, Psalms 16; 10, 89; 19, Isaiah 10; 17, 29; 23, 49; 7, Hosea 11; 9, Habakkuk 1; 12, 3; 3, Mark 1; 24, Luke 1; 35, 4; 34, I John 2; 20.

(4) The Saint of Saints: Daniel 92; 24.

(5) The Just One, or Righteous: Psalms 24; 19-21, Isaiah 41; 2, Jeremiah 23; 5, Zechariah 9; 9, Matthew 27; 19-24, Luke 1; 17, 23; 47, Acts 3; 14, 7; 52, 22; 4, James 5; 6, I John 2; 1, 29.

(6) The Wisdom of God: Proverbs 8; 22, 30, Matthew 11; 19, Luke 11; 49, I Corinthians 1; 24.

(7) The Oracle (or Word) of the Lord, or of God: Genesis 15; 1-3, I Samuel 10; 10, II Samuel 7; 4, I Kings 17; 8-24, Psalms 33; 6, Isaiah 40; 8, Jeremiah 25; 3, Micah 4; 2, Luke 1; 2, John 1; 1-4, 3; 3-4, Hebrews 4; 12, 11; 8, I Peter 1; 23, II Peter 3; 5, Revelation 19; 13.

(8) The Redeemer or Saviour: Genesis 8; 16, Job 19; 25-27, Psalms 49; 14, Isaiah 41; 14, 44; 6, 47; 4, 59; 20, 62; 11, 63; 1, Jeremiah 50; 24, Matthew 1; 21, Luke 2; 11, John 1; 29, 4; 42, Acts 5; 21, Romans 11; 26, Revelation 5; 9.

(9) The Lamb of God: Isaiah 53; 7, John 1;

29, Acts 8; 32, 35, I Peter 1; 19, Revelation 5; 6, 13; 8, 15; 3, 21; 22, 22; 1.

(10) The Mediator, Intercessor, or Advocate: Job 33; 23, Isaiah 53; 12, 59; 16, Luke 23; 34, I Timothy 2; 5, Hebrews 9; 15, I John 2; 1, Revelation 5; 9.

(11) Shiloh, The Apostle: Genesis 49; 10, Exodus 4; 13, Matthew 15; 24, Luke 4; 18, John 17; 3, 20; 21, Hebrews 3; 1.

(12) The High Priest: Psalms 110; 4, Isaiah 59; 16, Hebrews 3; 1, 4; 15, 5; 10, 9; 11.

(13) The Prophet like Moses: Deuteronomy 18; 15-19, Luke 24; 19, Matthew 6; 15, John 1; 17-21, 6; 14, Acts 3; 22, 23.

(14) The Leader, or Chief Captain: Joshua 5; 14, I Chronicles 5; 2, Isaiah 55; 4, Daniel 9; 25, Micah 5; 2, Matthew 2; 6, Hebrews 2; 10.

(15) The Messiah, Christ, King of Israel: I Samuel 2; 10, II Samuel 7; 12, I Chronicles 17; 11, Psalms 2; 2, 45; 1, 6, 72; 1, 89; 38, Isaiah 61; 1, Daniel 9; 26, Matthew 2; 2-4, Matthew 16; 16, Luke 23; 2, John 1; 41-49, 6; 69, Acts 4; 26, 27, 10; 38.

(16) The God of Israel: Exodus 24; 10, 11, Joshua 7; 19, Judges 11; 23, I Samuel 5; 11, I Chronicles 17; 24, Psalms 41; 13, Isaiah 46; 3, Ezekiel 8; 4, Matthew 15; 31, John 20; 28.

(17) The Lord of Hosts, or The Lord: II Samuel 7; 26, I Chronicles 17; 24, Psalms 24; 10, Isaiah 6; 1-5, Malachi 1; 14, Romans 12; 19, Philippians 2; 9-11.

(18) King of Kings, and Lord of Lords: Psalms 89; 27, 110; 1, Daniel 7; 13, 14, Matthew 28; 18, John 3; 35, 13; 3, I Corinthians 15; 25, Ephesians 1; 20, 22, Colossians 3; 1, Revelation 19; 16.

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THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES

Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones provides a very eloquent picture of Israel's national regathering. There is much in the account to give food for thought. In the first place, Ezekiel saw a valley, or more properly, as the margin has it, a "champaign"—wide level expanse of meadowland—strewn with bones, the bones of the House of Israel. There could not be a more vivid indication of the apparent hopelessness of Israel's position. A battlefield, strewn with the remains of the fallen, unburied, cared for by no man. But there is a stirring, a shaking, and bone joins to bone, becoming the frames of men. The flesh appears, growing on to the bones; and skin, covering the flesh and giving those reconstituted bodies the appearance of men. But they are dead men; there is no life in them. A sonorous voice from the heavens, "Come and breathe upon these slain, O breath, that they may live." And the breath came down, and entered into their nostrils, and their breasts heaved, and their eyelids flickered and opened, and they stood upright upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

There is a vital principle marked out here, and we should base our prophetic expectation upon the truth thus indicated. The bones came together, and the bodies were rebuilt, but there was no life in them until the Spirit of God came upon them. We may well liken the shaking and coming together of the bones to the first efforts of man to bring about the restoration of Israel—those attempts of the nineteenth century by men such as Rothschild to create settlements in the Holy Land; movements such as Zionism having for their object the creation of a Jewish people in a Jewish State. These things, largely secular, not always inspired by religious ideals, were like the joining together of the bones—mechanical,

not held together by any living spirit or life-giving process. More like certain types of wooden puppets, the arms and legs of which are held together by pieces of wire.

Now we are in the second phase. The flesh is coming upon the bones. The first crude attempts at organisation are giving place to a much more reasoned ideal of a national order in which the regathered people will take their place as one of the nations of the world. There is a measure—as yet a woefully small measure—of possession. Some degree of material prosperity is being attained. Palestine has its own coinage, its own postal system, its own railways and industries. It has its own University and Hebrew has become a living language once more. The bones are being clothed with flesh.

One day, a day yet in the future, the skin will clothe the rebuilt body—the nation will stand before men quite self-contained and capable of conducting its national life. It will be a complete body in itself, entire in all its parts. But, as with Adam before God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, that nation will still be dead. Still ineffective. It will require the inbreathing of the Divine Spirit to enable it to stand upon its feet and commence to work out its glorious destiny. And so, while we can now see the flesh coming upon the bones and stand almost within sight of the time when the skin will cover the body, we must look for a day when a new spirit takes possession of the regathered people and they stand up before men, not in their own strength, but in the strength and power of their God. Only then will they be ready to withstand the terrific onslaught of nations which is called by Jeremiah the time of Jacob's Trouble, and which will mark the full end of this Age and the establishment of the Kingdom.

ANONYMOUS.

We would acknowledge with appreciation the receipt of anonymous donations of £1 (Oct.) and £1 (Nov.).

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