

THE
SCRIPTURES
OPENED

—
ASHCROFT.

THOUGHTS AND THEMES

FOR BIBLE STUDENTS

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The Scriptures Opened

Ashcroft, Robert

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Booth
Oregon Bible College
From
Nellie Ling

A FEW TESTIMONIALS

FROM PROMINENT BRETHREN CONCERNING THE MERITS
OF THE WITHIN WORK,
"SCRIPTURES OPENED."

*(From an old veteran in the Truth, Benjamin Wilson,
Sacramento, Cal.)*

"The book you sent is at hand; I like it very much. It is written in a kind, attractive, Christian spirit, calculated to win and instruct the reader in the deep things of God as revealed in His Word."

(From H. C. Jacobs, 5648 Wentworth Avenue, Englewood, Ill.)

"I have been reading the book 'Scriptures Opened,' and, with very few exceptions, I am very much pleased with what I have read. It is very seldom that we read a book, especially on religious subjects, that reflects all our own ideas. If it were so, we would learn nothing by the reading. His style is elegant, and his testimonies are presented in a manner that must be convincing to every honest inquirer after truth. I think it will prove to be one of the best volumes in our literature, and I sincerely wish it might have a very large circulation. There is, however, very little demand for books that advocate the *truth*. The masses have no taste for anything so elevating and refining as this book presents."

(From J. L. Wince, Pierceton, Ind.)

“DEAR BROTHER: The book, ‘Scriptures Opened,’ came duly to hand. In the reading of it I am not only well pleased, but delighted, with its style of thought and language. The author’s statements of the truth are clear as sunbeams. His criticisms are just and logical, and though they lay bare popular theories, they do not unnecessarily provoke the bad temper of those of his readers who may differ with him. There is something about his manner of argument easier felt than described, and which is calculated to conciliate his antagonist and put him on good terms with the author. His Christian boldness, conjoined with his humility and kindness of heart, wins and holds the admiration of the reader. All these and more are interwoven in the composition of the book, and for this reason it is certainly a good work to put into the hands of those of our religious friends who have a disposition to give some attention to our side of the important questions of difference between us. It should be read by all who share with us the faith and hope of the apostolic gospel.”

(From J. H. Thomas, Rochester, N. Y.)

“I have examined the book, and must say of it that it is well and ably written. Sound in ‘the faith’ and beautifully expressed; mild and gentle in spirit, well calculated for the intelligent believers, and the learned among outsiders. Its style also will recommend itself to the ordinary reader.”

(From W. H. Wilson, Hammond, Ia.)

“DEAR BROTHER: Received the book you sent, entitled the ‘Scriptures Opened,’ by R. Ashcroft. I have read the work with a great deal of pleasure and profit. He has suc-

ceeded in opening the Scriptures in a very clear and concise manner. The Scriptures used in support of the themes under consideration are correctly and aptly applied. His arguments drawn from the Sacred Word are to the point and very forcible.

“The general scope of the work shows that the writer is a literary man and a scholar, and as a consequence the *truth* is dressed in a creditable manner. No one need to be ashamed to place the work in the hands of the most educated.

“Doctrinally the work voices my own convictions, and I can honestly recommend it to the brotherhood at large. It ought to be in every home, and I hope the brethren will do all they can to give the work a wide circulation.”

(From J. T. Waggoner, Rochester, Ind.)

“DEAR BROTHER WOODRUFF: Your favor and book received. To say that I am well pleased with the work would but faintly express the high esteem in which I hold it. I regard it as the most valuable acquisition that has yet been made to our literature. The work breathes throughout that sweet spirit of our Blessed Master—a spirit that is often lacking in some otherwise able efforts to present the truth. I am irresistibly drawn toward Brother Ashcroft as I read the masterly arguments with which he demolishes the orthodox strongholds. There is absolutely nothing left but the scattered and blackened ruins of the tower in which a false religion has sheltered itself through the dense fog of ignorance. That, thank God, has been dissipated by the bright rays of the truth. Many efforts have been made to establish the great cardinal truths ‘that are most surely believed among us,’ but it has been reserved for Brother Ashcroft to deal the most ponderous sledge-hammer blows that have been dealt against human tradition in this age. Brother Ashcroft possesses

that rare faculty of grasping the strongholds of the enemy and turning their own weapons against themselves.

“The mighty problem that has vexed the brains of millions, ‘Does Death End All?’ is so thoroughly answered, that no appeal can, or will be made.”

(From John Goodliff, Roselle, N. J.).

“DEAR BROTHER WOODRUFF: I am reading the book ‘Scriptures Opened.’ I must write to tell you how much I enjoy it. Brother Ashcroft has a manner of expression quite his own, beautiful and convincing, and cannot help but interest and instruct the inquirer after truth. The beauty, harmony, and glory that gild the sacred page are brought out in a masterly manner. My heart is stirred while reading. The book is an enjoyable feast all the way through, and ought to do much good.”

Brethren A. J. Eychauer, G. W. Myers, George Balmain, all have written of their appreciation of the book, and whose judgment can safely be depended on regarding its merits.

THE SCRIPTURES OPENED

THOUGHTS AND THEMES

FOR

BIBLE STUDENTS

Lectures and Miscellaneous Papers Exhibiting the Revealed Purpose of God Concerning the Earth and all its Families. What we are, and what we may become. The Nature, Extent, Epoch, and Method of our Christian Redemption.

BY

ROBERT ASHCROFT,

*Formerly Minister of the Congregational Church, Rock Ferry,
Liverpool, England.*

"I have grounded my preaching upon the literal word; he that pleases may follow me, he that will not may stay."—LUTHER.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—ISAIAH.

"Search the scriptures."—JESUS.

"Saying none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come."—PAUL.

"If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God."—PETER.

THIRD EDITION

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR

AT

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1891

Dedication.

**TO THE PEOPLE WHO ARE SPRINKLED WITH THE BLOOD OF JESUS,
THROUGH THE CONFESSION OF THE TRUTH CONCERNING
HIS KINGDOM AND THE PATIENT WAITING FOR
THE GLORY SOON TO BE REVEALED, IS
THIS BOOK DEDICATED BY
THEIR FRIEND AND COMPANION, IN THE
FAITH AND HOPE OF THE GOSPEL,
THE AUTHOR.**

PREFACE.

HERE are some of the author's public utterances and contributions to various magazines and papers published in England during the years 1876-85. He has yielded to the desire of a generous friend for their issue in a more convenient and less ephemeral form.

Occasional sameness and repetition of argument and phrase are due to the fact that the matter here set forth was not originally intended to make a book.

The reader who has been perplexed by the startling contrast in doctrine and practice between modern and Apostolic Christianity, will find these pages interesting and perhaps profitable in unexpected ways. All who are in search of a reasonable faith, founded exclusively on the Scriptures, are earnestly recommended to compare the following pages with the Inspired Word.

The "Bible Companion," to be found at the end of the volume, is in daily and very profitable use by many on both sides of the Atlantic. It was drawn up by one of the author's personal friends. These "Tables" conduct us through the Old Testament once, and through the New Testament twice a year. If habitually followed, they may prove the most valuable part of the book.

TORONTO, CANADA,
January, 1891.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IT is now five years since "Scriptures Opened" was given to the public. During this period the book has proved its usefulness in confirming the conclusions of many intelligent readers, and in helping others out of the doubts and perplexities arising from an acceptance of the traditional theology. There is now a call for another edition. If it had been practicable the writer would have gladly revised these pages, in the hope of making some parts of the volume more effective, and bringing others into better agreement with the results of recent study. But circumstances forbid this attempt, and the book must again go forth in its original form.

Its title may sound somewhat pretentious, and a word of explanation or apology on this point may not be out of place. The conviction of the writer has long been that, to use the language of Rothe: "Our key does not open, the right key is lost, and till we are put in possession of it again our exposition will never succeed. The system of biblical ideas is not that of our schools; and so long as we attempt exegesis without it, the Bible will remain a half-closed book. We must enter with other conceptions than those which we have been accustomed to think the only possible ones." The doctrine of "the kingdom of God," as originating in the covenants made with the fathers of Israel, understood in their plain grammatical sense, is beyond all doubt *the missing key*. This doctrine introduces the most beautiful harmony and simplicity into the sacred writings, and fortifies the reader, as no other system of interpretation can, against the assaults of

unbelief. There are many parts of Scripture which present stupendous difficulties both to the reason and the moral sense when viewed in an isolated way. And this, be it observed, is the only way in which skeptical writers treat any portion of the record. Unless the reader is acquainted with the purpose of God, as unfolded in the writings of the prophets, and can discern the relation which all parts of Scripture sustain to that purpose, he will be but poorly equipped for the battle of faith. Theodore Parker's view was, that, "Here [in the Bible] are the works of various writers, thrown capriciously together, and united by no common tie but the lids of the bookbinder." If this were so, there would be an end to all controversy on the subject. But, if it can be shown that each book included in the Canon of Scripture, and each portion of each book, belongs to one great system of truth, which is gradually developed through all, the matter will at once assume a very different complexion. Destructive criticism can be only effectually disarmed *in this one way*. As an able writer has pointed out with reference to the Pentateuch: "The inspiration of the books of Moses is shown, not by this or that statement, but by their design as a whole and their relationship to the rest of the Word, and to effectually invalidate it, men must show that the design contemplated, partly become history, is unworthy of God, defective in adaptation, and sustains no relation to the final results proposed." In this way all the apparently hard places of Scripture become susceptible of a comparatively easy understanding. The glorious plan and purpose running through all these writings, *as a golden thread*, interpret for us many otherwise insoluble difficulties. This is altogether lost sight of alike by the advocates of the "Higher Criticism" and by our prominent men of science. The teachings of these men are readily indorsed by the multitudes who have no means of verifying them for

themselves; and so-called "scientific" conclusions unfavorable to the infallibility of the sacred records are paraded in the pulpit, and put forward in works of fiction like "Robert Elsmere," and in magazines and reviews, with an air of dogmatism and assurance which impress the popular imagination, and which is evidently leading to the culminated antagonism to Divine truth which the Word itself predicts as one of the chief characteristics of the closing years of the Gentile dispensation. Some of the hypotheses of modern science have a look of great plausibility, and are set forth with a degree of confidence (sometimes amounting to arrogance) that appears to protect them against all possibility of denial or doubt. Every scrap of apparent evidence that can be used to discredit the Bible with the least show of probability is eagerly used to that intent. It is convenient for these men to ignore the fact that even Copernicus, the founder of modern astronomy, only regarded his system as "an assumption, temporary and incapable of demonstration." Such words as "hypotheses," "views," "systems," etc., so freely used by natural philosophers, are proof that their conclusions are largely of a mere theoretical character. We believe that a triumph is yet in store for the Bible over all the speculations of men; and that, in a much more comprehensive sense than is at present imagined, those words of Holy Writ will be fulfilled: "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness;" "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man that they are vain;" "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." Indeed, it is abundantly evident that "*The Kingdom of God*" is the only *Key* that will unlock the Sacred Scripture from end to end.

5 PARKVIEW AVENUE, TORONTO, CANADA

August, 1895.

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PART I.



Bible Lectures.

LECTURE I.

ARE WE DEATHLESS?

THE object of this address is to call attention to what in our judgment is the general teaching of the Scriptures concerning the nature of man and his state in death, how he stands related to the all-absorbing question of immortality; whether, if he dies, he continues *in any sense* to live, and what are the facts and considerations which govern the whole subject so far as we are able to gather them from an impartial study of the sacred records which we mutually revere.

The public mind has of late years shown a disposition to look more narrowly into these things, and many ministers and clergymen of undoubted ability and earnestness have come to the conclusion we shall endeavor to establish. Mr. Henry Constable, Mr. Samuel Minton, Mr. Ed. White, Mr. R. W. Dale, and many others whose names are less familiar, have at various times undertaken the exposition and defense of the doctrine of "conditional immortality." There is indeed an association which has been formed for the purpose of promulgating that doctrine. I do not myself belong to that association, and desire to have the question before us considered without regard to the opinions of men, or the tenets of any particular sect.

It will scarcely be felt that any apology is needed for an address on a topic like this. We have all felt a strong wish to

know (if possible) what lies beyond the grave. Death is an event which impends in all cases. At the longest, a very few years will, in the natural order of things, bring each of us into personal conflict with the last enemy. Human life upon the earth is universally felt to be a span and a shadow. There is nothing very substantial and satisfying about it. The Psalmist asks: "Wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?" The crowds that are lying in the cemetery were once youthful and vigorous, and as full of care or hope as any of us now may be. And, for anything we can tell, we shall soon be as they, and the places that know us now will know us no more for ever. Whatever, therefore, you may think as to the question of human destiny, you will no doubt be prepared to grant that it is one which comes home to every individual in a way no other question does.

Are we deathless? The inquiry would be met in different ways by different people, according to the degrees of attention they have given to the subject. Some would treat it with utter indifference and unconcern as one of no practical moment. Their motto is "One world at a time." They say the present life is the only life of which we have, or can have, any knowledge; and they advise the making the best possible use of it by extracting from it all the gratification it can be made to yield, leaving the future to take care of itself. Indeed, some go so far as to seriously doubt the desirability of a second state of existence, though they would not object to a prolongation of the present life beyond its present limits under agreeable conditions. It is their contention that we ought philosophically to face the fact of death, and try to reconcile ourselves to the inevitable, without even indulging hope in the direction of a future state. John Stuart Mill, however, considered that though there were, in his opinion, no very solid grounds for such a hope to rest upon, it was not

yet entirely unreasonable. I have met with several thoughtful persons who professed themselves quite content to pass forever into the oblivion of the grave. They had schooled themselves to regard such a destiny as the only possible contingency, and for them it had neither alarm, sadness, nor interest of any kind. They were willing when the time arrived, quietly to lie down, and take their eternal rest.

Another class, more devout, consists of those who hold that, though immortality is to be earnestly desired, the subject is outside our knowledge and determination. We must (say they) do the best we can—be just and kind, and pure in all our dealings, and be content to leave what is uncertain and distant in the hands of God, who, they believe, will take a benevolent and merciful view of our ignorance, and act toward us wisely and well.

Then there are those who take positive ground in relation to the subject, and contend very sincerely that the human race is immortal. They seek to support this contention by a variety of plausible arguments, partly of a philosophical, and partly of a scriptural character. Stress is laid on the desire for immortality so generally prevalent. A sort of instinctive longing after it, which most men have felt, is held a presumption in its favor, though of course it does not prove it. Just as all other forms of human desire point to the means of their gratification, so the desire for endless life is an indication that it is probable, though not absolutely certain, in all cases. The fallacy of this argument appears to me to be twofold. In the first place there are numerous exceptions (some of them conspicuous and cultivated) to the alleged universality of such a desire; and in the second place, it is notorious that human beings seldom get all they would like to have. Many very ardently wish for things that must always remain beyond their reach. Granted, therefore, that the

desire for immortality widely exists; this cannot prove it to be a present possession. On the contrary, men cease to hope for that they already have; and if they are only longing for anything, it is proof positive that they as yet have it not.

But we are also reminded, that in all nations there has ever existed a sort of intuitive impression that man was a deathless being. I have not a sufficient acquaintance with the thoughts of all nations to justify any denial or qualification of this statement, but would suggest that even if it were indisputable, it would form only a poor kind of evidence on the subject. All nations have for generations held erroneous ideas on a variety of matters, and have become possessed of them nobody knows how. Each succeeding generation accepts the beliefs of its ancestors without much hesitation or inquiry, and nothing is easier to propagate than a notion born of ignorance and superstition. We ought not to allow ignorance, however widely spread and continuous, to sit in judgment upon knowledge. The greatest facts and discoveries in science have but slowly gained ground upon the credulity of the uncultivated sections of society. The general assent of mankind can be cited on behalf of some very monstrous propositions. Besides, where one man may say, I feel and know that I am immortal; another might assert the very contrary, and declare himself the subject of diametrically opposite sensations. Mere assertion, based upon preference, or longing, or fear, would prove nothing on either side, except the reality and strength of individual opinion. Many a lunatic has imagined himself the central figure in a royal pageant, or had "an intuitive impression" that he was the embodiment of wisdom and all around him mad. We must learn to discount such impressions.

It is further attempted to prove man's inherent immortality by assumptions relating to the phenomena of mind.

He can think, and reason, and remember. Instinct prompts each bird, in every generation, to build its nest in the same way; but man is always varying and improving upon his architectural models. This and similar facts are held to point to an essential difference between the mentality of man and that of the lower animals. And this difference is supposed to involve a pledge of immortality, and to indicate the possession by man of an intellectual nature which survives the dissolution of the body. See, too, how capable he is of Divine thoughts. The beast never prays to a Supreme Being, and is incapable of conceiving the idea of an endless life. Man can do both. He is a moral being. And this is why we regard with such widely different sensations the brute which kills its offspring, and the man who murders his child.

I have no wish to diminish the force of any argument based upon facts of this description. There is but a faint analogy between the mental nature of a beast and that of a human being in a state of average cultivation. But I fail to see how this necessarily proves man to be immortal. Because these extraordinary mental powers are liable to decay before death takes place. Men who have attained great intellectual eminence often pass into a second childhood, and become utterly and hopelessly incapacitated for every kind of useful work. The powers of the mind too are suspended in dreamless slumber, or concussion of the brain. A laboring man receives a heavy blow on the head, and wonders where he is when he wakes up in the ward of a hospital. He does not even know how he came to receive the injury which brought him there. If, as is often alleged, the mind sustained the same relation to the body that the musician does to his instrument, the mind would be aware that the body had been hurt. Whereas in such cases as I have mentioned total unconsciousness supervenes, and the man knows not any-

thing. Any form of animal life would share the same suspension of its mentality under similar circumstances.

This fact (which is too well attested to be denied), seems to prove that mind depends upon the living brain, and is a product of it. Accordingly you will invariably find that great thinkers have superior cerebral organizations, while natural idiots have retreating foreheads or some other defect of brain structure which no possible amount of training would ever overcome.

But there are some arguments based upon the language of Scripture in the attempt to prove man a deathless being. Stress is laid upon the revealed fact that God made man in His own image; and as God is immortal, it is argued that this human image of Him must be immortal too. . We beg to suggest that this by no means necessarily follows. God is more than immortal—He is all-powerful and all-wise; but no one would ever think that because man was made in His image he is omnipotent and omniscient too. The apostle Paul (Col. iii. 10) speaks of the new man in Christ, who, he says, "is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." And in Ephesians iv. 24, he further says that this new man "is after God created in righteousness and true holiness"—or, as the margin has it, "holiness of truth." Man, therefore, appears to have been originally created in God's image, in these senses:—he had knowledge; he was upright and innocent, holy and true; he had an intellectual and moral nature which placed him at the head of the animal creation. Some further contend that he bore a physical resemblance to the angels, whom they understand as having been instrumental in his formation from the dust of the ground. "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," the word Elohim which occurs in the first chapter of Genesis, and is there always translated "God," being supposed to sig-

nify such a plurality of beings as would be denoted by the word "angels." Without holding ourselves responsible for this view, we may admit that it receives apparent countenance in the fact that in some recorded cases of angelic manifestation, these celestial beings were mistaken for men, so exact was their resemblance to human beings. But, if the image of a thing were necessarily as enduring as the thing itself, a photograph taken in childhood would last as long as the person of whom it was a likeness and immediately disappear at the epoch of his death. A statue in marble or bronze ought also to undergo dissolution at the same time as the body of the man of whom it was an image. And any child who exactly resembled his father ought to live precisely as long as he.

We are further reminded that the Lord God "breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." But this breath of life was in all animals as well. In Gen. vii. 22, we read that "all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died." So that if the possessor of this breath of life proves immortality for man, it ought to do the same for every living creature that exists upon the face of the earth—both "cattle and the creeping things, and the fowl of heaven." In Eccl. iii. 19, we are told they have all one breath. And when any of them dies this breath or spirit goes back to the great source of universal power and animation, as it is written in Job xxxiv, 14—"If he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath, all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again to dust."

It is remarkable that while the words translated "soul" and "spirit" occur in the Scriptures many hundreds of times the prefix "immortal" is never used in any of these instances, nor any term equivalent to it. On the other hand man is frequently spoken of under the designation "enosh" in the He-

brew Scriptures—a word which is translated “mortal man” (Job iv.17)—“Shall mortal man be more just than God?” We are not authorized in saying that the speaker in Job meant to put the matter in any such form as this—“Shall man, whose body is mortal, be more just in the immortal part of him than God?”

But in spite of many explicit declarations of man's mortality, contained in the Scriptures, it is alleged that his immortality is everywhere taken for granted, just as is the existence of God, and his providential government of the world. The Lord Jesus never denied in so many words the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and had it been a fiction, it is thought he would have denounced it as such to his disciples. But this argument would have more force, as it seems to me, if there was any evidence that the disciples were believers in the doctrine in question. Had such been the case, and he had never taken the trouble to show them they were wrong, there would certainly have been in his silence “a kind of negative proof of the doctrine,” for it is hardly likely he would have allowed them to remain so fundamentally in error. Though they were undoubtedly mistaken on many points, there does not appear to me to be any proof that the doctrine of man's inherent deathlessness ranked among their misconceptions. If it had, he would no doubt have put them right: and the reason he never directly alludes to it probably is, that there was no necessity for him to correct a mistake which was not theirs, and into which they were in no danger of falling. His teaching seems to have gone on an altogether different assumption—the assumption that men were naturally mortal, and that everlasting life could only be had through him. Hence at the grave of Lazarus he said, “I am the resurrection and the life.” On another occasion he said, “I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.”

To the Jews he said, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." "This is the Father's will who hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing but should raise it up again at the last day." From this latter statement, I think we may fairly gather that, but for *the resurrection at the last day*, many of Christ's friends would be *lost*, for he represents the resurrection as a means by which he would *lose* none of them. But if, independently of the resurrection, they themselves were consciously present with him in heaven, I cannot see what real personal loss he would sustain in them even if their bodies were never raised from the corruption of the grave.

It is not, in our judgment, at all correct to say that the Scriptures *assume* the natural immortality of man. For you cannot very well *assume* anything without mentioning it. In our ordinary conversation we are continually using brevity of phrase, and do not think it necessary to go into every detail of a matter. We content ourselves with the mention of certain leading facts, and *so* we assume that those to whom we speak are aware of them. If the sacred writers, as alleged, had everywhere assumed the immortality of the soul, they would have been compelled to mention it occasionally at least, as a fact of which everybody was perfectly well aware. And this they never do. They *do mention* other things which they take for granted, such as the existence of God—the fact of God's providence—and the inspiration of the Scriptures; but are entirely silent, from beginning to end, with respect to the doctrine now under our consideration.

There are, indeed, several passages in which, on a superficial view, man's immortality appears to be assumed; and from these, inferences are very generally drawn in its favor. These texts are mostly to be found in the New Testament, which is supposed to deal more explicitly with such matters

than the Old. Christ's exhortation to his disciples to fear not them who, though they might kill the body, were not able to kill the soul. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The words of Jesus to the dying thief. The prayer of Stephen—"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Paul's expression of desire to be "absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." His declaration that he had "a desire to depart and be with Christ." His uncertainty as to whether he was on one occasion "in the body, or out of the body." Peter's reference to Christ's preaching to the spirits in prison, and other passages of a like character. There is an apparent sanction in all such texts to the doctrine we are seeking to disprove. They seem to teach that death is not an interruption of man's conscious life, and that his real personality is unaffected by it. What is held as solid and substantial encouragement to the commonly received idea is deduced from these parts of the Scripture. And it would be uncandid to deny that they are destitute of all seeming force in that direction. They at once occur to the recollection of the Bible student, when he first listens to an address like this, and appear to him signally fatal to the conclusion we have accepted. It is only fair to acknowledge that they call for explanation from our point of view. And though, in my judgment, it is possible to make such explanation sufficiently clear to be entirely satisfactory to any one who wishes to have the Scriptures harmonized, yet I can readily grant that there have been some very lame attempts made to reconcile them with the doctrine of man's mortality. Those who disbelieve that doctrine have certainly some excuse for their unbelief of it in many of these passages just as they stand. If, for instance, I wished to teach that when a man dies he passes immediately into a state of blessedness or woe, while his body is consigned to the grave, what better support for

such teaching could I find than the story of Dives and Lazarus? If I had nothing but the parable to proceed upon, I should be justified in putting forward my contention for an intermediate state, with all possible earnestness and pertinacity. But it so happens that we have an abundance of literal statement in other parts of the Bible which goes against such a conclusion. We read, for instance, that "In death there is no remembrance of God" (Ps. vi. 6)—that "The wicked shall be silent in darkness" (1 Sam. ii. 9)—and that to deny the resurrection is to represent that believers have hope in Christ in this life only (1 Cor. xv. 19). These, and hundreds of assertions equally plain and positive, require to be set aside if I am to believe the doctrine commonly held; whereas it is not necessary to ignore the rather difficult texts I have mentioned in order to accept the teaching of the plainer passages in their broad literality. The question then is, Which is the wiser plan to adopt?—to interpret the obscure in the light of the clear? or to pay no attention to the clear because of the obscure? A man of candor will not long hesitate between these two alternatives. He will endeavor to ascertain what are "the first principles of the oracles of God," and seek to bring everything else into harmony with them. In any case, there are some difficulties to be encountered, and of these it seems best to choose the fewest and the least.

I do not here propose to enter into any discussion of the passages I have quoted, with a view to showing how they can be read so as to agree with the general teaching of the Bible on the subject of immortality. There is a large amount of printed matter to be had from various sources, which deals with all that can be urged on the popular side of this important question, and which treats all such objections more or less satisfactorily.

There is one fact which, if borne in mind, will greatly

assist toward a reconciliation of the texts which seem opposed to the doctrine of man's mortality, with those that distinctly affirm it. It is this—there is no perceptible interval between death and the resurrection, to a person who is lying in the grave. However long the intervening period may be, it is no period at all to him. This can be illustrated by many obvious facts of our everyday experience. You will all know how slowly the night passes when you are in pain from any cause. It seems as though the morning light would never dawn upon you again. You count the weary hours one after another, and each looks like an age. Yet that night of painful watching and tossing to and fro is no longer than an ordinary night. It is very different when you retire to rest in perfect health, and there is nothing to keep you awake. The daylight seems to come directly, and if your brain could be perfectly still all the time, you would appear to awake, six or eight hours later on, the very instant after you had fallen asleep.

So it is with the dead, though of course none of us as yet can speak from experience. It is the testimony of Scripture that "the dead know not anything," and that "there is neither knowledge, nor wisdom, nor device in the grave." This being the case, the lapse of countless ages goes for nothing, and time is annihilated. The dying man's pulse completes its last feeble throb, and he is once more a living person the very next moment, so far as his own perceptions are concerned. The day of resurrection thus immediately succeeds the day of death with the rapidity of the lightning's flash, and he wakes surprised to find how long, and yet how short, his slumbers in the grave have been.

Now it may be presumed that the Scriptures are written from a Divine standpoint, and so in much of their phraseology they do not take into account the interval between death and the resurrection, but speak as though there was no

such interval at all, which is indeed the case to the dead person himself. No sooner, for instance, is Paul "absent from the body" in the sense of death, than he is clothed upon with his house from heaven. He departs to be with Christ, and is not more than an instant on the journey,—and all by reason of the fact that to those who are dead there is no chronology, and life in the resurrection is resumed apparently as soon as ever the pulse ceases to beat in death, though long centuries may perchance intervene.

It is sometimes objected to this view of the subject that resurrection cannot take place unless there is an immortal soul to be reunited to the body. But those who urge this objection can scarcely have thought the subject out. They would not deny the resurrection of the body, and yet in the vast majority of cases the body does not exist to be raised, but has long ago crumbled back to dust. Cannot God, who made man at the first, remake him after he has gone back to the ground out of which he was taken? Is it beyond His almighty power to put me together again, and cause me to know and feel that I am the same individual who formerly lived? There are things in nature that pass as entirely out of being as do the dead, which yet are reproduced by the great Creator's power. The smell of last year's rose—the taste of last year's orange—the form of last year's wheat—these have clean gone out of existence, but we do not hesitate to look for them again. Why then should men account it a thing incredible that God should raise the dead?

The idea that man survives death in a separate or disembodied state appears to be negatived by a variety of other considerations. Foremost among these is the fact that it renders the resurrection practically unnecessary; for why should we be reunited to our bodies, if we can be made perfectly happy or miserable without them? On one occasion, Christ

represented that many would appear before him at the judgment day, and ask, "Have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and done many wonderful works?" These persons would say, "We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets." And they are to be dismissed from before him. Observe now, these people were the contemporaries of Christ in the days of his flesh. They had sat at the same table with him. Yet when they appear before him, after the lapse of many centuries, they are surprised that he does not recognize and welcome them! They are astonished to hear him say, "I know you not; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity." I should have great difficulty in believing that men who had been already familiar with their fate—men who had been in a state of punishment for hundreds of years, and who, therefore, on the popular theory, must have known that such was to remain their condition to all eternity—that such men should affect surprise at their future rejection by the Son of Man! It seems altogether incredible. But there is no difficulty in the case, if we suppose that these persons have been lying during the entire intervening period in "the dust of the earth."

It is, moreover, hard to understand on what principle human beings should be brought before the judgment seat of Christ, and tried and sentenced, after they have been undergoing punishment for ages! They are supposed to have gone straight to their doom at death. Surely that ought to be sufficient, assuming, of course, that they were sent there on adequate evidence of their guilt! Why reopen their case, and have another investigation of the grounds on which they were previously condemned? Many a man has been wrongly sentenced by his human judge, and the mistake has been found out afterwards, and he has been released from punish-

ment on a second trial. But shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? If he deals with a criminal at death, there will, I think, be no need of a future assize for any fuller and more satisfactory determination of the case. But nothing is more clearly revealed in the New Testament Scriptures than that "the Lord Jesus shall judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." The Apostle Paul also declared that there was laid up for him a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, would give to him in that day; and not to him only, but to all them also that love his appearing. And 1 Peter i. 13, bids the believers "hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto them at the revelation of Jesus Chrst." You will notice that it was to be brought unto them, they were not to be sent unto it! This arrangement, as I think you will plainly see, leaves the doctrine of the resurrection in that place of supreme importance which it occupies in the apostolic writings, and is characterized by a harmony and fitness which are painfully absent from much of the modern teaching on these subjects.

And now, my friends, I think enough has been said to supply you with food for private meditation on the question we have ventured to raise in your midst. Immortality does not, according to the Scriptures, at present belong to the sons and daughters of men. From what Paul says in Rom. ii. 7, we gather that, if men want deathlessness, they must make some effort to get it: "To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honor, and immortality," God will render eternal life. And in 2 Tim. i. 10, the same Apostle declares that our Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." It is therefore only in connection with Christ and the Gospel that we can wisely hope to attain this inestimable boon. He has already been delivered from the power

of the grave, and as Paul says, "Death hath no more dominion over him." Of him it is said that he hath been "made after the power of an endless life." He can say, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore." And in his prayer to the Father, recorded by John, he declared that God had given him power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to all his friends. If then, we are ever to obtain immortality—if we are ever to receive a nature that will not wax old, and grow feeble, and decay—we shall get it through him who is "the first-begotten from the dead," and who, having thus himself "been made perfect, became unto all them that obey him the cause of eternal salvation."

LECTURE II.

REVIEW OF A SERMON ON "THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL."

FEW clergymen venture, as our friend Mr. Drummond has done, to publicly announce their intention to preach on this important topic. The arguments generally relied upon in support of the doctrine are known to be singularly weak and unsatisfactory by all who have impartially examined them. Our friend's well-known scholarship and ability were a guarantee that he would say the best that could be said on behalf of the popular tradition. We propose with all due respect to him to examine his arguments in the light of the Scriptures, which are our only standard of appeal on all questions affecting our relation to the life to come.

Our review of his sermon is based upon the contents of his own manuscript: so that we are in no danger of misrepresenting his statements. He, however, first illustrated the nature of his contention in a sentence he made use of in his prayer, in which he expressed himself as "thankful that they were addressing the God of the living, and not the God of the dead." The language is quoted from Christ's reply to the Sadducees: "He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err" (Mark xii. 27). Mr. Drummond seems to have overlooked the fact that these words are part of an argument to prove—not the immortality of the soul, but "the resurrection of the dead." The question

in dispute was not Mr. Drummond's doctrine at all. Christ did not say, Now that men never really die; or, Now that "all are born into an endless life," even Moses showed at the bush, but "Touching the dead that they rise; have ye not read in the book of Moses" (verse 26). It is not probable that Mr. Drummond would have referred these Sadducees to any part of the Old Testament by way of silencing their objections to the doctrine of a future life. In the course of his sermon he had occasion to compare the Old Testament to "night lights" and "tallow dips." This amounts to an admission on Mr. Drummond's part that "the immortality of the soul" cannot be proved from the Old Testament. If it could, in a single place, he would no doubt have immediately fastened upon the proof, regardless of its source. Christ was able to prove his doctrine of immortality from the "Book of Moses" (Mark xii. 26). How is it that Mr. Drummond cannot prove *his* from the same source? but speaks in terms of scarcely disguised disparagement of the Prophets of Israel, and intimates that they were quite in the dark as to the question of a future life! It is remarkable that he should use the phraseology of Christ's argument, and yet put scarcely any value upon the testimony on which that argument was based. We have to defend Christ's eulogies of the Old Testament Scriptures against the slighting allusions to them which Mr. Drummond found it necessary to make in the course of his attempt to prove the immortality of the soul. Let any one read carefully the following testimonies concerning a future existence, which are but a specimen of what is contained in the Old Testament, before he indorses Mr. Drummond's declaration as to the ignorance of those "holy men of God."

"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me" (Job xix. 25-27).

"The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up" (1 Sam. ii. 6).

"But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for He shall receive me" (Ps. xlix. 15).

"Thy dead shall live, my dead body shall they rise. Awake and sing ye that dwell in dust" (Isa. xxvi. 19).

"Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. xii. 2).

"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues. O grave, I will be thy destruction" (Hosea xiii. 14).

These are portions of those Scriptures, concerning which Mr. Drummond asks: "Why go back from the Apostles into the broken and darkened words of men who were terrified at the blackness, who confessed that they could not order their speech by reason of darkness?" No better answer to this could be given than the declaration of Paul that he "said none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come" (Acts xxvi. 22) and that "Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Rom. xv. 4). There was therefore no doctrinal retrogression involved in Christ's allusion to the writings of Moses, for the purpose of demonstrating the truth concerning a future life. It would appear that Mr. Drummond sees only in the Old Testament the scared utterances of benighted men. The fact of the matter is—a thorough belief in the Old Testament Scriptures is incompatible with an official alliance with those traditions which subvert and stultify Moses and the Prophets in almost every doctrinal respect.

The Sadducees were silenced by Christ's argument, which they would not have been had he gone aside from the matter

in dispute, and sought to prove "the immortality of the soul." They would soon have reminded him that he was not speaking to the point of their inquiry. His argument stands thus: "God is not the God of men who are dead in the final sense—of men who are never to be refashioned from the dust; yet He called Himself the God of Abraham, and in that you Sadducees have proof of His intention to raise Abraham from the dead." Abraham "lives unto God" in the same sense in which he was "the father of many nations" before he had any child. That sense is shown by the Apostle Paul in Rom. iv. 17: "God who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things (or those persons) which be not, as though they were." Mr. Drummond cannot deny that the words "All live unto Him" were spoken "touching the dead that they rise," and not touching the dead that they are not dead. And therefore the sentence is no proof of "the immortality of the soul"—a doctrine which has compelled the Swedenborgians, in sheer logical consistency, to deny that there is any resurrection beyond what they conceive takes place in the article of death, when an immaterial form is supposed to be evolved from the perishing organization.

Besides, if we were to grant for argument's sake that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are now alive, the question would then remain—Who are the dead of whom God is not the God? The passage is entirely useless for the purpose in view of which Mr. Drummond quotes it, and is equally against Sadduceeism, and the doctrines of an universal resurrection and the "immortality of the soul."

The report of Mr. Drummond's sermon contains no explanation of the text by which it is prefaced: viz.—"Our Saviour Christ Jesus, who hath abolished death, and brought life and incorruption to light through the Gospel" (2 Tim. i. 10). He could not have chosen a passage more fatal to the

dogma he wished to defend. He was not at the pains to show his congregation in what sense Christ had abolished death. This obviously needed elucidation, for if there is one fact in human experience more apparent than another, it is the fact that death still reigns in all the earth. We suppose Mr. Drummond's contention would be to the following effect: "There is now no reasonable ground for a belief in death since Christ has abolished it, by teaching and making entirely evident the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Death existed before as a misconception on the part of the Prophets, but Christ rectified their error, and by the gospel did away with every excuse for the belief in death." But was it an idea that Christ abolished, or a fact? Has death never been anything more than a theological conception or phrase without a counterpart in the experience of mankind? In what sense, then, is it "The wages of sin"? (Rom. vi. 23.) And how did this "mistaken idea" come into the world by sin, and so pass upon all men? (Rom. v. 12.) And what sort of a remedy for it would be "the resurrection of the dead"? (1 Cor. xv. 21.) Yet this is the only sense in which the exigencies of Mr. Drummond's contention will allow him to understand the phrase "who hath abolished death." According to him Christ died to abolish an idea! Were he to affirm that it was a fact and not an idea that Christ abolished, he would only plunge himself into a deeper morass in which he would still more helplessly flounder. For instance: How could Christ abolish what in reality never existed? Could he abolish death from the experience of men who were already immortal? Or are we to understand that mankind were mortal and died before Christ came; but ever since he abolished death they have been immortal and don't die!

Then how could Christ bring the doctrine of "the immortality of the soul" to light, seeing he never once mentioned it.

Mr. Drummond is not in the habit of bringing things to light without at least saying something about them. Even his Sermon on the Immortality of the Soul must be duly announced in the columns of the newspaper. How singular that Christ should never have found it necessary to preach on the same subject! And yet he is supposed to have brought the doctrine to light. Why! it had been formulated centuries before by Pagans, who had never heard of Christ or the Gospel! Socrates was just as sure of it as is Mr. Drummond. If the thing were self-evident, as he declares it to be, it would hardly require to be "brought to light," nor yet would it call for any impassioned defense in order that reasonable men might be convinced of its truth.

Mr. Drummond thinks there is proof of the immortality of the soul in the absence of any explicit denunciation of the doctrine from the recorded sayings of Christ:

"Do not," says he, "Christ's words afford us a negative proof, where, speaking of his own eternal life and the eternal life of all, he says, 'If it were not so I would have told you'? The fact that Christ did not contradict these yearnings and beliefs of ours (the fact that he allowed the Jews around him as well as his disciples to believe, as we know they did, that they were immortal), but left that tremendous mistake (if mistake it was) uncorrected; and the readiness and earnestness with which he did correct faults of faith infinitely less momentous than that, seems to me a strong proof that we are not mistaken. The fact that he did combat the dreary negations of the Sadducees, and thereby made them his most malignant foes, shows that he did not believe in the Sadducees' creed as to the end and destiny of man—a creed identical in its main features to the materialistic view of man's nature to which I have been referring."

The last sentence of this quotation lays its author open to the charge of wishing to convey the impression that there is no important difference between our belief and that of the ancient Sadducees touching a future existence. It is a fair

sample of the kind of misrepresentation to which we are well accustomed. Mr. Drummond knew perfectly that the Sadducean denial of resurrection is no part of our creed, but that we believe and "have hope toward God that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust" (Acts xxiv. 15). But we can overlook this misrepresentation, since a similar treatment is accorded the words of Christ himself. Mr. Drummond's congregation would probably not think it worth while to turn to John xiv. 2, in order to ascertain whether the words—"If it were not so I would have told you" were spoken "of his own eternal life, and the eternal life, of all." He said on one occasion, "I pray not for the world" (John xvii. 9), but whenever did he speak of the eternal life of the world? Yet, because Christ used the words, "If it were not so I would have told you" of the many mansions—or abiding-places—of his Father's house, Mr. Drummond sees in them a proof of the immortality, or "eternal life," of all the worthless and abortive forms of humanity that have ever tenanted the earth! By this sort of logic, "If it were not so I would have told you," can be made to prove a host of other things beside the immortality of the soul. "Christ did not contradict it in so many words, therefore it must be true," is an argument that would hold just as good if applied to the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John ix. 2.) We don't read that Christ expressly contradicted the absurd doctrine which that question involves—the doctrine of a man's existing and incurring responsibility before his birth; yet who but a Pagan would ever think of believing it now?

We have not in the New Testament a synopsis of all the doctrines held by either the Sadducees or the Pharisees. There were items in the belief of each party of which there is no express denunciation recorded on the part of Christ, but

we know that he bade his disciples beware of their doctrine in general terms, and called the Pharisees "blind leaders of the blind." (Matt. xv. 14, xvi. 12.) And instead of seeking their enlightenment, we are told that he spoke to them in parables, "lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and he should heal them" (Matt. xiii. 13-15.) If they had possessed the true doctrine of immortality, they would not have been "blind leaders of the blind." Mr. Drummond admits that the Pharisees taught the immortality of the soul, and we are not without evidence of a certain sort that the Sadducees shared their belief on this subject. In Kitto's Cyclopædia (art. "Sadducees") there occurs the following: "In the Talmud and in the New Testament we are told that they (the Sadducees) denied the resurrection, which by no means involves the immortality of the soul." That is to say, it is quite possible for those who deny the resurrection to be firm believers in the doctrine for which Mr. Drummond is contending! In that case, the Sadducees may have been more friendly toward his cause than he has been accustomed to think; for the only difference between them and him as regards this subject would be, that while they denied the resurrection in one way, he denies it in another—with them it was absurd, while with him it is an awkward and unaccountable excrescence upon the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, which they are believed to have held as well as he. If the learned writer in Kitto be correct, the Sadducees were supporters of Mr. Drummond's contention, as against the doctrine that resurrection must inaugurate all renewal of human life. They said, "There is no resurrection" (Matt. xxii. 23), and he might just as well say the same for any logical use which the doctrine has in the ordinary ministrations of the pulpit.

We have only to refer to Christ's undisguised and positive teaching to test the value of the inference which Mr. Drummond would draw from his silence touching the immortality of the soul. Let us go to a passage in which without doubt He "speaks of his own eternal life." Mr. Drummond seems to think that the further we read in the Scriptures, the less error and the more truth we encounter. We will, therefore, open at the last Book of all—"The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him." In that Revelation we have Christ speaking thus: "Behold, I am alive forevermore" (ch. i. 18). The word "behold" is generally an indication that an extraordinary announcement is to follow. But if the doctrine of the immortality of the soul be true, Christ said no more than any son or daughter of Adam might have said; for does not that doctrine affirm that all are "alive forevermore"? Are not Christ's words an intimation that he alone of all the human race has attained to permanence of being? having "life in himself" (John v. 26), being "the first-begotten from the dead" (Rev. i. 5), "made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life" (Heb. vii. 16). Is it not true that he asked life of God, and that God gave it unto him, even length of days for ever and ever? (Psalm xxi. 4.) And is he not constituted the channel by which the life of God (from which all are alienated by natural birth) (Eph. iv. 18) will be communicated to all who will ever possess it? Has not the Father given him power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as God has given him? (John xvii. 2, 3.) The doctrine of man's inherent immortality denies him this wonderful jurisdiction, and places the whole question beyond Christ's control! No wonder a writer—quoted by Mr. Drummond—should affirm that until this dogma is discarded, not a ray of light can enter the mind. It would be easy to fill pages with posi-

tive statements made by Christ, from which the most perverse ingenuity could not distill the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Let the following serve as a sample :

“If ye believe not that I am He ye shall die in your sins (John viii. 24).

“I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly” (John x. 10).

“Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead” (a fact which proves that Jesus is using the words “death” and “life” in their plain grammatical significance, and not with any theological meaning). “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever” (John vi. 49, 51).

Yet the pulpit is loud and persistent in its assurances that all must “live forever” whether they eat of that bread or not! Mr. Drummond is the representative of a system that does not coincide with the Scriptures in their teaching concerning the universal state of man as a creature made subject unto vanity. His theory leaves no room for a rational explanation of the coffin, and the open grave, and the passage of the mourners up and down the streets. It was impossible for him to tell his congregation what the Apostle meant by the words he chose as his text. No one can, unless he has discarded traditional theology, and accepted the Bible doctrine of immortality. Then indeed he will know that Christ did not abolish death and bring life and incorruption to light, by indorsing the theory of the serpent as embodied in the philosophy of the Pagan world—but by receiving from the Father the right or privilege to take again the life he had laid down for his friends; and by proclaiming himself “the resurrection and the life”—the only way whereby mortal men can obtain a change of nature that will place them forever beyond the reach of decay and death.

It was necessary for Mr. Drummond to make some

attempt to account for the silence of the inspired writers on a subject concerning which modern preachers are so careful to be explicit and reiterative. In writings that embrace a period of thousands of years, and exhibit every variety of style and character that is consistent with their dignity,—history, prophecy, poetry, narrative, parable, proverb, epistle,—all through there is an utter absence of those phrases with which the pulpit has made us familiar in its endeavors to impress us with an idea of our individual importance as deathless beings. Mr. Drummond tried to account for this circumstance by the suggestion that man’s immortality is in the Scriptures “taken for granted.” He said: “The sacred writer before the majestic picture of a world’s Creator has not set himself down to prove the existence of a God.”

True, there is in the Scriptures no piece of argument intended to prove expressly that God exists, but there are positive assertions to be found to that effect. For example, in Heb. xi. 6 it is testified that “He that cometh unto God must believe that *He is*.” We nowhere find it asserted, however that approach unto God must be preceded by a belief in the immortality of the soul. “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God” (Psalm xiv. 1). But never a statement like this—“The fool hath said in his heart, Man has no immortal soul.” The Divine existence is more than assumed; it is again and again expressly affirmed, which cannot of course be said of the doctrine for which Mr. Drummond contends.

The doctrine of Providence is stated quite unambiguously in Dan. iv. 25: “The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will.” And what could be more positive than Paul’s allusion to the inspiration of the Scriptures in 2 Tim. iii. 16: “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” We do not ask for an elaborate proof from the Bible of the immortality of the soul; but

would be content with a plain statement of the doctrine like any of the foregoing. Let Mr. Drummond produce it, and so put us to silence.

If we are immortal, it is surely amazing that the inspired writers should have left us without an approach to the smallest acknowledgment of the fact. It has been suggested that its positive declaration by them "would have been an insult to human reason." Surely this is a sort of insult we might have managed to put up with! Beside, it is notorious that the clergy of all denominations do not deal thus tenderly with "our reason." They do not hesitate to employ such "gratuitous insolence," nor do they spare their congregations the indignity to whose infliction upon them we are told "God would never condescend." We make bold to suggest that the reason which accounts for the absence of any particular dogma from the express terms of Scripture, ought also to compel its absence from pulpit prayers and sermons and hymns.

Not only does the Bible abstain from the use of any form of words such as are generally used by preachers and religious writers descriptively of the soul of man—it actually speaks in a way that utterly excludes the current idea of its immortality. In one of those Psalms which in Mr. Drummond's opinion give such a wretched and misleading light (but which he reads in his church with solemn intonation, as if they were all that Christ and the Apostles thought them to be), we read, "None can keep alive his own soul" (Ps. xxii. 29). That can hardly be immortal which needs to be "kept alive" by a power not resident in itself. So far from being "interwoven into the whole texture of Scripture," the immortality of the soul is negatived by hundreds of inspired assertions which Mr. Drummond can only dispose of by denying their inspiration. The Bible has left no important truth to the sport of inference. There was no concealed undercurrent of meaning in the sen-

tence which consigned Adam to the dust of the ground. Jehovah was explicit enough when he said to Noah: "Every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth" (Gen. vii. 4). All the penalties provided by the law of Moses were expressed in terms so explicit as to preclude the possibility of misunderstanding, so that no transgressor could plead mistake and say he had been led to put an erroneous construction upon the sanctions which upheld and vindicated any particular statute. When Jesus would have his disciples know the exact truth concerning Lazarus, he said to them plainly—"Lazarus is dead." Mr. Drummond is surely prepared to listen when Jesus speaks plainly, although he may think that Job, and Moses, and David, and Solomon were not plain spoken. If, however, Lazarus in his essential personality was not dead, but alive in some other part of the universe, we confess ourselves unable to see anything particularly "plain" in the Great Teacher's declaration concerning him. A Divine use of the word "death" cannot be supposed to necessitate a long theological explanation, or to require that men of classical education should so manipulate it as to bring it into apparent harmony with the doctrine of the immortality of the soul.

One of Mr. Drummond's most astounding perversions of Scripture phraseology was his use of the words spoken by the angels to the women who had gathered at the empty sepulchre of their risen Lord: "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" (Luke xxiv. 5.) It requires a keen eye to discern the immortality of the soul lurking in this angelic inquiry. The question would have been impossible had the world been twenty-four hours younger. Yet Mr. Drummond quotes it as though it were true of Christ from the very moment when he said, "It is finished"; and because the angels used the words in relation to one who had just been raised from the dead, he seems to think they apply equally to the countless generations

of Adam's descendants who are lying in the congregation of the dead!

"But," says he, "flesh and blood are not to inherit the Kingdom of God," "and yet some part is to inherit it; what part is it?" It would be just as appropriate to inquire, "What part of Christ entered the presence of God?" Did he not ascend to the Father bodily, and without dropping off a single part of that material organization which the disciples had previously handled and held by the feet? Where in the whole range of Bible teaching do we come across this division of man into "parts" any one of which can perform the functions of intelligence when separated from the rest? We read of "this mortal" putting on immortality, and being "swallowed up of life," and of "this vile body" being changed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body; but never do we encounter a hint that "some part of man" inherits that from which some other part is excluded. Mr. Drummond may perhaps be disposed to refer us to 1 Thess. v. 23 as a proof of "the tripartite nature of man." "Your whole spirit and soul and body." Here, however, are four particulars mentioned, from which some might argue that man is quadripartite. There is something represented by the pronoun "your." Is the "your" only a part of the man? Who is the possessor of the three properties specified? Mr. Drummond would say—not "the body"; and if he were to say "the soul" or "the spirit," the reply would be—these are things possessed, and not possessors. Clearly the "your" stands for the whole living man, and there cannot be a possessor in the absence of either body, soul, or spirit. Nowhere in the Scriptures is the word "soul" or "spirit" used to denote the condition of man without a body.

In the course of his sermon Mr. Drummond gave extracts from writings which, in his view, put their author "out of court with all reverent searchers after truth." They are as follows:

"Man is mortal and made of the dust of the ground."

"The life of man is not himself, but the power which enables him (that is, his bodily self) to exist, in the same way as the life of an animal sustains that animal in being. It is the very same life that is possessed by the beasts of the field."

"Man in death is in a state of non-existence."

"Mind is the product of the living brain, and personal identity the sum of its impressions."

The "reverent searcher after truth" need not hastily dismiss these propositions with abhorrence or contempt. For is it not a fact that man is death-stricken because of sin, and therefore "mortal"? (Job iv. 17.) (1 Cor. xv. 54.) Did not the Lord God form him "of the dust of the ground"? (Gen. ii. 7.) Will any one contend that the "breath of life" which was breathed into Adam's nostrils was Adam himself? And is not the same "breath of life" common to all animals under the sun? (Gen. vii. 22.) (Eccl. iii. 19.) Does not the withdrawal of that breath in all cases result in the way spoken of in Job xxxiii. 14, 15? "If He gather unto Himself His spirit and His breath, all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again to dust." And when man has "turned again to dust," how about his existence? Does he exist anywhere save in the imaginations of deluded man? If so, how greatly mistaken must David the prophet have been when he said, "O spare me that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more!" (Ps. xxxix. 13.)

Mr. Drummond objects to the statement that "mind is a product of the living brain." Perhaps not always. There are brains of which, though living, but little can be predicated worthy the designation "mind." Still it is undeniable that the manifestations of mind are suspended in dreamless slumber or concussion of the brain. Mental phenomena are subject to the accident of birth, and the varying culture of different indi-

viduals. As a matter of common observation, intellectual power is regulated by the size and quality of the brain in a healthy organization. The power which enables a man to think, is the same power that enables him to breathe. It is the all-pervading Spirit of God, in which all creatures whatsoever live, and move, and have their being. When that power energizes a well-formed and well-nourished brain, the result is a higher degree of mentality than would be the case if the man's brain was poor in quality and of meagre quantity. It has indeed been shown that the cranial capacity of a race may be gradually increased by the action of civilizing influences continued during many centuries. Some time ago measurements were reported as having been made of the cranial capacity of two sets of Parisian skulls—the one undoubtedly belonging to the twelfth, and the other to the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was found that the one hundred and fifteen skulls of the former period had an average capacity less by thirty-six cubic centimetres than the skulls of the latter period. Were we to take the brain of a natural idiot, and compare it with the brain of a man like Baron Cuvier, who is said to have had a brain-weight of sixty-four and a half ounces, the probability is it would not weigh more than one-third! These facts go far to establish the proposition which has so greatly excited Mr. Drummond's hostility, and to prove that mind is a production, and not a producer.

But how can matter think? We don't know how; our knowledge is limited to the fact itself—the *modus operandi* we cannot explain. We are aware that matter attracts at incalculable distances, but we cannot explain how this is done. Two chemical ingredients will decompose each other, but the fact is more than we can account for. To take up this foolish cry of the clericals, and declare that matter cannot be made to think, is to measure God's Omnipotence by our miserable

capacity or prejudice, and to account it "a thing incredible that He should raise the dead."

The charge of "materialism" raised against us by Mr. Drummond, only amounts to "calling names." Epithets are not arguments. With the scientific negations that have come to be expressed by the term "materialism," we have no manner of sympathy. "We believe in God, and reverence His Word, which is *full* of true materialism from material Adam the first to material Adam the second, who is none the less material in that He has become "a life-imparting Spirit" (1 Cor. xv. 45), and has a "glorious body." (Phil. iii. 21.)

Of course the preacher drew attention to the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, and to Paul's expression of desire to be "absent from the body and present with the Lord," as final and conclusive on the subject of disembodiment. Mr. Drummond does not appear to have elaborated the argument it is customary for such as he to base upon these two portions of Holy Writ. He seems to have contented himself with the briefest possible sojourn in these supposed "strongholds" of the common tradition. Let us see if he has any lawful reason for claiming their shelter even for a moment.

The parable recorded in Luke xvi. 19-31, does not introduce us to bodiless human beings. Its characters have a certain form and substance. They are not immaterial. One has a tongue that is tormented, and the other has a finger whose tip might be dipped in water. And before the two can be brought face to face, it is necessary that the man with the finger should—not accomplish a bodiless locomotion—but be raised from the dead! Besides, the rich man is in the place translated "grave" in 1 Cor. xv. 55. So that we have simply a dead man represented parabolically as speaking and suffering in the grave. The Old Testament contains several similar descriptions of fictitious scenes enacted in precisely the same

Sheol, or Hades, or Hell, and Mr. Drummond would not contend for their literality. He would not admit that "Pharaoh and all his multitude" were conscious of the "comfort" which Ezekiel attributes to them (Ez. xxxi. 16-18) in the very same place in which the rich man was "tormented." Nor would he admit that at the funeral of the Babylonian monarch (Isa. xiv. 9) there was a general move among the corpses of the dead kings who had preceded him in his descent into Sheol, or that these defunct potentates actually addressed him with the taunt, "Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?" Why deny the "Prophet like unto Moses" the same liberty of parabolic utterance that is accorded to Ezekiel and Isaiah! Especially when his object is not enlightenment, but retribution. For the parable in question was addressed to the Pharisees, a class included in those referred to in John ix. 39, where Jesus says: "For judgment I am come into this world . . . that they which see might be made blind." Mr. Drummond must prove his theory of disembodiment by some Scripture reference where the narrative or argument is unencumbered by any illusion or phrase that assumes the presence of the body. He may say we have precisely such a case in 2 Cor. v. 8. He would doubtless regard this as equivalent to a desire on Paul's part to be without a body, and to be in the company of Christ who has one. That, however, to say the least, would be a very singular companionship. Has the incongruity of it never occurred to Mr. Drummond? An immaterial and invisible subsistence in constant presence and intercourse with one who possesses the attributes of form and substance, and whom his friends handled and looked upon before he was taken from them into heaven! Besides, did not Jesus say to his disciples: "Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you." (John xiii. 33.)

Was Paul an exception to this statement of inability on the part of Christ's friends to follow him into the Father's presence? If not, what might he mean by his desire to be “absent from the body, and present with the Lord”? There is not the slightest doubt that he was willing and anxious to be free from the encumbrance of that “body of death” which caused him to exclaim, “Oh, wretched man that I am!” (Rom. vii. 24.) But the Apostle has nowhere expressed himself as in love with a bodiless condition. There is, in truth, nothing enchanting in such a prospect. “Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life” (2 Cor. v. 4). From this it is evident that Paul did not desire that condition of being unclothed, which Mr. Drummond would contend he refers to when he speaks of being “absent from the body, and present with the Lord.” “There is,” says he in another place, “a natural body, and there is a spiritual body” (1 Cor. xv. 44), and there is no Paul without either the one or the other. The spiritual body is not produced before the reappearing of Christ, who at his coming will thus transform the vile bodies of his friends, and make them like his own (Phil. iii. 20, 21). Presence with the Lord, in a glorious and incorruptible nature, will indeed mean absence from that body of weakness and dishonor and death in which Paul groaned, being burdened, earnestly desiring—not disembodiment—but to be clothed upon with His house which is from heaven (2 Cor. v. 2).

“The survival or resurrection of the faithful,” says Mr. Drummond, “is by our opponents argued from the New Testament. If you argue the destiny of the few from the New Testament, why not argue from it the destiny of the many?” There is a want of accuracy in this statement. We are not limited to the Old Testament for proof of the destiny either of “the few” or “the many.” We are willing to be conducted

into any part of the entire Scriptures whither their assailants may choose to lead us. We have not the slightest objection to "argue the destiny of the many" from the New Testament. And we should do it in some such way as the following: In Acts xvi. 6, 7, it is recorded that Paul and Timothy were "forbidden by the Spirit" to preach the gospel to the inhabitants of certain localities. We think "the destiny of the many" in those places may very fairly be argued from this circumstance. The Gospel is declared to be "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. i. 16). But "how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom. x. 14, 15.) From this it clearly follows that they must remain unsaved who are thus providentially excluded from the invitation to eternal life.

What then? Mr. Drummond will have some difficulty in disposing of these inhabitants of Asia and Bithynia on the supposition that they were all endowed with "precious immortal souls" in need of immediate salvation. He is non-committal on the subject of eternal torments, though, doubtless, he has long since seen his way to discard that dogma. Of course, if these people, who were divinely ignored in the manner recorded, are yet finally to attain salvation, it was just as well the Apostles should be spared the trouble of what might have been a hazardous and trying journey. But then, why send them anywhere in view of the Universalist's scheme, which in the long run saves everybody, whether they have believed the Gospel or not? We are not perplexed by cases of the sort mentioned, but have learned that the object of the Apostolic testimony was to take out of the Gentiles a people for Jehovah's name (Acts xv. 14), and not to save immortal souls from the pains of hell. We realize that the masses of mankind are in all respects unsuited to the purpose of God, and therefore

destined to be “put away like dross” (Psalm cxix. 119). In Apostolic times God had “much people” in some cities (Acts xviii. 10), and none at all in others, whose inhabitants were therefore simply left to the operation of the universal law of sin and death which has been implanted in every human being, and which has already consigned unnumbered millions to an eternal grave.

We are also able to argue “the destiny of the many” from a statement addressed by Christ to the Sadducees, and recorded in Luke xx. 35, 36: “They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.” It is impossible to believe that Mr. Drummond has exercised much reflection over this impressive declaration. It bears very positively and unmistakably upon “the destiny of the many.” It proves that all will not be accounted worthy to attain the resurrection of the dead, and a state of deathless being corresponding to that of the angels. A human creature failing thus to obtain promotion to a permanent existence simply remains “flesh and blood,” which do not last very long inasmuch as they are decaying corruptible things—incompatible with a position requiring incorruptibility and perfect wisdom and strength in all who are chosen to fill it. There is no wrong done to those who are excluded by circumstances or by personal unworthiness from a place in the permanent arrangements of the Deity. The supposition that it would be unjust on His part to let the bulk of mankind finally disappear in death, is due to the fallacy that man has a claim upon existence. The fact is, he has no claim of this kind whatsoever. His breath is in his nostrils. If he had put it there, he might talk about his right to it with some show of reason. If he

lives, now or hereafter, it is through the favor and forbearance of God, "in whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind" (Job xii. 10). This God has been pleased to approach us in the Scriptures, and to declare on what terms He is prepared to grant an incorruptible existence to the condemned children of the dust. If we do not know those terms (and few do), our natural state remains unaltered, and in a few years we pass away like the grass of the field. There is abundant testimony in the Scriptures which shows that there are whole nations in the grave who will never rise to obtain that "world" of which Jesus spake to the Sadducees. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos iii. 2). Had Mr. Drummond been living at the time those words were addressed to the house of Israel, he would have been the recipient of no invitation from God to share His great salvation, for it was not until Apostolic times that "God granted to the Gentiles also repentance unto life" (Acts xi. 18). "The destiny of the many" may surely be argued from this indisputable fact to which the New Testament bears witness, but of which orthodoxy has no manner of explanation. Where are the Gentiles, generation upon generation of them, their families, their tribes, their nations, who lived and died in a state of alienation from the commonwealth of Israel, and of strangership to the covenants of promise, before God ever visited or knew any save the house of Jacob? The Scriptural answer is—they abide under the dominion of death, from which they were never emancipated by the law of life that God has established in Christ Jesus. They have no consciousness of deprivation, and we need no more pity them than we need lavish our commiseration upon generations yet unborn. Inheritors of a corruptible nature, they have fallen beneath the sentence passed upon their progenitor, by whom sin entered

into the world, and death by sin. The Scriptures are explicable on this understanding, but all is mystery and confusion on Mr. Drummond's hypothesis, that all men in all ages are related to an eternity of life and consciousness by virtue of their birth.

Nor are these the only passages in the New Testament from which we “argue the destiny of the many.” “This is the Father's will who hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day” (John vi. 39). Has the Father given every human being that ever lived to Christ? If not, and if only such as have been so given are to be raised to immortality, what about “the destiny” of those who are not the subjects of this glorious promise? “The Son quickeneth whom he will” (John v. 21). Will he quicken all who have ever breathed the breath of life? If every son of Adam is amenable to the judgment seat of Christ, what are we to understand by Paul's declaration (Acts xiv. 16), that God “in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways”? May not “the destiny of the many” be argued from such a statement in a manner unfavorable to the popular contention? If all mankind that have ever trod the surface of the earth are destined to “live as long as God shall live,” how came the Apostle to the Gentiles to speak of them as being “alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in them”? (Eph. iv. 18.) It is not possible to reconcile the teaching of the Pulpit with these unambiguous statements, before whose authority we are eager, at Mr. Drummond's suggestion, to bow. Such reconciliation has been attempted by men of culture and supreme conscientiousness toward God, and by men, too, whose temporal interests were bound up with the maintenance of the established tradition, but they have been compelled to retire from the task. And we cannot encourage Mr. Drummond to hope that

he will be more successful than they. His appraisal of man is in no way akin to the Bible estimate of him. He says—"If man be no more than they teach us, he was not worth what God has done for him, and what He is doing for him to-day." How differently the voice of inspiration speaks! "Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God" (Ez. xxxvi. 32). "Lord, what is man, that Thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that Thou makest account of him" (Ps. cxliv. 3). The Bible nowhere represents man as being worth what God has done for him. "All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity" (Isa. xl. 17). Mr. Drummond's eulogies of mankind are clearly not permissible from the Divine standpoint (and what other standpoint is worth mounting for the purpose?). It was not because man was valuable in God's sight that he laid a foundation for his recovery in Christ. He was able to raise up children unto Abraham from the very stones (Matt. iii. 9). "The adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself" is not because the adopted were of infinite worth, "but according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace" (Eph. i. 5, 6). The potter's power over the clay is an inspired illustration (Rom. ix. 21) of man's value in the sight of God, an illustration awkward and unserviceable in the pulpit, we grant, yet one which must commend itself to every truly reasonable mind. Mr. Drummond is of opinion that the view of man's nature universally presented in the Scriptures, "is an insult and a degradation" to those who hold it. But surely facts are not insult, however degrading they may be! It was the wont of the apostle Paul to admit that as a natural man he was nothing to boast of. "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. viii. 18). We are content to endure the degradation connected with "this vile body" in hope of ultimate redemption from it, the earnest of

which we have in the glorification of the Lord Jesus, "the first-born among many brethren."

Mr. Drummond was at great pains to express his intense abhorrence of the statement in Eccl. iii. 19: "Man hath no pre-eminence above a beast."

He says:

"The quotation of this passage generally concludes at the end of the 20th verse. The 21st verse is awkward. The previous verses are thundered out, and we are bidden to contemplate man as being a beast and nothing more, having no pre-eminence over them—his breath, their breath—his spirit, their spirit—their death, his death, and nothing more. But what saith the writer? 'Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth'? There is that momentous difference between man and beast. As a beast moves through its few allotted years, as it physically decays, all decays—it lapses into helpless decrepitude, and, once downward, there is no upward path to the lost youth and vigor. But man, though he may seem to go downward—though he dieth and wasteth away, and giveth up the ghost even as a beast does, yet of him this is always true, the spirit of man goeth upward, ever upward, toward light and life and God."

From this it would appear that Mr. Drummond is quite ready to use the "tallow candle" when he thinks it serves his purpose. Solomon is not far wrong after all, it seems; and was not so entirely benighted on this subject as the earlier part of the sermon made him out to be. The value of his testimony would, however, be greatly diminished if it could be shown that he so flatly contradicts himself in the same breath. If, in any sense, the human personality "goes upward" at death, it cannot be true, as stated in the 20th verse, that "all go to one place: all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." The most that can be said from Eccl. iii. 21 in proof of the "momentous difference between man and beast" is, that while the spirit of the one goes up, the spirit of the other goes

down! The spirit is exactly the same in both, for "they have all one breath"(verse 19). If Mr. Drummond could show that Solomon is speaking of two different things, which each at death take an opposite direction from one another, there would be some strength in the argument, the weight of which, however, must be made to rest, not upon the direction (up or down) which the spirit takes when it leaves the body of either man or beast, but upon the nature of the spirit itself. What that is may be gathered from Eccl. xii. 7: "The spirit shall return to God who gave it." Nothing can return unless it has been there before. The spirit is only man's spirit as long as he has it. If the spirit is the man, then the man must have been in existence before he came into his body?

Does not the spirit of the beast also return to God who gave it? Is not "the soul of every living thing in His hand," and is He not the "fountain of life" to all creatures whatsoever?

"Thou makest darkness, and it is night, wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. . . . The earth is full of thy riches: so is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. . . . These all wait upon thee. . . . Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust" (Ps. civ. 20-29).

In the opinion of Mr. Drummond "if the early chapters in Ecclesiastes prove anything, they prove too much. So far from teaching that a favored few shall have an immortality from which all else are shut out, they teach that all alike are swept ruthlessly into the eternal grave." But is this correct. The book takes as its key-note the declaration in chap. i. 2, "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, all is vanity." It was not written for the purpose of propounding a doctrine of immortality for either the many or "the favored few." The phrase "eternal grave" is no where to be found in it from first to last. Like all the other books of Scriptures, Ecclesiastes is

useful and authoritative on the particular subject it treats of. If we may not get the Bible doctrine of immortality from its pages, we may get thence the Bible teaching as regards the nature of man and his state in death. It is unwise to discredit information which is correct as far as it goes. We should never think of seeking in Chronicles for a record of the Acts of the Apostles, nor should we expect to find in Ezra or Nehemiah a detailed account of the resurrection of Christ. The passage in question does not teach that “all alike are swept ruthlessly into the eternal grave”; for if it did, it would leave no room for the exhibition in the other Scriptures of God’s great purpose in connection with His glorious Son. Surely a writer may affirm that man returns to dust as do the beasts, without committing himself to the doctrine of endless death for all!

Mr. Drummond doubtless intended to be very smart when he said: “I confess I cannot understand the enthusiasm with which some men would thus try to prove that they were beasts and nothing more.”

The friends of the truth, however, are by no means enthusiastic over the discovery that they are mortal men and women, “and were by nature the children of wrath even as others” (Eph. ii. 3). They do not to *try* prove this, for with them it is too palpable a fact for serious debate, and they find few things more wearisome than the constant reiteration of what is apparent to any man who has eyes to see. Their enthusiasm arises entirely from the hope of the Gospel, which promises them an immortal existence of glory and honor in the kingdom of God—a hope that would be impossible, if they were already in possession of endless life. It is no source of satisfaction to them to have “natural bodies” (1 Cor. xv. 44, 47) which are “of the earth earthy,” like the bodies of all the brute creation, although not the same flesh as theirs, since “there is

one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds" (1 Cor. xv. 39). They look forward to the promised return of the Lord Jesus to accomplish that change of nature on all the "vile bodies" of his friends which will make them "equal unto the angels," and gird them with beauty and incorruptibility and strength.

Compared with that condition, Mr. Drummond may well speak of "the bestiality of man's nature." In his use of such a phrase the facts will bear him out abundantly. What other term is sufficiently accurate to portray the natural man? Jesus used the most disgusting types of the brute creation in his representations of the subject. "Dogs" and "swine" and "serpents" were common expressions with him to denote "the bestiality of human nature." Mr. Drummond evidently would not use such terms and has a much higher conception of the value and dignity of human nature than Christ had. How his whole soul must revolt from the Apostle's allusion to some as to "natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed"! (2 Peter ii. 12.) Even "the wise men of the nations" were in the estimation of the Prophet "altogether brutish and foolish." (Jer. x . 8.) And if that is a true description of the educated classes of society in any generation, what must be the condition of the masses? What a spectacle of folly and vanity the inhabitants of the earth present! Consider the swinish multitudes whose chief concern is to eat and drink and dress and animalize in every conceivable way—the crowds of well-attired, but empty-headed persons of both sexes from whom it is simply impossible to hear a single word of wisdom year in or year out—the gaping, idiotic masses whose besotted and repulsive countenances, and whose disgusting profanity, make one shudder as he passes by! Are they not bestial? and is that not a befitting destiny for them which the Psalmist declares shall be their doom, "They shall never see light. Man

that is in honor and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish" (Ps. xlix. 19, 20).

"But," says Mr. Drummond (quoting the words of Dr. R. W. Dale, of Birmingham):

"It is not a beast who struggles vainly against divinity in the ancient tragedy. It is not a beast that in modern times resents with infinite sorrow and fierce revolt the pains and disorder which have come upon this Creation. It is not a beast that has sought for gods to worship in the stars in heaven and in the meekest and most majestic objects of earth, in the clouds, in the winds, and in the heroic founders of national communities. It is not to a beast that the moral law appeals. It is not to a beast that the love of God can be given. It is not a beast that has the power to refuse it."

As a piece of fine writing these sentences will command admiration. Mr. Drummond's sermon was embellished by their introduction. But they don't settle the question of the nature of the creature who does all these grand things, and is the subject of these Divine attentions. They simply affirm that he is not a beast, although the Scriptures declare that he is appropriately represented and may be fitly designated by the term. Man, indeed, stands at the head of the whole animal creation, and his physical and mental characteristics are the result of his having been originally created "in the image of God." He has capacities which the lower animals have not, although they have several which he shares in common with them. But the possession of superior endowments does not prove that the possessor is an immortal being. The value of all reasoning like the above is seen at once when it is applied to those human beings who have never exhibited such heroic and superior qualities and aspirations as those mentioned in the eloquent quotation just given. The argument, reduced to its naked form, stands thus—Man has a noble intellectual capacity, therefore he must be immortal! But surely if the

duration of a creature's existence is at all to be inferred from the measure of that creature's mental capabilities, we are bound to come to some unfavorable conclusion touching the immortality of many whom we have known. If noble aspiration and great cleverness prove immortality, what about "Hodge," whose aspirations never travel much faster or further than his own manure cart? What about the idiot? And what about those breathing organisms in human shape that have never exhibited the faintest token of mentality?

Besides, the elephant is more intelligent than the porcine species, and the dog has more sense than some men. Where are we to draw the immortality line? There is quite a graduate scale in the world of animal life, and if mental or physical superiority justifies an inference or proof in favor of endless existence, then the existence of some men and some beasts ought to be of longer duration than that of others.

The testimony of Edward White, of London, was introduced by Mr. Drummond to the effect that the things believed by us constitute "a Materialism of which Atheism would be the logical issue if its adherents reasoned correctly." That is to say, we are Atheists in everything except our mode of argument! We are only saved from being precipitated into the dark abyss of total unbelief by a fault in our logic! This is a strange assertion to make concerning a people who read the Scriptures daily, and believe all things testified therein.

There is nothing more in our report of his sermon that calls for an extension of this reply. His list of passages that are generally quoted as against us was capable of considerable enlargement. They create no difficulty to those who understand the Scriptures as a whole, and who do not set the Old Testament in opposition to the New. It is not difficult to harmonize such texts as those referred to with the plain and positive declarations of the Word of God; but it is utterly

impossible to bring these explicit statements of man's mortality into agreement with the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. There are many considerations which make it difficult to change from what is in accordance with early prepossessions. There are formidable social impediments in the way of an honest renunciation of old dogmas. It is in many ways an awkward and inconvenient thing to cherish religious convictions which are out of harmony with the current traditions. Most are afraid of being thought changeable and whimsical in such matters, and suffer themselves to be controlled by this fear to an extent they are little aware of. And some have the idea that you cannot begin to doubt the truth of popular Christianity without running into the quagmire of infidelity, and rejecting the Scriptures altogether. It is said that Dr. Johnson, the lexicographer, was so oppressed by the thought of this imaginary peril that he was literally afraid to examine his own thoughts on religious subjects, although the bent of his mind was strongly in the opposite direction to that of the churches of Papal and Protestant Christendom. He was not aware that there was another alternative besides ecclesiastical religion on the one hand, and the chilling negations of skepticism on the other. The Bible (if he had understood that glorious plan of God which it unfolds) would have filled Dr. Johnson's mind with thoughts that he would not have been at all afraid of examining, and which would have yielded him a solace and satisfaction which tradition is powerless to impart.

LECTURE III.

WHEN IS LIFE RESUMED?

MANKIND in all ages have wearied themselves in the attempt to solve the problem of a future existence. The majority, indeed, have been always abundantly content with their inherited conceptions upon the subject. There is no topic in relation to which they are less ready to welcome mental unsettlement and disturbance. Their ideas, in most cases where they can be said to be the product of reasoning, are founded on the preconceived notion of the possession by man of a thinking principle distinct and separable from the body. This thinking principle is usually called the soul, or spirit, and is thought to constitute the real personality of the human being in whose body it is said to reside. Thought and consciousness are supposed to stand in the same relation to the bodily organization as the player to his instrument, or the rower to his boat. Hence it is argued, that when these are suspended (as in the case of accident or fever) the explanation is that the functions of the brain are incapable, through the derangement, of being used by the soul in a normal way. But, if I were discoursing music on a pianoforte, and the instrument suddenly refused to respond to my touch, I should certainly be aware of the circumstance; I should know that the mechanism was out of order. Whereas cases have occurred in which, through injury to the brain, men have passed whole months in complete insensibility. They have not been in the

least aware that anything was wrong; and on being restored to consciousness have resumed mental operations at the precise point where they were interrupted by the concussion. According to the theory commonly entertained, they ought to have been sensible all the while of the harm they had sustained, as the musical performer would certainly be of the defect in his instrument. Thought and consciousness are related to the body, rather as the tune is related to the instrument on which it is played. Without the instrument the harmonies evolved could not be produced. The arguments used to prove that a man survives his own death, "would equally prove that the tune does not die when the instrument ceases to give it expression." The attributes of sensation, will, reason, and affection, are the result of a material organization whose fortunes they share. In defective and ill-developed states of the human body, these attributes are correspondingly feeble. A powerful mind was never known to be connected with the brain of an idiot weighing only 22 ounces. The perfume of the rose does not survive when the rose itself has perished. The doctrine which affirms that man has eternal life as a natural and present inheritance, rests on no support which can be considered philosophically tenable. It rests largely on what has been termed "the disagreeableness of giving up existence." What men want to be true, they are apt to persuade themselves *is* true. But there are many things which we should like to be true, but which are palpably and undeniably false. It has been remarked that "if the consoling nature of an opinion can be a ground for believing it, this doctrine would sanction half the mischievous illusions recorded in history, or which mislead individual life."

Then again, stress is laid on the fact "that there is no instinct which has not corresponding to it a real object fitted to satisfy it. The desire for eternal life is instinctive, there-

fore eternal life there must be." It has however, been pointed out that "to suppose that the desire of eternal life guarantees to us personally the reality of life through all eternity, is like supposing that the desire of food assures us that we shall always have as much as we can eat through our whole lives, and as much longer as we can conceive our lives to be protracted to."

Then we are reminded that the belief in human immortality has gained the general consent of the human race. Are we then to accept this fact (supposing it for the sake of argument to be a fact) as good and sufficient reason for our individual concurrence in the opinion. Then, on the same grounds, what absolute error may we not also be called upon to indorse? For hardly an exploded theory on any subject can be cited which has not at one time or another obtained the general countenance of mankind. It is truly said that the prevalent opinion on any given topic is just the one with which the minds of men are most carefully indoctrinated from earliest youth, without regard to the foundation on which it rests. This accounts for the wide-spread existence at various periods of what is now acknowledged to be delusion and mistake. We are, or ought to be, concerned with the evidences which give support to this or that opinion, and not with the fact of its having received, or its having been denied, the general concurrence of mankind.

There has been, however, one class of writers whose general assent the common belief in man's natural immortality did not receive. These are the holy men of old in whose minds God was pleased to place His word. They were not oblivious of the desire for endless life which has been implanted in the human breast, but they recognized the fact that that desire was not only proof of the absence of the good to which it was directed, as a present characteristic of human

experience, but that its gratification was entirely dependent upon the Divine will. They saw mankind "alienated from the life of God"—"by nature children of wrath," and yet they taught that the desire for an eternal existence was not doomed to universal disappointment. "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good: seek peace, and pursue it." "God shall redeem my soul from the power of the grave." The instinct which is so suggestive of immortality, has been provided with the means of its gratification, but God has connected these means with the name of His well-beloved Son, and to him has committed the power to confer the wished-for gift of eternal life on whomsoever he will. The sting of death can only be extracted by him. He is "the resurrection and the life." He said: "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

It is customary to regard the life which Christ came that men might have, not in the sense of immortality, but as consisting in the possession of that peace, and holiness, and joy which arise from a present consciousness of the Divine favor. These without doubt will characterize the immortality with which he will endow all his friends, and will be connected with it. But they are not eternal life itself. Christ has come to do the opposite of that which the thief does when he kills and destroys; and we have no difficulty in understanding what is meant by killing and destruction. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." When will that eternal life be their portion? We have the answer in Mark x. 30, he who has made sacrifices for my sake and the gospel's "shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time

and in the world to come eternal life." So in Matt. xxv. 46, after the judgment is over, the righteous go away into eternal life. Paul exhorts Timothy to "lay hold on eternal life." There would obviously have been no force in such an exhortation if eternal life had in any sense been a present fact of Timothy's experience. In Titus i. 2, he speaks of the "hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began"; and in ch. iii. 7, he designates believers of the gospel as "heirs according to the hope of eternal life." An heir, in hope of his inheritance, is not regarded as being in actual possession of it.

True, there are some passages which seem to teach that eternal life is the immediate portion of all the sons of God. We read for instance in John iii. 36, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." This statement, however, is but a sample of many others in which future facts are spoken of in the perfect tense. Its meaning is well illustrated by a single quotation from Rom. iv. 17, where the Apostle quotes the words of God to Abraham, "As it is written I *have* made thee a father of many nations." Abraham was not actually a father in any sense at the time this was said; he had not even a single child. But he was, in God's purpose, the progenitor of a numerous seed, a father of many nations, as Paul goes on to say, "before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were." The promises of God are all yea and amen; there is no doubt or uncertainty about them; so that the things to which they relate can be spoken of as though they were already matter of actual experience.

On the same understanding those who are destined to eternal death are spoken of as if death had already taken place. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth," she is pursuing a course that will certainly end in the loss of

her existence, and from the Divine point of view is a dead woman, although for the time being she may be living. God sees and speaks of things, in their ultimate and permanent aspects. If they are to be facts, they are alluded to as facts, often thousands of years beforehand. The birth of Christ is spoken of in Isaiah as though it had already occurred, "Unto us a child is born, etc." In the same way we may understand the statement that he who believes on Christ hath everlasting life. Everlasting life, is life without end—life for evermore—length of days for ever and ever. This is a definition of it given in Psalm xxi. 4.

Men do not care to die. It is the one event of human history of which they prefer not to talk. It is by universal consent acknowledged to be a thing to be avoided as long as possible. But it is inevitable. "The living know that they must die." Now the Gospel deals specially with this fact. It appeals to the general reluctance of mankind to yield to the grasp of this mighty foe, and it offers us deliverance from its dominion and power, by a glorious resurrection. Accordingly we find that the Apostles had but one doctrine of eternal life to propound, and that was connected with Jesus and the resurrection. No one can have carefully and impartially read the Apostolic Scriptures without perceiving that the doctrine of the resurrection is much more prominent in them, than it is in the sermons and the religious literature of the present day. It is perhaps rarely the case that the topic is discoursed upon from the pulpit. For some reason or other preachers are comparatively silent regarding it. This fact must strike an impartial mind as being very perplexing and extraordinary, especially when it is borne in mind that an Apostolic origin or sanction is claimed for all doctrine that is propounded in the name of infallible truth.

All who believe in Christ must also admit the Divine

authority of the Apostles as the exponents of his truth. Paul says (1 Cor. xiv. 37): "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." In the next chapter he prefaces a long argument about the resurrection with the intimation that he had received from Christ what he was accustomed to teach on the subject. It will be remembered that Jesus himself said to his Apostles, "He that heareth you, heareth me." It cannot therefore be successfully maintained that in listening to the Apostles we are listening to teachers who are less reliable than their Master; or that while we are bound to accord to *his* sayings an unqualified assent, we may accept the statements of the Apostles with a certain degree of reservation or demur. He and they stand or fall together, and we are not at liberty to pick and choose between them.

Now if we read their public testimony as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, we shall find that wherever they went they invariably proclaimed the doctrine of the resurrection as the only solution of the problem of a future life. They in no instance are represented as having encouraged the people to hope for a disembodied existence after death. Had they done so they would have encountered no opposition in their work. The head and front of their offense lay in their teaching that all life beyond the grave would be inaugurated by the resurrection of the dead, and that God had put the sole power to accomplish this in the hands of His Son Christ Jesus. It is recorded in Acts iv. 1-3, that "As they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in prison." If their doctrine of a future life had been identical

with that which the authorities entertained, they would never have been molested and incarcerated in the way they were. The secret of the opposition they encountered was to be found in the manner in which they connected a future state of existence with the name and work of Jesus of Nazareth. The tendency of the popular thought in those days—as in ours—was to dissociate the doctrine of immortality from Christ and from the resurrection altogether, and make it a necessary and unconditional fact of human nature which could not be affected by anything which Christ might or might not do. If there were a law on the British statute-book which provided that whoever should be found in this way connecting men's hopes of an immortal existence with "Jesus and the resurrection" should be put in prison for their pains, very few public men would run the slightest risk of losing their liberty. For as a matter of fact it is not usual to propound a doctrine of immortality that would bring its exponent under the penalties of such a proviso.

When the philosophers at Mar's Hill heard Paul preach the resurrection of the dead, they mocked—and as believers in the immortality of the soul, those eminent men of Greece were entirely consistent in their ridicule; because the resurrection can only be regarded as an awkward and unaccountable excrescence on the Platonic theory of a future life. If men, in truth, do never die, it is useless to talk about the resurrection of the dead.

It is astonishing that 1 Cor. xv. can be read so frequently as it is without the discovery being made that it is entirely fatal to the current ideas of man's present relation to immortal life. In verse 14 Paul maintains that his entire teaching would amount to nothing if the doctrine of the resurrection were capable of actual disproof. "Then," says he, "is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." We might fairly

ask whether the majority of modern preachers could consistently say the same—whether they would be prepared to assert that their preaching, from year's end to year's end, would be "in vain," if they were to say nothing at all about a doctrine on which they seldom, if ever, discourse?—a doctrine which at the very most they only mention once in a while.

Nor is this the only form in which the Apostle puts the argument. In verse 18, he intimates that if Christ be not raised, all they that had fallen asleep in him would in that case have perished. But the ancient saints of God who lived and died before Christ's time are, according to popular teaching, supposed to have passed at death immediately into the presence of God in heaven. The resurrection of Christ was an historical event that occurred many hundreds of years after these Old Testament saints had, according to the common view, passed upward to the skies, and how, on that supposition they could be said to have perished in the event of Christ's resurrection not having taken place, it is somewhat difficult to see. The language is clear enough on the understanding that they are all lying in the unconsciousness of death, waiting the time when the Lord Jesus will put forth his mighty power and call them forth to the resurrection of eternal life. If Christ himself had not been raised, it is obvious that he never could raise them, and they would therefore, as Paul says, have perished, and been done with for ever.

What is it to *perish*? We read of the bread that *perisheth*, and of other bread that *endureth* unto everlasting life. To perish, therefore, is the exact opposite of to endure. The constitution of things spoken of by the Apostle under the figure of "the heavens and the earth" is to perish; "but thou," he says, "remainest." To perish, therefore, means not to remain. It is certain that it cannot signify eternal misery,

for how could the ancient saints be said to have perished in that sense, if Christ had not been raised from the dead?

The Apostle's argument is encompassed with no such difficulties, when the facts are duly borne in mind. He regarded all the dead as being in the position in which Job, and David, and Solomon, and Hezekiah, and Daniel, believed them to be, "asleep in the dust of the earth," their memory, knowledge, affection, hatred, and general activity of being now no more. And, believing this, he saw that it would follow as a matter of course, that unless they were rescued from that condition they would remain in it to all eternity. His argument is thus remarkably conclusive and clear, and is rescued from the embarrassment to which an erroneous tradition consigns it.

Then, again, in verse 19, Paul intimates that for any one to deny the resurrection is tantamount to saying that the hope of all who believe the gospel is restricted to the present life. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Now does the believer in man's natural immortality—an immortality which is supposed to be a fact all the same whether the resurrection takes place or not—does he confine his expectations to this life only, whenever he thinks it doubtful whether the dead will be raised? If I have "a never-dying soul to save, and fit it for the sky," why need I trouble in the least about the resurrection? My hope, in that case, will not be limited to this life only, whatever may, or may not, happen in the way of resurrection. Where's the misery, the mental distress, of those who say so little about the subject? What a man considers all-important he is sure to insist upon at every convenient opportunity. If the exponents of popular Christianity regarded the resurrection as being of as much consequence as it was in Paul's estimation, why don't they preach it as he did, as man's only hope in regard to a future life?

But he further exclaims, "What advantageth it me if the dead rise not?" Now suppose it were the case that Paul was well aware that when he died he would depart immediately into the presence of Christ and enjoy unspeakable happiness for hundreds of years, would there be no advantage in that? Are we to understand that he regarded the prospect of going to heaven as a disembodied saint as so utterly uninviting that he could see nothing to be in the least desired about it? In writing to Timothy he speaks most exultingly about the reward which awaited him in a future state of existence: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." If he had expected to receive that recompense before the appearing of Christ, is it conceivable that he would have expressed himself as he did in the words, "What advantageth it me if the dead rise not?" His hope was anchored entirely and exclusively upon the return of Christ to the earth, to reform his friends from the dust, and to give them a glorious and undying nature; and if that was not going to happen, why then, says he, it is useless to think more upon the subject: let us just extract all the pleasure we can out of our present existence, seeing it is all we shall ever have.

Finally, it is remarkable that when Paul administered consolation to those who were mourning the loss of friends who had been removed by death, he did not resort to any of those forms of comfort by which it is common in our day to solace survivors. He did not say, "Be of good cheer, your friends are not really dead, they have only gone before, and have gained their reward earlier than you. You will join them in the mansions of the blessed by and by, when your turn comes to die." This is no doubt the kind of comfort it is customary to give under such distressing circumstances. But

if we consult the Apostolic Scripture we shall see that they fixed the hope of believers upon the resurrection, to the exclusion of every other ground of consolation. In writing his first letter to the Thessalonians, who were at that time lamenting the death of some of their number, Paul says (iv. 13, 14), "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them who are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him"—not a word about their having already gone to their reward! "The Lord himself (verse 16) shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." Not before then might they hope to see their friends again. If there was any chance of their reunion taking place at an earlier date, Paul would certainly have drawn their attention to the fact, for when any man tries to comfort others he avails himself of every fact and argument he can think of as being at all likely to be of service.

About death itself there is nothing that can afford much consolation to the bereaved. It was never intended to be a consolatory event. It is a curse, not a blessing—the fruit of sin—not the reward of a holy life.

LECTURE IV.

THE DIVINE NATURE.

THE subject announced for our present consideration is regarded by some as altogether too solemn and too far removed from the sphere of human thought to justify any attempt at its elucidation. It is held that we have neither materials nor capacity to enable us to arrive at correct conclusions concerning it. If this be so, we are in an evil case, assuming the truth of Christ's words: "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God" (John xvii. 3). According to Jesus there is no living eternally for such as are unacquainted with the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth. Whence is such knowledge to be obtained? Certainly not from the material universe. That universe presents to our gaze a measureless expanse of infinitude—infinite power—wisdom—duration—space. But it tells us nothing about the Divine Nature—where the Deity resides, and what He intends to do. We cannot know what there is to be known about God by simply reading that book which men call "nature." On hearing such a statement as this, some would refer us to the words of the Apostle Paul in Rom. i. 19, 20. Now we must carefully note who they were to whom the Deity had communicated the knowledge which Paul here speaks of. From the previous verse we gather that they "held the truth in unrighteousness"; and the verse following states that "they knew God." That could not be said of the Gentile nations, for they were ignorant

of the truth, were without God, and walked in the vanity of their minds. The statement could only be correct as applied to the nation of Israel, "to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises." (Rom. ix. 4.) In the possession of all these advantages, Israel had a glimpse of those invisible things of the Deity which He will make manifest upon the earth in due time, when He shall fill it with His glory at the revelation of His Son. That is to say, the purpose of God, as touching the future of the human family as shadowed forth in the things of the Mosaic economy from the very foundation of it. These were the things that had been "made" or ordained, by means of which Israel might have gained all necessary information touching the Deity's Eternal power and Godhead—and by which indeed, as Paul says, they were left without excuse. But Israel could never have gathered from "nature" what was so abundantly supplied by the Mosaic *cosmos*.

We have the exceptional advantage of not only being able to consult the arrangements of that "world," which was created at Mount Sinai, and whose form of government was theocratical—but we have the testimony concerning God which was delivered by that Prophet like unto Moses, touching whom God said to Moses (Deut. xviii. 18): "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." If, with the words of such a Prophet in our hands, we remain ignorant of the only true God, we are surely without excuse. It would have been surprising if among all the revelations which the Deity has been pleased to give to men, there was to be found no information concerning His nature. There are of course mysteries connected with His existence which no created mind can fathom.

What a mighty secret is that of His Eternity—no commencement of Being—from everlasting—One before whom there was no manifestation of wisdom and strength and life whatever, and out of whom all things have proceeded! The human brain has not been organized to grasp these bewildering conceptions, and we are obliged to confess with the Psalmist: "Such knowledge is too wonderful for us: it is high; we cannot attain unto it."

We can, however, understand what Paul meant when in Rom. i. 23 he spoke of the "incorruptible God." It is possible for our minds to follow him when in 1 Tim. vi. 16, he refers to One "Who only hath immortality." And we are not hopelessly perplexed by the declaration of Christ which we find in John v. 26: "The Father hath life in Himself." So when we come to the only place in the Scriptures where the phrase "the Divine nature" occurs, we need be at no loss to comprehend the precise idea which was in the writer's mind. If we consult 2 Peter i. 4, we shall see that the Apostle uses the words in connection with a reference to certain exceeding great and precious promises; and he intimates that by these promises it is intended that believers should become partakers of the Divine nature, and so escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. It is clear from Peter's words that those to whom he wrote were not at that time possessed of the Divine nature. And yet he addresses them as "having obtained precious faith through the righteousness of God and their Saviour Jesus Christ." The fact that their possession of the Divine nature was presented to them as a *hope* based on the promises of God, clearly makes their attainment of it a future thing. Besides there is no partaking of the Divine nature so long as men have not escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. We direct special attention to this point because it is the universal wont of religious writers to make

the possession of the Divine nature identical with what is experienced under circumstances of excitement at religious gatherings, when men are supposed to be converted and saved.

The Divine nature is by Peter associated as a great reward with knowledge of God's exceeding great and precious promises. Now a promise can only be great and precious by reason of the greatness and value of the things promised. No promise to confer a small benefit could well be spoken of as a great promise. When, therefore, the Apostle in this connection speaks of promises that are *exceeding* great, the inference follows that whatever the Divine nature may be, it is no frivolous boon to be made a partaker of it.

The word rendered "nature" in this passage from Peter occurs twice in Jas. iii. 7, where it is applied first to *beasts*, and then to *men*. "Every kind (nature) of beasts, etc., hath been tamed of mankind"(human nature). And Paul, in his epistles, speaks of "Jews by nature"; and of all being "by nature the children of wrath." We have no difficulty in understanding the word "nature" as it occurs in such cases as these. We don't regard it as descriptive of mere mental or moral manifestations. We mean by it the entire substance of the creatures referred to—all that men and beasts become possessed of in the process of natural generation and birth. Surely, when James refers to the beasts and birds and serpents, and things in the sea, he has in mind the different forms of organic life which those words represent. And so when Paul says, "We who are Jews by nature," he can only have alluded to what we understand by parentage or physical constitution. The Divine nature of Peter's epistle is not therefore a synonym of something that merely belongs to the Deity, but isn't the Deity Himself. It is nothing less than the substance of the Invisible One; all in fact that Paul had in mind when he wrote of "the incorruptible God." The Divine nature is the antithesis

of human nature. Though we are fearfully and wonderfully made, yet we know what we are made of. We are not made of that which does not decay. If people would only learn to bow before inspiration, they would not have such a surprising conceit of themselves, but would see that they are but dust. Human nature is not incorruptible, for it is made subject unto vanity, and when death occurs we hasten to bury it out of our sight. But the Divine nature cannot be buried, nor brought to dust, for there is inherent in it "the power of an endless life."

The fact that God is substance and has form will not be immediately received by such as indorse the theological conception which declares Him to be "without body or parts." What, however, are we to make of those words of Christ concerning the Father which are recorded in John v. 37: "Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape"? If we were to say that no person now living has ever seen a perfectly exact and genuine likeness of Christ as he appeared in Palestine eighteen and a half centuries ago; that no one could reproduce the sound of his voice nor tell what sort of a complexion he had—all would understand that we believe Jesus Christ to have been, not an intangible myth, but a real material person with features and intonation capable of being described by those who saw and heard him. So, when he said of the Father: "Ye have neither heard His voice nor seen His shape," it is not unreasonable to gather from Christ's use of such words, his own belief that God possesses the attributes of form and speech.

Those who may still feel disposed to demur to this proposition may perhaps consider that they have a reason for their objection in Christ's declaration that "God is a Spirit"—assuming that a Spirit is necessarily without corporeal form. If that were the case everything that is spiritual would be

without substance or form. But what about that spiritual meat and drink that Israel partook of in the wilderness? What about "the spiritual man" of Hosea's day, whom he speaks of as mad? Was he without body or parts? What about "the spiritual body" of the resurrection which Paul contrasts with the natural body of our present state? What about Christ himself, who is declared to be "The Lord, the Spirit"? (2 Cor. iii. 17.) Surely no one will contend that Christ, who is thus shown to be a spirit, is incorporeal. He permitted his friends to handle him after his resurrection and some of them held him by the feet, which still retained the marks of the nails. Christ is material beyond all doubt. His nature is deathless and incorruptible substance, and it is in the likeness of his glorious body that the bodies of his friends are to be fashioned when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and admired in all them that believe.

"Blessed," says he, "are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Do you believe that? But suppose God has neither body nor parts, how are the pure in heart to behold Him? The time will come when those who have pleased God shall be permitted to look upon Him as literally as those beheld Christ to whom he said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." God is only invisible to these mortal natures of ours. The angel that was with Israel in the wilderness was so glorious a manifestation of the Eternal One, that no man might see His face and live. It is indeed a glorious gospel which promises a nature capable of enduring the vision of His presence, who dwells in light unto which no man can approach, and whom no man hath nor can see. He is not invisible to *all* intelligent beings. There are myriads who share His nature, and stand in His presence, and look upon His form, and wait upon His throne, and hearken unto the voice of His word.

We are dependent for our present existence upon the con-

tinuance of favorable external conditions. We must have food, and breathe an untainted atmosphere, if life is to be prolonged. When anything occurs to interfere with the conditions of our present being, our strength goes from us and our breath soon follows it, and we die and return to our dust. But suppose that was true of us which Christ said was true of God, when he declared that "The Father hath life in Himself," we should not then be the creatures of circumstances as we now are. We should remain in perfect vigor, whatever might be the character of the external conditions in which we might be placed. For a being to have life in himself, is for that being to possess the Divine nature. Christ is now in that unspeakably exalted and glorious condition. He said (John v. 26), "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in himself." There was a time when the Son had not life in himself, and when the Father (who was greater than he) caused him to share His own immortality. Hence we read in Psalm xxi. 4, "He asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever." Men think they honor Christ by claiming on his behalf the eternal possession of that which God imparted to him as a reward of his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. But Christ can never be honored by any unscriptural theories concerning him, particularly such as ignore his life of complete subjection to the Father's will.

In him, however, we have one at least connected with Adam's race who partakes the Divine nature. . One who, as Paul says in Heb. vii. 16—"has been made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." Once have conferred upon us "the power of an endless life," or the power of living for ever, and we should then have life in ourselves; and that will have been accomplished upon us of which Jesus speaks in Revelations iii. 12: "Him that over-

cometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name." What are we to understand by Christ's "new name"? It cannot mean that he has received a new designation that he is not any longer called Jesus the Christ. The word "name" in Scripture is often used to indicate all that appertains to a person; his nature, and rank, and all of honor and authority and power that belongs to him. When speaking of the angels, the Apostle affirms that Christ hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent "name" than they—the meaning cannot be that Christ's nature is superior to that of the angels—for it is the Divine nature in both cases, which is immortal and incorruptible by whomsoever possessed. The word "name" in that particular case evidently stands for *rank*, and the passage finds its significance in the fact that Christ has been exalted far above every name that is named—angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him. When, however, Christ promises to write upon him that overcometh his new name, the promise is specially a guarantee of a new nature. He promises to give his friends immortality—to cause them to have life in themselves, besides admitting them to a share in all the glory which the Father has given unto him. Christ's former name is referred to in such places as those where he is declared to have been "made of a woman"—"of the seed of David according to the flesh." And his new name comes out in those passages where he is designated "the first-born of every creature" (Col. i. 15); that is—of every immortal creature from Adam's race—or as Paul has it in verse 18 of the same chapter—"the beginning, the first-born from the dead." The sense in which Christ is "the beginning" is indicated in his own words recorded in Rev.

iii. 14: "The beginning of the creation of God." The present race of human beings are not the creation of God, for men are born into the world of the flesh and of corruptible seed. It would be entirely inappropriate to speak of mankind in their present condition of ignorance and corruptibility as the "creation of God." But this earth is yet to be tenanted by a race who will fully answer to this designation—"the creation of God." It will be a race of immortals and Jesus is the commencement of it. It is joyful to have the assurance which we possess that one connected with our race has now "life in himself," and that instead of being any longer "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," he has received a "new name" and is clothed with beauty, and girded with ever-abiding strength. A beginning has been made in the direction of incorruptibility as far as mankind are concerned, and there is one member of our race who now partakes the Divine nature, and who though once dead is now "alive for evermore." His present nature or "name" is the second he has had. In his first nature he was "crucified through weakness"—in his present nature "he liveth by the power of God," and has become the commencer of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him. That flesh of his, which he said "profiteth nothing," has been transformed and made all glorious and powerful by the energy of the Eternal Spirit. And what Christ has experienced himself he will cause all who are accepted by him to experience by-and-by. The Father has given him power over all flesh. Not a soul can emerge from the grave unless that power of his is put forth. It is either friendship with Christ or eternal companionship with death. He says, "I have the keys of hades and of death. No one can issue forth from thence to a renewed existence unless I am consulted. It is only in me that men shall be made alive." God has committed all judgment to the Son, and He is the one who will decide on whom the unspeakable gift of

immortality should be bestowed. What a calamity it is when men refuse to look into these matters! They are spending the days on trifles and folly, which might be spent as a probation for eternal life. The Lord Jesus will soon arrive upon the scene, and give to the world a manifestation of that Divine nature which he has possessed for more than 1800 years; in the exercise of a power by means of which the existing order of things shall be broken up, and be made to give place to a polity which shall embody the mind of God. And not only in him shall that Divine nature be manifested: it shall be conspicuous in a great and glorious company of immortalized ones from Adam's race, in whom Jehovah will dwell and walk, and whom He will use as the vehicles of His infinite wisdom and Omnipotent strength. It will be their work to remove the countless and incurable abominations of the present state, and to give mankind good government, and sound commerce, and true religion, and complete emancipation from all the manifold evil which has degraded and cursed the generations of the earth. The world has had a lengthened experience of false teachers, and selfish blundering kings and governments. And this mighty change which shall introduce upon the miserable scene these glorious sons of power, will surely be welcomed by myriads of hopeless and oppressed sons and daughters of Adam, to whom existence is bereft of every attraction, and who came into the world only to find themselves surrounded by the high stone wall of poverty and woe, which they have never been able to surmount. But above all it will be welcomed by those who have waited for it, in an age when the divine testimony concerning it is trodden under foot, and men walk after the imaginations of their evil hearts. Human nature has long held the sway in the earth, but it will shortly be hurled from its throne, and be compelled to render submission to that Divine nature which will find a multitudinous embodi-

ment and manifestation in the Lord Jesus—"the first begotten of the dead, the prince of the kings of the earth," and in all those whom at his judgment seat he shall select as his associates in the administration of the kingdom of God, and endow with length of days for evermore.

It is something to be surprised at, that such an issue as this should be at all possible in our case, and that the knowledge of such a possibility should have reached us, amid the prevailing darkness. It is a marvel that these glorious truths—which bear the impress of their divinity upon the surface—should yet be laughed to scorn, and that in quarters whence one might hope for better things. They have come to us through the writings of the prophets and apostles—men who have long been dead, but who while yet they lived, spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. We ought to be very thankful that God has spoken at all, and that the Divine silence, which for good reason has been maintained for the last eighteen centuries, has not always characterized the Deity's relation to the sons of men. For we could have known nothing about the Divine nature if He had altogether hidden His face from man, and held His peace. But it has pleased Him to approach the race, and to place an arrangement amongst men by which they may obtain redemption from death, and be made partakers of His holiness, and have an abiding-place in His house.

I know not whether the possibility of becoming a partaker of the Divine nature has any genuine interest for you. The dimensions of this audience show that the invitation may fall on multitudes of heedless ears. The majority are quite content with the nature they have got; and as long as they can get plenty to eat and drink, and manage to preserve a fair amount of health and to keep free from pain, they do not want to rise above their present animal existence. As for arousing

their enthusiasm with the hope of the Gospel, the experiment invariably fails. If a man were to announce that he would stand on his head for a quarter of an hour, he would receive a larger amount of attention than he who gave notice of a lecture on a subject like this.

But your presence here encourages the conjecture that you are able to see something in this invitation to partake the Divine nature that is worth your attention; and you may wish to know the conditions on which this change of nature will be conferred. There is a long distance between a mere natural man who hears the gospel for the first time and the goal it holds in prospect. He has a hard and weary road to travel. The terms are sure to be disagreeable to the nature he already has. It may be easy to be a Christian according to commonly received ideas on the subject; but to be a successful candidate for the Divine nature is a widely different thing. There are few that find the way of life, but there are fewer still who find the life itself. It means present disadvantage in a variety of forms; the loss of friends, and honor, and perhaps money. If you doubt this, you only need to start out on a path of uncompromising obedience to the Lord Jesus, and you will soon be in a better position to judge. It is as true to-day as it was when Jesus trod the earth, that if a man will come after him in the only sense in which any one can in these days—that is the sense of believing what he said and doing what he commanded—that man will inevitably suffer on this very account. The fact that any religion is popular, and that no man suffers from the profession of it, is in itself a sufficient proof that it is not of God. There are no conspicuous seats at meetings for the proclamation of these things, which any one can appropriate with any commercial advantage. The honors which men have to give do not fall to the lot of him who aspires to be a partaker of the Divine nature. But what

of that? We know how real an institution is the coffin and the grave! There is a popular hymn which talks about "our home over there"; but if we have searched the Scriptures to any purpose, we have discovered that the charnel house is the only "home over there," for all who walk not in that one way of salvation which was made known by the Apostles in the first century. In dealing with a subject like this there is no wisdom in other than great plainness of speech. In Adam all die. If men want to live for ever they must become related to a different federal head—they must become connected with the second Adam, the Lord Jesus, who has become a life-giving Spirit, and apart from whom none of woman born may pass from his present mortal state to a condition of incorruptibility and ever-abiding strength.

The supreme question then should be—how am I to become favorably related to the way of eternal life? By what means am I to get out of my natural state of subjection to vanity and death? Well, the first step is, that men acknowledge that such is really their condition. All notions and fancies, and conceits that do away with "death" as God's dispensation to man because of sin, must be unceremoniously laid aside. The inquirer must cease to regard himself as a deathless being. He must discard the dogma of "the immortality of the soul," with all the fictions that are based upon it, and affinitized to it. He must be prepared to receive the kingdom of God as a little child.

Christ has appointed a ceremony which in itself is a complete acknowledgment of man's present condition as under condemnation to die. I refer to the ordinance of immersion. We find that wherever the Apostles went they required those who believed their testimony to be baptized, and this practice of theirs received the sanction of the Lord Jesus. No one can understand this ordinance until he realizes the truth concern-

ing the nature of man and his state in death. There could not have been appointed a more beautiful or appropriate symbol; and this will be apparent when all the facts are borne in mind. And what are the facts? Simply these: We are the natural descendants of one man who was condemned to return to the dust because of disobedience. Men may refuse to acknowledge that such is the case, but they wont be able to refuse to die when their time comes. The day arrives when a man's lips cease to utter either truth or falsehood, and he lies silent in the embrace of death. The Lord Jesus succeeded where the first Adam failed; and he bore the death-stricken nature to a grave from which it was possible for God to release him, because of his perfect righteousness before Him; and He has put into his hands the power to make all partakers with himself of the Divine nature who render obedience to His commands. Baptism buries us with Christ, and enables us to put him on, and is one of those commands which all who understand the Gospel are required to obey. And there are many other precepts of his included in that commission he gave to his disciples, when he told them to teach the nations to observe all things whatsoever he commanded them. By conforming to these requirements we place ourselves in the way which leads to those glorious things of which we have been speaking. And although the perishable nature through which our life is at present manifested may disappear for a while in death, yet Christ will not fail to reproduce us in due time, and clothe us with our house which is from heaven, and give us to know the unspeakable luxury of a nature that is beyond the possibility of weakness and decay.

We are quite sure that these are the true sayings of God. If we were at all doubtful upon this point, we should never seek to gain the ear of our contemporaries, in order if possible to induce them to compare what they read in the Scriptures

with what they have been accustomed to believe. We consider that we do but act the part of reasonable and philanthropic men in publicly announcing these our steadfast and soberly acquired convictions. Our action exposes us to no little ridicule and indignation and scorn. We are not surprised, but are content to wait. The future will show who is right; and for its final and undebatable revelations we long with exceeding great desire. For not the faintest shadow of a doubt ever crosses our minds that those revelations will all be favorable to the men and women in this and preceding ages who have believed the things concerning the kingdom of God, and have conformed themselves to the Divine will as made known in the Scriptures of truth.

Your acquaintances and friends will be all ready to join in a common condemnation of what is in reality the only wise and reasonable course which a human being can pursue in this present evil world. But what of that. These people cannot give us back our life when once we have lost it. They cannot set the cold, stagnant blood running through our veins again. They cannot give us an immortal nature for the one we have got. But there is One who can: he is real—he is historical—he is undying—and of him we affirm that he is coming to change the vile bodies of his saints; and to make them like his own, and to break up the present arrangement of things in which man rules; and darkness, and enmity, and selfishness, and superstition, and utter ungodliness, so universally prevail; and to establish a dominion the world throughout, which will emancipate and enlighten and gladden and bless the people of the earth, and make them eager to show forth God's praise to all generations.

LECTURE V.

THE GREAT SALVATION.

WHAT? WHEN? AND WHERE?

IN modern times particularly, men have done much to remedy the sufferings of their condition. Various social and scientific improvements have marvelously diminished the pains and inconveniences of existence and made life more worth living than it was fifty or one hundred years ago. But no one has yet been able to devise a remedy for that most sad and grievous fact of human experience which brings the coffin to our doors and gradually fills up the vacant places in our cemeteries. We need a salvation that will make death a thing of the past, and utterly and forever abolish it from the expectation of the living. And I shall endeavor to show that it is precisely such a salvation which is announced to us in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To some this may seem unnecessary, for all who revere the Scriptures would assent to the proposition that the Saviour came to show unto men the way of eternal life, to take away the sting of death, and to open the kingdom of heaven to all believers. But unfortunately all are not agreed as to what death is: and I don't see how we are intelligently to appreciate the offer of salvation unless we know exactly what it is we need to be saved from.

In some religious circles the opinion prevails, and is expressed with great earnestness and solemnity of language, that

mankind are born to an inheritance of endless misery—spoken of as “the pains of hell.” I have no desire to wound the feelings of those who honestly believe (or think they believe) this dreadful doctrine. Most of us probably have entertained it at one time or another, and our views of God’s salvation were determined by it. We pictured men passing away from the pain and misery of the present life into an eternity of woe and torment, expressly ordained for them by a Being of whom it is testified that “His tender mercies are over all his works.” It is wonderful that the Christian religion has survived so lamentable a misrepresentation of its real teaching. There are indeed expressions here and there in the New Testament, which on the face of them appear to give countenance to this frightful belief, and on this account those who hold it are entitled to our sincere respect.

The great salvation, we are told, “first began to be spoken by the Lord.” Now he certainly did speak of the damnation of hell—of everlasting punishment—of the worm that never dies, and of the fire that is never quenched. By the use of such terms as these he doubtless meant to describe a real danger which threatened the men of that generation who rejected his word—a danger, too, which would entail permanent consequences of the most disastrous character. The question is, Did he mean what he is commonly supposed to have meant? Was his purpose to teach that for all the finally impenitent, there was reserved an eternity of motiveless, vindictive torture? and is this the doom from which he professed salvation in his Father’s name? He spoke of him who was able to destroy both soul and body in hell. By “destruction” did he wish to convey the idea of conscious survival in unutterable anguish? A true answer to these questions is clearly of the utmost consequence: and it seems to me we can only obtain it by a close examination of the language quoted.

We may in one sense get out of the Bible whatever we first put in. Texts can be quoted in which all manner of doctrinal opinions seem to find more or less support. But it is not in this way that we shall arrive at a correct understanding of revealed truth. Let us make no assumptions, and bring no preconceived ideas and traditional interpretations to these passages, but just let them speak for themselves.

What then and where was the "hell" of which Christ warned his hearers? Two words used by him are so translated in our version. Into one "hell" he himself is declared by Peter to have gone after his crucifixion, for that Apostle, on the day of Pentecost, applied to Jesus a passage in one of the Psalms which says, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." This "hell" is translated "grave" in 1 Cor. 15. "O grave, where is thy victory?" And with the same "hell" he threatened the city of Capernaum, saying: "Though thou be exalted to heaven, thou shalt be thrust down to hell." In other words, Capernaum should come to utter desolation and ruin and become one of the buried cities of the earth. This is the hell spoken of also by Christ when he said the gates of hell should not prevail against his church. The figure is apparently drawn from a beleaguered city whose gates are strong enough to resist an invading force. But Christ's Church cannot be supposed to be in the hell of popular belief and wanting to get out, or out, and wanting to get in. As a guarantee of the resurrection of his followers the statement is intelligible and most appropriate. In no other sense, and of no other "hell" but the grave can it possibly be understood. This "hell" is also the one mentioned in Ezekiel xxxii. 27, where certain military hosts are said to have "gone down to hell with their weapons of war; and they have laid their swords under their heads,"—that being the way in which soldiers were buried in ancient times.

From this hell, dear friends, we shall all need deliverance in the natural order of things, for the grave is the house appointed to all living. The Promised Deliverer has come, and proved himself to be the right one by being raised from the dead, and proclaiming himself "the resurrection and the life." No salvation is worth preaching that does not guarantee our deliverance from the Sheol of the Hebrew, the Hades of the Greek, the Hell of the Saxon, the cemetery of the English—all different names for precisely the same thing.

But our Lord spoke of another hell, and from this he said that the Scribes and Pharisees of his day would not be saved. He called them serpents and viper's brood, and exclaimed: "How can ye escape the damnation of Gehenna?" This is a totally different word from the one we have been considering—different in sound, derivation, meaning, and application. Hades is a word of universal interest, for it describes the natural destiny of the whole human race—death having passed upon all men because of sin. But "the damnation of Gehenna" was only reserved for certain disobedient Jews in Palestine, and had no bearing upon other populations of the earth. It was inflicted upon them at the destruction of their city under Titus some forty years after Jesus uttered this threat. An unquenchable fire was kindled in that city, and dead bodies were thrown over the walls into the valley of Hinnom—called in the Greek "Gehenna." This place in ordinary times was the receptacle of the refuse of the city and the offal of the Jewish sacrifices—the dead bodies of criminals were also cast there to be consumed by worms, or by the fires which for sanitary reasons were kept continually burning. A Jew would at once associate with Gehenna—not the thought of ever enduring misery—but of complete and rapid destruction; and our Lord's allusion to the well-known scene of putrefaction and cremation would remind them of the last

verse in Isaiah's prophecy : "They shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." You will notice that dead bodies, "carcasses,"—not immortal souls, were, according to this prophecy, to be the prey of the unquenchable fire and the undying worm. Total and irreparable destruction would be the result—not survival in conscious misery. These who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ are, Paul says, to be punished at his appearing with "everlasting destruction from his presence and from the glory of his power." In this sense alone can we rightly understand the phrase "everlasting punishment." The destruction of body and soul (all there is of a man) will afford no ground of hope that he shall ever live again—it will wipe him completely out of existence, and be the *end* of him, as the Apostle says in speaking of the destiny of the wicked "whose *end* is destruction." In one of the Psalms we read: "Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be." There was a time when he did not exist, and in the righteous judgment of God, whose mercy he despised and whose great salvation he neglected, he will return to that state of oblivion and be forever blotted out of the land of the living. There is not a sentence nor a word, either in the Old Testament or the New, which gives real support to the Pagan conception of "hell" as a place or a state of never-ending pain, and the sooner men leave off threatening their fellow-creatures with a punishment that is never going to befall them, the better. Infidelity will always have a pull upon Bible believers until they cease to misrepresent the sacred volume they so much revere, and to do it such grievous dishonor.

The salvation which Jesus spoke about was not a present experience even in the case of his best friends. He only

invited them to entertain the hope of it, as something to be realized in the distant future. "He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved." From this declaration of our Lord we should infer that those people are mistaken who say they are "saved now." Salvation, according to Christ, is not to be had until the end is reached and we have endured thereunto. The Apostles speak in the same strain. The *hope* of salvation is an expression we find in their writings: what a man already has, he no longer hopes for. "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Anything that can be spoken of as "nearer" than it used to be can hardly be regarded as a present possession. Then we read of believers "as the heirs of salvation." An heir is not one who already has inherited, but who has this before him in prospect. Elsewhere the *end* of our faith is declared to be the salvation of our souls. Salvation, therefore, is not an immediate accompaniment of faith, but is to be realized as the end or climax of it. And it is to be worked out with fear and trembling—sensations that do not agree with a consciousness and present experience of it. Finally, salvation is to be brought to the earth at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, for it is testified that "to them who look for him, shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." He does not bring them a salvation they already have, but one for which they have earnestly longed and patiently waited.

I make these remarks that we may not confound our present religious sensations (however purifying and satisfactory they may be) with the promised salvation of God. One who believes that he is "saved now" will be very likely to treat the true hope of the Gospel with indifference, and to regard the coming of Christ to raise and immortalize the dead, and to rule the world in righteousness, as matters of very secondary consequence. We must be content to open our

eyes to the facts of our present condition. It is a good thing when a man turns from his iniquities, repents of his sins, ceases to do evil, and learns to do well. God forbid that we should ever seem to underestimate the importance of a devout, earnest, and self-denying life. To be transformed by the renewing of our minds, so that we love righteousness and hate sin, and strive daily to do those things that are well-pleasing to God, is indeed a form of salvation which we must all experience if we would at last inherit the promises. But the great salvation which first began to be spoken by the Lord means much more than this. The most perfect saint sees in and around himself very much that he would like to have altered. He is subject to pain, weakness, anxiety, sorrow, and death. His religion does not save him from acute evils and distresses of this character. He has to stand beside the open grave: lover and friend is put from him, and his acquaintance is taken from his side. He knows, too, that he himself is under the same law of mortality, and must sooner or later go the way of all the earth. No man is saved (as a matter of actual experience) who has got to die. As long as death reigns, the salvation of God is deferred: for the Apostle Paul declares that the Saviour hath abolished death, and that this is the last enemy that shall be destroyed. He has abolished it as a matter of purpose or intention, and is only waiting the time appointed to carry this design of salvation into effect. The most distinguishing feature of God's salvation is expressed in the inspired declaration, "There shall be no more death." This was the hope of God's saints in ancient times. Every Israelite that had knowledge of the Divine purpose, and embraced the hope of Jehovah's promise, was led thereby to anticipate deliverance from the power of the grave. This expectation is embodied in the writings of the Hebrew Prophets and Psalmists in many forms of exultation and con-

vidence which confirm Peter's statement in which he says: "Of which salvation the Prophets have inquired and searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you." Now you may read the writings of the Prophets from beginning to end; but you will not find a word in them to countenance the idea that God's salvation is the salvation of immortal souls from the endless sufferings of a future state. These men did not expect to go to heaven when they died; but they did expect to be raised from the dead. It is customary to represent them as being wholly uninformed on the subject of the life to come, and their hopes certainly were very unlike those which are now generally entertained by church-going people. But we must remember that Jesus drew attention to the Old Testament Scriptures, and reminded the Jews that in them they thought they had eternal life. He would never have done that, if in those divine oracles there was nothing to be found relating to this important subject; or if the holy men who wrote them were not to be accepted as thoroughly trustworthy guides. The Apostle Paul may be said to have prided himself on the fact that he said, "none other things than those which Moses and the Prophets did say should come." So that, my friends, if we cannot get our ideas of the future life out of the Old Testament Scriptures, we may be quite sure they are not true. Jesus informed the woman of Samaria that salvation was of the Jews—it was set forth in the writings of their inspired men—they, as a nation, were the appointed custodians of saving knowledge, and with no other people on the face of the earth did that knowledge originate, or was it to be found. Salvation is not from the home of Socrates and Plato, who taught that man has immortality by virtue of his birth and constitution; it is not from Rome or Alexandria or Babylon, or any of the ancient centers of commerce or learning; it is from the Jews, and those who

want it must seek it where God has been pleased to place it, or else they will never find it. The holy Scriptures alone are able to make us wise unto salvation, which is more than can be said of any other literature that has ever come from human brain and pen.

Now let us suppose that we had never read or heard anything on the subject of salvation except what we might gather from the writings of Moses and the Prophets, should we have had the hope which is widely prevalent in religious circles of the present day,—the hope, I mean, of a *post-mortem* translation to celestial happiness and of escape from the horrors of an eternal hell? Why, no such notion would ever have entered our heads. This conception is of purely Pagan origin; its source is from without the Hebrew Scriptures, which are absolutely silent respecting any such doctrine. The salvation which God promised his people in those ancient time was a deliverance from the dominion of death,—their ransom from the grave. No one can pretend that such a salvation is not wanted. "The wages of sin is death." "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return," was the sentence pronounced upon the first sinner, by whom sin entered into the world and death by sin. The only remedy for this death is in the hands of one who has been in the grave himself, and thus has tasted death for every man. And he will apply the remedy, not by taking his people to heaven one by one as is commonly supposed, but by refashioning them all from the dust at one appointed time, when he will glorify them together. This will indeed be a great salvation—in every respect worthy the divine power necessary to its accomplishment. For it will mean a complete change of nature for all who are the subjects of it: "this corruptible will put on incorruption, and this mortal will put on immortality." We can only form a vague idea of what it must be to have a body that will never know a moment's pain

or weakness—that will be an eternal stranger to every disagreeable sensation—that will always remain young and beautiful and vigorous and angel-like in the incorruptibility and perfection of its powers. There is said to have been a young man in the sepulcher that had been recently vacated by our Lord. He looked young, but no one who saw him could have told his age. More than 1800 years have passed away since he was so described, and he is as young as ever. He belonged to an order of beings who have been “made after the power of an endless life.” The lapse of millions of ages will write no wrinkle on his radiant brow, but leave him just as fresh and glorious to behold as he was when seen of the disciples at their Master’s empty grave. Now if we are made partakers of the great salvation, we shall be like that young man, for hear what Jesus said on the subject in words recorded in Luke xx. 35, 6: “They who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead are equal unto the angels.” There are no funerals among the angels, and there is no sickness, nor any of the countless ills to which mortal flesh is heir. To be made like them—to share their imperishable nature, and to be in every respect on an equality with them—why, this is a great salvation indeed! How strange that people should be more ambitious to resemble their fashionable and well-to-do neighbors, than to attain angelic power and wisdom and glory, and make celestial and everlasting friendships among the immortal aristocracy of God!

But this was not all that our Lord had to say about this great salvation. Wherever he went he preached the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God. The nations of the earth need his salvation as well as individuals. The world has suffered incalculable misery from bad government ever since it was a world. Now the Prophets of Israel had a great deal to say upon this subject. They spoke of a time when a King would

reign and prosper, and execute justice and judgment in the earth. In that blessed era war would be unknown; the hand of the oppressor would never be raised in deeds of cruelty and blood; the gifts of God's bounty would no longer be misappropriated and monopolized and abused—men would live together in contentment and good-will, and the strifes and enmities of centuries would be buried in an eternal grave. To the Lord Jesus Christ God has given all power in heaven and earth, and all people, nations, and languages are to fall down and worship before him; for he is to be the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, and of the increase of his government and of his peace there shall be no end.

This is truly a gospel for mankind in every land beneath the sun—the Gospel which Jesus preached in all Judea and Galilee—the Gospel of the Kingdom—the very Gospel which Paul expounded to his fellow-countrymen in Rome, as we read in the last chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and which, in verse 28 of that chapter, he calls “the salvation of God.” When the Jews there would not receive his preaching about the Kingdom of God, he said, “Be it known therefore unto you that the *salvation* of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.” Why did he use the phrases “kingdom of God” and “salvation of God” interchangeably? Simply because they describe one and the same thing. The Gospel is a call to an inheritance of glory and honor and immortality in a kingdom by means of which God designs to bless all families of the earth, and subdue all things unto Himself. The final result will be that this globe will be populated with a redeemed race, every member of which will possess the Divine nature, conformed to the image of God's dear Son, a partaker of endless life.

What say you to such a salvation as this, my friends? Is it not reasonable—intelligible—glorious—and unspeakably great? It is to be brought to the earth, where it is so badly

wanted, at the revelation of Jesus Christ. In hoping and waiting for it, we may be out of accord with the religious expectations and desires currently entertained: but we are certainly in harmony with the hope of Israel for which Paul was bound with a chain. Prophets and Apostles are with us in this matter, and they are good company and safe. It is wise to look only for what God has promised, and to confine our attention to the locality that is to be affected by his promise. The world to come is an era of blessedness to be inaugurated upon the earth when Jesus comes. In his absence there is no salvation for man, woman, or child—no deliverance from the hand of death—no real well-being for the nations at large. There is salvation in no other name. The things you and I most need, are all treasured up in him, and in him alone. Science can do nothing for us as we approach the fundamental necessities of existence. We want to live forever—to be rid of annoyance in every shape—to see the wrongs and mischiefs of life permanently rectified—God's honor exalted—His name magnified, and His will done upon earth as it is done in heaven. It will all be accomplished in due season. We need not be impatient. "Known unto Him are all his works from the beginning." What we need to be most of all concerned about is our own relation to this great salvation. For it is not all that will get it. Many are quite unqualified to appreciate it, and need by true repentance to have the whole current of their desires and sympathies changed. "There shall in no wise enter" upon this salvation that which defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie." "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Others again do not believe the glad tidings of this salvation, and these will find themselves at liberty to let it alone. God will not thrust the good things of his promises upon incredulous and disdainful souls. Some may know of this salvation and believe that it is coming, who

nevertheless neglect to render the practical obedience which is required of all who are heirs of it. When the question was raised by the anxious multitude on the day of Pentecost, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" the reply came promptly from inspired lips: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." We have no authority to say otherwise to any who wish to obtain this great salvation. The conditions on which it is to be had have not changed since Apostolic times. These were the men that showed unto their contemporaries the way of salvation, and they said there was no other way than the one they taught. Since their day systems have arisen in departure from the purity and simplicity of the truth as they proclaimed it: and it has become exceedingly and painfully necessary that all earnest minds should go straight back to the fount and origin of Christian doctrine, and take their ideas, not from what they hear and see around them in the present day, but direct from the one infallible source of all saving knowledge. The Bereans of old were commended for not taking for granted all that was told them by Paul. They went to work and searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so. And if that was a meritorious proceeding on their part when they had been listening to the words of an inspired man, how much more necessary that the same course should be pursued when the words spoken cannot be said to possess any inspirational value. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." If these oracles say, "God only hath immortality,"—let him say the same. If they say that "to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honor, and incorruption, God will render eternal life,"—let him say the same. If they say, "The upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it: but the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of

it,"—let him say the same. If they say, the righteous "shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just,"—let him say the same. "To the law, and to the testimony if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." The truth will harmonize the various parts of the Scripture, whereas error is sure to set one portion of it against another, and introduce mystery and confusion where none exist. We ought to be able to express all our religious beliefs and expectations in the very language of inspiration, and you may depend upon it that any doctrine which cannot be so expressed is not true. How easy it would be to name some for which it would be absolutely impossible to find Bible phraseology. We are not in the habit of interpreting things of our own or other people's into the Book,—we try to let it speak for itself, and our main object is to call attention to what it says, and to induce our hearers to search the Scriptures for themselves. It is not easy to part with fondly cherished traditions, however erroneous their character. Nor is it easy in these days of manifold and conflicting opinion to come to a knowledge of the truth. We have got to be in real earnest,—to get rid of bias in any particular direction,—to keep our minds open to the light,—to cultivate the somewhat rare virtues of moral courage and mental independence, and to be ready to follow our intelligently acquired convictions although they may involve us in outward distress, diminish the number of our friendships, and bring us to a piece of bread. The most valuable things in nature are not exposed to the general view upon the surface of the ground. Laborious search is necessary on the part of all who would procure them and be enriched by their possession. So "if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."

LECTURE VI.

REDEMPTION NOT BY COMPENSATION.

THE idea of a compensatory element is more or less present in all currently entertained expositions of the subject with which we propose to deal in this lecture. It would seem that under any hard-and-fast legal arrangement penalty must inevitably follow on disobedience. If I break the law of the country, it lies within the power of no judge to release me from the due reward of my deed. Law can confer no favor upon me, though I keep it all the days of my life. Should I be a transgressor, I must take the legal consequences. There is no provision by which I can ward them off.

It was different, however, under the Mosaic economy. There were sin and trespass offerings, by the use of which the offender might escape the lash of the law. Not that the transgressor could in any way transfer his guilt, and so get rid of it. True, he might "lay his hand" upon the victim which he brought as a sacrifice to the priest, but by that symbolic act he did not take off from himself the burden of his personal offense; he simply delivered up to death his own "body of sin" representatively in that of the beast that was slain. This he did, as we read in Lev. i. 3, "of his own voluntary will." In putting his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering, he identified himself with it, so that its death became a representation of his own, and, in symbol, met the claim which the Law had on his life.

But did not the Law-giver receive some sort of compensa-

tion under this arrangement? None whatever! Here it is where misconception is liable to come in. The slaughtered beast was accepted *for* him, to make atonement or reconciliation for him; but the idea of expiation or pacification by means of an equivalent was absent altogether from these Mosaic ordinances. The bullock died in reality; and at the same time the offender died in symbol. The animal was thus not a substitute for the man, for if it had been, the man could not have died symbolically. It would, in such case, have been an exact legal equivalent for his own body, which it certainly was not. It simply represented the man's "flesh of sin," to use an Apostolic phrase. This was put to death as an acknowledgment of the just claim of the Law upon the nature that had transgressed. Presumably, if the transgressor had not laid his hand upon the head of the beast, the sacrifice would have been of no avail. The offering would *then* have been of the nature of substitution, and God has never accepted a substitute in expiation of a personal offense.

How, then, did the man get forgiveness? The answer is—Freely, by the Divine favor. It was not enough that he simply acknowledged the claim which the law had upon his body, or life. It would be held a curious forensic ordinance which decreed my total absolution from any form of guilt on condition that I only recognized the fact of its existence. Few creditors are disposed to be satisfied with the mere acknowledgment of their claims on the part of the debtor. He is expected to put his recognition into practical shape, and pay up.

This is what the man at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation did, under the law of Moses. He himself was symbolically put to death when he killed the bullock before the Lord. Had the beast been a substitute for him, he would not have been required to identify himself with it in any way. In fact, it would have been necessary for him to avoid all such

identification. Your substitute is he who does something *instead* of you. If you have any personal part in the transaction, either symbolic or otherwise, he ceases to be your substitute. You are doing part of the business yourself. You are drafted to serve in the army, and you get some one to go in your stead. But if you go too, or play ever so small a part in the business for which your country has demanded your services, the other man is no longer your substitute.

Now, under the law of Moses, the arrangement was that he who had committed a trespass should himself go with the victim he brought to the door of the Tabernacle, and there die a symbolic death. He thus not only recognized the claim which the law had on him, but voluntarily surrendered himself thereunto; and in so doing all his actual transgressions were freely forgiven.

The idea of substitution has probably arisen in connection with the fact that the slaughtered animal was required to be "without blemish." This looks like the innocent suffering instead of the guilty. And the notion is supposed to receive countenance in the apostolic statement that "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." The spotlessness of the animal sacrificed under the law was, however, a type of the perfection of Christ's character, as is generally admitted. Had not Jesus been thus "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," his death would have been of no avail for the purposes of redemption. The law would have held him, in common with the rest, under its perpetual dominion. He could not have been released from the power of the grave, and consequently could never have released any one else. The spotlessness of his character could only have been typified by a sacrifice that was without blemish. Under no law, divine or human, is it permissible to put to death the innocent instead of the guilty.

Then if Jesus did not die instead of others, what was the relation which in dying he sustained to the law of sin and death under which we all are born?

In Rom. viii., Paul says that "God, sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." As there was in Christ no personal sin to condemn, "sin," in this passage, must have a different meaning from that of actual transgression. In 2 Cor. v. 21, we read of "him who knew no sin," being "made sin for us." This could only occur in the sense indicated in Heb. vii. 27,— "Who (Christ), needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins and then for the people's; for this he did once, when he offered up himself." Here, we do not conceive that the inspired writer refers to actual guilt at all. What the high priest did often, Jesus did once. This fact makes a reference in the passage to personal transgression inadmissible. Christ died unto the sin-nature, otherwise called by Paul "the flesh of sin" (Rom. viii. 3), not "sinful" in his case, in the sense of misdoing, but in the sense of nature or constitution. All flesh is "the flesh of sin," it is sin's property, for it is under the law of sin and death in consequence of its derivation from Adam. There is no guilt in this, it is pure misfortune. The posterity of Adam passes away in the natural order under the law of death, which was introduced into the world by his disobedience. Infants, who have neither done good nor evil, fall and die beneath this law, and not because of any personal offense—of which indeed they are obviously incapable. "The flesh of sin" is thus doomed to pass away without respect of persons. Jesus was "made sin" in this sense only: he partook of the Adamic nature common to all whom he came to redeem. That nature he voluntarily delivered up to the demand of the law of sin and death, which had a claim upon it through the disobedience of Adam. In this

he was the anti-type of the High Priest under the law. The priest put to death that which represented the body of sin; while Jesus offered up the body itself. God thus "condemned sin in the flesh"; he treated the flesh of all Adam's descendants representatively in the person of one, whom, because of his spotless character, he could deliver from the power of the grave. Being "made of a woman," and born under the law of sin and death, Jesus surrendered himself to its righteous claims. He thus "abolished death" just as we abolish a debt when we pay it. It is common to speak of death as "the debt of nature," and there can be no objection to the phrase provided that by "nature" we understand the law which, in the natural course of things, consigns all human beings to the silence of the grave. When Jesus thus offered up himself to the claims of the law of sin and death, its demands were fully met. "The law" only "hath dominion over man as long as he liveth." When he is dead it has done with him. Its dominion ceases with his last breath. But the consequences of its rule are endless, because death is a finale under the natural order. The claims of this law having been satisfied, the debtor's life remains forfeited, if he be an ordinary human being. Jesus, however, was more. He was "the body prepared" for the purposes of redemption. It was not possible that he should be holden of death. If he had died a natural death, he would have seen corruption, for "the death of the cross" was part of the obedience on account of which he was brought forth from the grave. But he died voluntarily—not in the ordinary course of nature. "No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself."

In Heb. ix. 12, he is shown to have been personally benefited by his own death,—“having obtained eternal redemption.” The state of the verb here (Middle Voice) in Greek refers back the action to the agent—e. g. I wash myself—I buy for

myself—I thrust away for myself—I persuade myself—I answer for myself—suffer yourselves to be defrauded—they all allowed themselves to be baptized. It was in this voice that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews referred to Christ as obtaining eternal redemption. He obtained it for himself. The Revised Version wisely omits the italicized words “*for us.*” Jesus needed such redemption not by reason of any personal offense, but because he was in the nature on which the law of sin and death had a claim, and he required to be released from that claim, which could only be done by the voluntary surrender of himself thereto in obedience to his Father.

He is now in a position to redeem from that law all who are willing to put to death the body of sin. It needs to be borne in mind that men are “condemned already”—“by nature children of wrath.” They come into the world and are “made subject unto vanity, not willingly.” Whatever their actual behavior may be—it cannot increase or prolong the condemnation pronounced against all flesh, which is “as the grass of the field.” They are under no law which will bring them out from the grave. On the contrary, they pass away under a law which keeps them there. There is, as we have before remarked, no guilt connected with their being born under such a constitution of things. The condemnation is shared by those who have “not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression,” such as infants and persons who come into the world with a defective cerebral organization. This universal law of death simply places matters where they were before the life on which it operates began. It works just the same whether there is actual guilt in the case or not. There is a passage (Rom. iii. 19) which may seem to teach otherwise: “That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” From this statement we might be led to infer that God deals out death to all mankind on the

ground of their personal transgressions, irrespectively of the law of death under which they are placed by birth. But the marginal reading will help us here: "That all the world may become subject to the judgment of God." And it is "the judgment of God" that, in the case of all of woman born, the law of sin and death shall be allowed to enforce its claims.

The question here for us to consider is, whether there is any provision made for our escape from this inherited condemnation, and, if so, where does the provision lie? And in what does it consist? "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches—none of them can by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him, that he should still live forever and not see corruption." That ransom has been given by Christ, as it is written: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." This was done when he laid it down in voluntary surrender to the Divine claim which the law of death had upon human nature. That law held captive the whole posterity of Adam. The redemption price was paid when Jesus gave himself up to it. In our case the effects of that redemption begin to operate the moment we put to death the body of sin. How are we to do this? We get full directions in Rom. vi. 3-8, where it is made abundantly plain that we may put ourselves to death, and destroy the body of sin symbolically. In the grave of baptism we bury the old man—the flesh of sin; and from that burial we rise released forever from the law of sin and death, by "the law of the spirit of life in Jesus Christ." No man ever passes under that law a second time. He may walk unworthily of his high vocation; he may sow to the flesh; he may mind earthly things. If he so does, and dies unrepentant, he will get the wages he has earned, and "the wages of sin is death," under a distinct arrangement affecting those only who having been once made

free from the law of sin and death, "turn aside from the holy commandment," and so "fail of the grace of God."

As for the personal transgressions of those who thus are "made free from sin," these are freely forgiven. Obedient believers of the gospel are "justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." They are "baptized for the remissions of sins." Their sins are "blotted out." There is no equivalent for debt incurred, nor any form of compensation given. Under the law of Moses, Aaron was commanded to take two goats and cast lots upon them—one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat. The former was to be a sin-offering; the latter, having been presented alive before the Lord, was to be sent away "by the hand of a fit man, into the wilderness," and so "bear upon him the iniquities of the people unto a land not inhabited." In this dual ordinance there was, in all probability, a typical representation of the two things of which we have been treating. The goat that was sacrificed might represent the putting to death of the body of sin in the manner we have described; while the scapegoat, carrying the sins of the people upon it into the wilderness, might shadow forth that act of God's sovereign favor by which He removes our transgressions from us "as far as the east is from the west." Let us not suppose that God must have adequate compensation in some way or another for transgressions done; or that He has exacted it from Christ in our room and stead. If He was compensated, how could He forgive? The compensation, if real, would entirely repair the wrong, and obviously leave no room for the exercise of pardon. This prerogative God will never abdicate. Atonement is reconciliation—at-one-ment; not pacification or smoothing down. We are forgiven "for Christ's sake"—because the transgressor, having put himself to death by being "crucified with Christ," and been "buried with him by baptism

unto his death," has become one with Christ, in whose sacrifice the claims of the law of sin and death were fully met.

This is the wisdom of God. The scheme is free from that serious objection and mystery which more or less attaches to prevailing ideas upon the subject. It is simple enough in itself, and may, we think, be apprehended without much difficulty by minds capable of giving it due consideration. It amounts to this: Christ went up to the cross for the same reason (among others) that takes the believer down into the water—that he might destroy by crucifixion the body of sin's flesh in a voluntary surrender to the demand which the law of death made upon it. We are called upon to do the same in the symbolic act of baptism. We then are expected to walk as those who are no longer the servants of sin, but are related to an entirely new order of things. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." The old man is not allowed the reins. His impulses are held in vigorous and uncompromising restraint. The natural man is controlled by his inclinations, or by motives of worldly policy and prudence. He does things because it is pleasant and agreeable to do them. If he abstain it is for reasons not much superior. The new man is guided and governed by the mind of the spirit. The former affinities and habits have lost their rectoral power, and existence is dominated by totally different aims. The subject of this preliminary spiritual emancipation will eventually experience the adoption, to wit, the redemption of his body from that daily death to which he thus consigns it, and be permanently established in a glorious life in which no painful mortifications will be required of him, but all will be tranquillity and perfection, and joy unspeakable for evermore.

LECTURE VII.

WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

THE salvation revealed in the Scriptures is not made known elsewhere. It is to them we are indebted for all reliable information upon the subject. At no stage of the world's mental development have its foremost thinkers managed to hit upon an analogous scheme. To the oracles of God, therefore, we turn for the one true solution of the problem which meets us at the earliest dawn of reason. In them alone do we read of a salvation that answers to our deepest needs.

It is therein connected with, and made conditional upon, a certain attitude of the mind which is described by the word "faith." The house of Israel are spoken of in Deut. xxxii, 20, as "children in whom is no faith." This accusation is borne out in the Epistle to the Hebrews (iv. 2), where is a reference to those who fell in the wilderness, of whom it is said, "The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with *faith* in them that heard it." In the same Epistle (xi. 6), it is broadly stated that "without *faith* it is impossible to please God." This being the case, it is clearly of the utmost consequence that we be well informed as to the nature of faith—what it rests upon, how it is produced and sustained, and what it will end in.

Now what is the demand here made upon us? Is it a blind and unquestioning acceptance of certain propositions

without regard to their coherence, or probability, or reasonableness? That would be mere credulity—not faith. God does not ask us to close our eyes. It is the well-known contention of the Papacy that reason steps out of its proper province the moment it employs itself on matters of religion. There is, of course, no imaginable absurdity that might not be defended on such grounds. But the Scriptures invite us to a reasonable service. The wisest man of his day applied his heart “to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the *reason* of things.”

It is the peculiar province of faith to deal with the future. In this respect it may be said to differ from belief. The latter is concerned with what is past—with the things God has already done upon the earth. He has chosen the nation of Israel, dispersed them among the Gentiles, and promised of old to restore them to their land, and place them under the care of a King and Shepherd of his own. He has raised His Son, Jesus Christ, from the dead in view of this, and has committed to him the jurisdiction of the whole earth. It is quite possible for a man to believe all this who is but imperfectly acquainted with all the evidence that goes to prove it. For it is not like an abstruse literary question requiring for its settlement an extensive acquaintance with books. No erudition is needed to enable a man to know and understand the promises of God, which are the foundation of saving faith. He has simply to turn up his English Bible and search those promises out. There they are, couched in no ambiguous terms; and not all the ministers and clergymen in the world could make them one whit plainer. The only mistake he is in danger of is, in supposing that they mean something other than that which is warranted by the simple grammatical import of the terms in which they are expressed.

What was it on which rested the faith of God's saints in

ancient times? Surely there ought to be no great difficulty in answering a simple question like this "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. . . . They which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham" (Gal. iii. 6-9). In order thus to share the blessing of Abraham, we must have his faith, and this we cannot have unless we know and believe what was promised him. It is unfortunately the case that much of the faith of which we hear in religious circles is in no way founded upon any promise which God made to Abraham. If you were to examine all the definitions of saving faith contained in theological literature, you would not find a sentence referring you to any covenant which God made with the progenitor of the Israelitish nation. And it is by no means clear how those can be said to be "blessed with faithful Abraham" who do not believe what God told him, or who are ignorant upon the point. His faith was no hazy, nebulous impression that, somehow or other, all would come right in the end. It was the belief of specific testimony. "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed" (Gal. iii. 8). If our faith is to be of any advantage to us, must it not rest on that ancient foundation? "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able to perform" (Rom. iv. 20, 21). We certainly can have no simpler or more scriptural definition of saving faith. What bishop could give us a better, or one easier to understand? A full persuasion that God will do what he has said—a persuasion based upon his own promises. This is that which constituted Abraham "the father of all them that believe" (Rom. iv. 11)—an honorable distinction truly! Righteousness is to be imputed to all who walk in the steps of his

faith. They are just required to believe what he believed, and to look for the things which were objects of faith and hope to him.

Then comes the question—What sort of a promise did God make to Abraham? For whatever it was, Paul regarded it as lying at the very foundation of the Gospel which he preached. He declared that he was “judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto the fathers” (Acts xxvi. 6). He says also that “Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises made unto the fathers” (Rom. xv. 8). Thus it is abundantly manifest that the very Gospel itself, which we are required to believe, finds its germ and significance in that which God covenanted to Abraham.

Did the Most High then say anything to His servant about a final deliverance from the pains of hell, and a translation to celestial places? Was his immortal soul to be conveyed at death to realms beyond the sky? It would, I suppose, be considered by many in our day a very defective gospel which did not emphasize and dilate upon these particulars. But God had not a word to say to Abraham about any such matters. The Patriarch’s faith fastened itself upon no such ideas. Let us see.

In Rom. iv. 13, Paul defines the promise as a guarantee that Abraham should be “the heir of the world.” In Gal. iii. 18, he says that God gave him the inheritance (of the land which his fleshly seed afterwards possessed under the law) by promise. And in Heb. xi. 8, we read that he “was called to go out into a *place* which *he* should *after* receive for an inheritance.” Turning to Gen. xiii. 15, we find that this inheritance of land was to be held on no limited tenure, but on one that should be permanent—“All the land which thou seest, to *thee* will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.” Paul shows that

the "seed" in this case is Christ (Gal. iii. 16), and as many as have been baptized into him (verse 27, 29).

Any one can see what such a promise as this involved. A mortal man can inherit nothing forever. He might inherit a property for the term of his natural life, but that would be all. "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." No man's goods or glory can descend after him into the grave. But Abraham did not even have his inheritance for this limited period, and he quite understood that such was to be the case. As Stephen said (Acts vii. 5), God "gave him none inheritance in it, no not so much as to set his foot on; yet He promised that *He would* give it to him for a possession." He was told, when the promise was made, "Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace: thou shalt be buried in a good old age." "He sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country" (Heb. xi. 9)—a country in which he had no sort of proprietorship; and he was content to do so down to the day of his death, in sure trust and confidence that the whole territory would one day have him as its perpetual owner and lord.

He must, therefore, have been a believer in the resurrection of the dead. His must have been the conviction that God would bring him back to life again, and give him a nature that would last as long as his everlasting inheritance. And what better hope could any man in any generation have or want? There were life and incorruptibility hidden in that promise, which quite enables us to understand how the Gospel was preached unto Abraham, for Paul says that Christ "hath abolished death," and brought these things to light through the Gospel (2 Tim. i. 10).

We have simply to let our faith run in this groove. It will be worthless and unavailing if we place it anywhere else. It must be Abrahamic. Deliverance from the power of the

grave and a permanent inheritance in the earth, are the things to which it must ever and exclusively point as the needle to the pole. This is real, Scriptural belief on the Lord Jesus Christ, who has been constituted a name of salvation. God has deposited these things in him who by delivering over to the claims of death the nature inherited from Adam, has become free from its dominion, and by his resurrection has opened the gates of death, and prepared the way for the fulfillment, in due time, of all that was promised to the fathers. To him has been committed the honor of recalling them from their long sleep in the oblivion of the grave, and of endowing them with that immortality which will qualify them for their everlasting inheritance in the glorious land.

It would seem indisputable that before we can have saving faith we must know what it is that we need to be saved from. Faith implies intelligence on this point. It does not admit of our being in a state of uncertainty about it. If we were struggling in the water, and believed that we should get out, our faith would fix itself on one distinct form of salvation. Under such circumstances we should know the precise nature of the peril to which we were exposed. But there are, unfortunately, so many different opinions in the world touching what is to happen in the future that most people are really unprepared to speak very definitely upon the subject; and the few that are, run the risk of exciting the pity or indignation of the rest.

But, pray, what is it from which we all need to be saved? What great question does the Bible deal with from first to last? What news would be most welcome to us in our present evil plight? Here we are, getting older every day—the grave ready for us at any time. If we form friendships, they are snatched from us, or we from them, by the ruthless hand of death. If we are in tolerable health one day, we are liable to be pros-

trate and incapable the next. Besides all which, we are harassed with a thousand cares which arise from the difficulty of getting enough for the requirements of this present vanishing existence. Surely deliverance from all this, even though not involving our transfer to some other part of the universe, would be exactly the salvation we need. We should be satisfied if we could permanently remain on this beautiful earth, under better conditions than those which at present prevail—if we could always be strong and well, and be entirely free from distress and care, and see all mankind living in purity, and peace, and plenty, and the fear of God.

Well, all this is wrapped up in the covenant made with Abraham. We read the Scriptures and find that this is none other than the salvation which God has provided in Christ. The whole human race is death-stricken because of sin, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." This is what is amiss! The nations of the earth are mortal—hastening to the grave. Their succeeding generations vanish from the scene, and are no more. Men fail to realize this, and cherish the delusion that they are deathless beings—the heirs of an illimitable duration. Hence they are blind to the peril which actually lies before them, and are scarcely prepared to listen to any way of salvation which recognizes the real facts of the case. No doubt it is pleasanter to live in ignorance of those facts, for there is not a little that is distressing and sad about them. But earnest minds are more anxious to know what is the bitter truth than to cherish attractive fiction. That truth may indeed be dreadful, and stern, and repellent, but the opposite of it can do us no real good. Let us then by all means open our eyes to the exact position of affairs. If we do we shall see that the tribes and families of mankind are in the state we have already described. They are doomed to the dissolutions of the grave, and they cannot deliver them-

selves from this destiny by any act or virtue of their own. The strictest morality we may practice cannot alter our natural relation to the law of sin and death. The Gospel alone is the divinely appointed agency of salvation. "Jesus said, I am the resurrection, and the life." "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Paul declared that it had "pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." It would be difficult to justify the mission of the Apostles if salvation were attainable independently of their testimony.

This is no merely speculative affair, or bit of barren theological discussion. It goes down to the root of all that concern us as living men and women who desire to live for ever. The possession of a saving faith will work wonders for us even now. It will do for us what it did for Abraham. It reconciled him to his lot as a stranger and pilgrim on the earth. He did not look for real and permanent satisfaction in this mortal state. His faith saved him from perpetual fret, and worry, and chafe over the vanities of a transient existence. His worldly affairs might prosper, or they might not. It did not matter a very great deal. All would soon be over and gone, and his body would rest in peace against the promised day of endless inheritance and blessing. He would then wake up surprised to find how long, and yet how short, his many-centuried sleep had been; for "the dead know not anything," and are as oblivious of the lapse of time as they are of the eternity that went before their birth.

I know that such views of life would by many be pronounced unhealthy and abnormal; but are they not, after all, in strict accord with obvious fact? Think of the generations that are gone, with all their business, their anxieties, their worldly hopes and fears! There are thousands of skulls lying empty and pulseless in the cemetery that once were the seats

of a thought as scheming and distracting as yours to-day; and in very short time (shorter, perhaps, than you may suppose) yours will be lying in a similar condition! What, then, is the good of fixing your whole heart's sympathy and care upon a vanishing picture—a mere passing panorama? "The fashion of this world passeth away." "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Life may be full of troubles, and barren of joys, but it cannot last beyond a certain time; and if it be lighted up with the glorious hope of the Gospel, it will not be very difficult to lay it down. There is, after all, to the believer, a genuine satisfaction in the fact expressed so pathetically by David in his declining years—"We are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding." With the worldling it is far otherwise; the prospect of death darkens his brightest hours, and the well-assured fact that he must soon bid farewell to his cherished associations infixes a sting in his fondest joys.

Even if there were no issues to faith of the kind the promises exhibit—if the whole affair turned out a magnificent dream and fiction, and there was in reality nothing but an eternal grave before the sons of men—still let me pass through life under the inspiring and purifying influence of this splendid lie, rather than exist without aspiration, and die without hope! Expectancy, joy, nobility and elevation of character are better than their opposites, even though the foundation on which they rest be a foundation of sand.

But we are by no means driven to this alternative. There are issues to faith of a demonstrably certain character. Its roots stretch far out into the historic past, and entwine themselves around facts which are among the best accredited of all that appertain to the human race. And it will culminate in such blessedness as hath not entered into the heart of the

natural man. It is no trifling thing to be offered a body that will never decay, but have life in itself, and be perpetually resplendent, and vigorous, and perfect in all its faculties and functions. To be accounted worthy of recognition by him to whom God has given all power in heaven and in earth—to be called to his side, and invited to follow and assist him in the great work which the Father has given him to do—to wield authority over the cities of the nations, and have unlimited resources of wealth, and wisdom, and beneficence, and strength at instantaneous command! These are the prominent characteristics of a future that will be crowded with transcendent glories—“an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven” in the person of Christ, in whom is treasured up all promised blessing for them “who are kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.”

LECTURE VIII.

IS HEAVEN OUR HOME?

THE human mind has in all ages solaced itself in the presence of death with a variety of pleasant fiction. Its hopes have uniformly found a ready vehicle in the inherited traditions of its respective countries and generations. The savage has buried with the deceased his bow and arrows in the belief that he would thus be enabled to pursue the chase in the land of spirits. Of our Pagan ancestors, the Anglo-Saxons, it is recorded that their ideas of the immortality of the soul were such as to inspire them with a contempt of death. On the other hand, the Buddhist looks forward to entire cessation of conscious being as the highest and most desirable recompense of a virtuous life. The ancient Greeks seem to have varied in their speculations as to a future state of existence—the imagination of some reveling in the prospect of Elysian fields—an embowered and floral Paradise, melodious with song, and murmuring with the sound of perennial waters; while Achilles, in the *Odyssey*, is quoted as having “expressed a very natural, and no doubt a very common sentiment, when he said that he would rather be on earth the serf of a needy master, than reign over the whole kingdom of the dead.”

The Egyptians anticipated departure at death to Osiris, the national benefactor; the Goths to Zamolxis. The doctrine of the Persians was so nearly akin to that of the Hebrews that some writers have hazarded the conjecture that the con-

tact of Zoroastrian opinions may have subsequently favored the development of the latter, though it certainly did not originate it. Zoroaster is said to have put this question to Ormuzd: "The wind bears forth the dust of the body, water washes it away; how then shall the body come again? how shall the dead arise?" Ormuzd answered: "I am he who holds the star-spangled heaven in ethereal space; who makes this sphere, which once was buried in darkness, a flood of light. . . . I created man, whose eye is light, whose life is the breath of his nostrils; I placed within him life's inextinguishable power. . . . Surely shall thine eyes some day see all these things live anew. Skeletons shall be clothed with veins and sinews. And when the resurrection is finished it shall never a second time take place." The system of religion which Zoroaster founded gradually sank into the gulf of a mere idolatrous adoration of the fire and the sun.

A celebrated Mohammedan writer of the tenth century held out the hope of a final refuge from all life's troubles in God. "In reunion with him we shall find eternal rest—a rest without sorrow, a joy without pain, a strength without doubt, a tranquil and yet an ecstatic vision of the source of life and light and glory, the source from which we came." The old Romans are said to have had their *lares*, or spirits of those who had led virtuous lives; their *larvæ* or lemures, the spirits of the wicked; their *manes*, the spirits of those of whom the merits were doubtful.

But if we wish authority on the subject and not speculation, we must consult those "oracles of the Deity" which were given into the hands of the nation of Israel—the only nation that for many centuries was in possession of so sacred and inestimable a trust. An oracle is a dogmatic religious communication, given for a religious purpose. It teaches no form of natural science or philosophy, unless such knowledge be

required as the basis of the spiritual instruction conveyed by the oracle itself.

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that the person whose names he mentions "all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Hebrews xi. 13). We should not have supposed so much as is here stated of them, from simply reading the biography as given in the book of Genesis. Indeed, the whole Pentateuch is silent on the subject of a future life. The Levitical legislation was restricted to temporal promises.

There is, however, nowhere in the Hebrew Scriptures any unequivocal expression of such hope as we can commonly hear, in favor of this contention. In the language they employ, hope lasts no longer than life, and never blends with their lamentations for the dead. Even if Jacob (as some strongly contend) expected to rejoin his son in Sheol, the prospect cannot be said to have solaced him in the least, as it surely would have done had it held out the certainty of conscious reunion there. None of the Patriarchs or Prophets appear to have anticipated a posthumous bliss. "They that go down to the pit cannot hope for thy truth" (Isa. xxxviii. 18). "Oh, spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more" (Ps. xxxix. 13). "Man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up; so man lieth down, and riseth not; till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep" (Job xiv. 10-12).

These are specimens of Hebrew thought and conviction on the subject of man's condition in death. They might be multiplied almost indefinitely. Nowhere in these writings is

there a syllable to indicate that the hope of an Old Testament saint was in any sense identical with the heaven-going expectations of modern times. He looked indeed for a renewed existence, but only by means of his redemption from the power of the grave. Meanwhile he would lie in darkness and under the shadow of death,—corruption would be his father, and the worm his mother,—he would go down to the pit, and abide like the slain in the grave whom Jehovah remembers no more! But there would come a time of awakening, when the earth would cast out her dead, who would once again see the Lord in the land of the living, and rejoice forever in his salvation. Satisfaction would come at last! Of him who was to make his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death, it is immediately afterwards predicted that “he shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied” (Isaiah liii. 11). “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awaked with thy likeness” (Ps. xvii. 15). “I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction” (Hosea xiii. 14). On this redemption the hope of every truly enlightened Israelite was fixed, and not on any previous translation to heavenly places.

Descending to New Testament times, we begin to find traces of the belief in a disembodied felicity for all the righteous dead, with a corresponding state of misery for the wicked. Tacitus states that the Jews derived their custom of burying instead of burning their dead from the Egyptians; that they have also the same care of the dead with them, and the same persuasion about the invisible world below. (See appendix to Josephus, vol. ii., p. 545.) In his “Discourse to the Greeks concerning Hades,” Josephus describes it “as a place in the world not regularly finished; a subterraneous region, wherein

the light of this world does not shine. . . . This region is allotted as a place of custody for souls, in which angels are appointed as guardians to them, who distribute to them temporary punishments, agreeable to every one's behavior and manners. The souls of the just are in the same region, but in a distinct department of it. On their entrance they are "guided to the right hand, and are led with hymns sung by the angels appointed over that place. . . . This place we call the bosom of Abraham." Jesus appears to have made a trenchant and ironical use of this piece of popular fiction in his well-known parable of the rich man and Lazarus—a parable which, strangely enough, has been extensively and seriously employed in support of the very fable it was obviously designed to discredit.

The Jews of Alexandria—led by Philo, who was an old man at about A.D. 40, when he was sent at the head of an embassy from them to the Emperor Caligula—held that the body of man was unnecessary to his real existence, and that his true life only began at the epoch of his escape from this fleshly prison. This also appears to have been the doctrine of the Essenes, who used Jewish imagery and forms of speech in its enunciation, but only to convey the teaching of the Alexandrian philosophy.

From those days onward to our time the idea has more or less extensively prevailed that to a righteous man death is but the gate through which he passes into a heavenly state. Bush, in his treatise on the soul, says: "No article of any creed in Christendom is more universally or unhesitatingly held than that each individual enters at death upon an eternal state of retribution." Language might be quoted from the doctrinal standards of the various religious denominations, from hymns used in worship, and from innumerable published works, which unmistakably set forth this belief. People are

accustomed to hear and use this language almost from their very childhood, and perhaps it seldom occurs to them to question its accuracy. The idea it expresses is presented to their minds backed by the enormous force of an established and all but universal authority. It is thus that the opinions of the vast majority of mankind on all religious subjects are molded and determined. Nor is this anything to be surprised at. What more natural than that persons, who for any reason feel themselves defective in knowledge, should allow the settlement of difficult questions to remain entirely in the hands of those who have been trained for their special treatment? And when churches have been built at a great expense, and munificently endowed either by the State or by private liberality and bequest for the express inculcation of certain doctrines, and those only, it is no wonder that those who sustain the office of the public teacher in such buildings should discountenance the agitation of them, and be content to have them assumed. When a man is thus bound by considerations so closely affecting his temporal prospects to uphold any established system, he is scarcely qualified to give an impartial verdict upon it. The less he knows and says in opposition to that he is paid to teach, the better for his emoluments and peace of mind.

But we lie under no such unfortunate and vexatious disabilities. Let us see then, if there be any ground in the New Testament Scriptures for the idea that heaven is our home.

Jewish Rabbinism had no fewer than three heavens. The first heaven was the space occupied by the atmosphere which surrounds the earth. The second was the region of the stars and planets. The third was beyond the confines of the visible creation—the house and throne of God. But we have no scriptural warrant for such exact definitions. Elijah was taken up by a whirlwind into heaven, and thither Christ

ascended. In the one case it is probable that nothing more is intended by the history than the illustrious prophet's removal from the scene of his labors. The precise locality of the heaven to which he went cannot be conjectured. (Here we may remark that his subsequent appearance with Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration, even though it were a literal occurrence, and not a "vision," as the narrative represents, would prove nothing for the common idea; for Elijah's translation was that of a living man, and not a disembodied spirit.) Jesus ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives. But even this statement gives us no information as to where heaven is. If he ascended aloft in the plumb-line vertical to Mount Olivet, then, had his ascent been accomplished twelve hours later, he would have taken an exactly opposite direction owing to the diurnal revolution of the earth on its axis. Some speak of heaven as located somewhere in the center of the vast expanse of space. They forget that space is boundless, and that which is of infinite extension can have no center. We might as well speak of a *central moment* in the eternity which is past and is to come. The idea is absolutely unthinkable.

Reliance, however, in support of the popular theory is put upon Christ's declaration to his disciples: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (John xiv. 2). Accordingly it is customary to speak of heaven as "a prepared place for a prepared people." But what about the ancient saints, who are supposed to have gone there hundreds and thousands of years before Christ went to prepare it? Did they go to find heaven in a state of disorder—not ready for their reception? Obviously we must adopt some more reasonable interpretation of Christ's words than the one they are thus made to yield. If we remember that the Father's house is that

"household of God" spoken of in the Apostolic Scriptures as ultimately to consist of his immortalized sons and daughters who are in their respective generations being "builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 22), and if we take the rendering of the word translated "mansions," given in the margin of the Revised Bible as "abiding places," we shall see that there is no necessity to suppose the words contain an allusion to the "heaven" of traditional theology. Christ proceeds to say: "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will *come again*, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also." Thus we see that the place promised them would not be prepared for them before the time appointed for his return to the earth. And as that return has not yet occurred it is impossible for us to suppose the earlier part of the promise was fulfilled when the disciples died. To us it seems clear that in this passage Jesus gives a reason for his long absence from them. The reason was this: the house of God was to consist of a great multitude which no man can number, and a large proportion of that multitude had yet to be developed from succeeding generations. The hearts of his disciples were filled with sorrow at the prospect of his approaching departure from them, and in giving them consolation in these distressing circumstances, he showed them how needful the separation was in order that an abiding condition or an immortal existence might be prepared for others as well as them. He had, moreover, previously declared: "As I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you" (John xiii. 33). Here is a distinct assurance that they could not follow him into the Father's presence to which he was then about to go. But although this was impossible, he would come again, and receiving them unto himself would give them a permanent membership in the great family of God when the days of its completion should arrive. To Nico-

demus he said: "No man hath ascended into heaven" (John iii. 13). How many modern statements are false, if that is true! What becomes of all the comfort it is usual to address to those mourning the loss of dear friends and kindred, when they are assured the departed are "safe in the arms of Jesus—safe on his gentle breast"? If Jesus is in heaven and no man hath ascended there (not even the Patriarch David—see Acts ii. 34), how can any one be in his arms, and on his breast? Why minister spurious consolation? The answer to this in many cases would be—because it is consolation, though perchance illusive, and there are cases in which it would be cruel to withhold it. Is this, then, an instance in which it is allowable to sacrifice the truth of God at the shrine of human sensation and preference? What do we lose when we part with a hollow or foundationless comfort? We will let an eloquent author reply: "We have lost absolutely nothing but that which the traveler loses when the mirage, which has displayed cool waters and green shades before him, melts swiftly away. There were no cooling fountains really there to allay his thirst, no flowery meadows for his wearied limbs; his pleasure was delusion, and the wilderness is blank. Rather the mirage, with its pleasant illusion, is the human cry, than the desert and its barrenness. Not so is the friendly warning; seek not vainly in the desert that which is not there, but turn rather to other horizons, and to surer hopes. Do not waste life clinging to ecclesiastical dogmas which represent no eternal verities, but search elsewhere for truth which may haply be found."

That truth is discoverable in the promises of God. Those promises were the sole basis of all Apostolic expectation of a future life. Under their influence the Thessalonians were led to "turn from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven" (1 Thess. i. 9, 10.) Would these believers at Thessalonica have been instructed to *wait*

for Christ *from* heaven, if it had been the Divine purpose that they should go *to* Christ *in* heaven eighteen hundred or two thousand years before their Lord's return? Hardly.

Why should sobs of bitter lamentation escape us when standing by the open grave, if the friend we follow to his burial has passed away to the heaven of eternal light and joy? Did we really believe this of him we should surely find our emotions of sorrow less difficult to control. But the fact is, at such times our natural feeling and plain sober sense involuntarily refuse to be imposed upon by a theological lie, and not all the books that ever bore the title—"Heaven our home," would avail to stop a single tear in the presence of that cold and lifeless clay.

From vain and profitless tradition turn we to the word of the Lord Jesus: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall *inherit the earth*" (Matt. v. 5). There is not a single promise in the whole revelation of God which fixes their inheritance in celestial spheres. That revelation is concerned from first to last with "this terrestrial ball." "The upright shall *dwell* in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it. But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it" (Prov. ii. 21, 22). "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord" (Num. xiv. 21). "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Ps. ii. 8). Now look at the picture which these three texts exhibit and see if you cannot make a home of it. First you have the earth cleansed from all its moral rubbish—the men "rooted out of it" by whose hand it is made the scene of depravity and woe, which myriads find it to be. "Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross: therefore I love thy testimonies" (Ps. cxix. 119). These are they who make the earth a desert instead of a home. Purged from the

defilement of their presence, you have only a righteous population remaining. And what does that mean? It means the most exquisite satisfaction that an ideal human intercourse can be imagined to afford. Every man at peace with his neighbor. Every dwelling-place the scene of contentment and purity and intelligence. No squalid misery or disease. No bitter crushing poverty. No "rich man's scorn," nor "proud man's contumely." No violent perversion of judgment and justice. No seasons of industrial depression, or commercial panic. No wars or rumors of wars. No "social maladjustments" of any kind. Because all human affairs are divinely administered by the beneficent and unerring hand of "that man whom God hath ordained," and to whom he hath given "all power in heaven and in earth."

A large section of the world's population profess allegiance to Christ in his absence; why should so many of these be so little able to endure the prospect of his visible presence and control? Human government has not been such a glorious success for all these centuries that any need disdain the thought of the personal rulership of him whom God hath appointed "the heir of all things" (Heb. i. 2), and who in the day of his humiliation could say: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

If every man upon the face of the earth were a worthy representative of his species—his understanding cultivated, his manners refined, his morals pure, his conversation chaste, his heart filled with affection and a "burning charity divine," his conscience molded and disciplined by an enlightened fear of God—we should surely be living in "a better country—that is, a heavenly." And if, in addition to all this, we were destined to "dwell in the land forever" (Psalm xxxvii. 29), we should soon begin to feel ourselves at home, and should want no other heaven.

Why then do men avert their gaze from the revealed future, and fix it on the airy phantoms of a paganized imagination! Is there not enough in what God has actually promised, to excite the highest and purest aspirations of the human mind and heart, that we must needs look in other directions for the hope and consolation that we need? "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's; but the earth hath he given to the children of men" (Psalm cxv. 16). Then let us be content with the prospect of the inheritance which may and will be ours if we walk in the way of God's commandments. No longer hoping for that he has never promised to bestow, we shall act wisely if we search the Scriptures of the Prophets and learn from them what glorious things he hath prepared for them that love him. Already he has done a great preliminary work upon the earth. The soil that carried the weary footsteps of the man of sorrows, and received the blood he shed for the remission of sins, shall yet upbear his triumphant march when he comes to rule the world in righteousness, to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.

LECTURE IX.

THE SONG OF THE HEAVENLY HOST.

IF we could take our stand on the plains of Bethlehem today, in ignorance of the Bible history, we should see nothing that would invest the locality with any extraordinary interest. We should see a miserable-looking little town, consisting of about two hundred houses, mean structures, built of limestone, without much regard to architectural effect. Olive and fig trees, vines and corn-fields, supply an environment which arrests the invasion of the desert. It is improbable that any modern Bethlehemite has a Scripturally enlightened conception of the ancient occurrences which have made the place famous throughout the civilized world. Hundreds living remote from the spot are better able to interpret the thrilling facts of its history, as predicted by Micah, and described by Luke. It is because we believe that what happened in that neighborhood eighteen and a half centuries ago bears upon the question of the world's future, that we are interested in this paltry Syrian village. There was born that great Deliverer of the nations, whose mission it is to bring all terrestrial things into glorious and permanent agreement with the beneficent purpose of God.

The announcement of this was first made to a group of shepherds. The Divine scheme has had several of its initiatory scenes laid in the pastoral world. The Patriarchs of the Hebrew nation received important revelations from on high when in the midst of their flocks. Under such circumstances the

angel of the Lord appeared to Moses. David was summoned from the sheepfolds to rule and shepherd the house of Israel. It is no more than a coincidence that the Greco-Roman legends chose to represent their heroes—a Cyrus or a Romulus—as being brought up among shepherds. Plain and humble men were selected as the receivers and conveyancers of the first intelligence of Messiah's birth. Such is the instrumentality by means of which God elects to work, "that no flesh should glory in his presence."

We know nothing of the history of this heavenly host. Of their precise age, their exact number, their celestial home, we are entirely ignorant. They may have been the former denizens of our planet, and have passed their probation for eternal life upon its surface, as some of us are doing now. In the race for immortality they may have had competitors who failed to win the prize. There is strong presumption that the glorious and powerful beings spoken of so frequently in the Scriptures as "the angels of God" were once creatures of the dust, as we are, and placed under an arrangement of trial and discipline, from which they emerged to everlasting life. It seems reasonable that the Supreme Being should admit no creature to a participation of His own incorruptible existence whom He has not first subjected to some form of test, and given the opportunity of proving himself worthy of immortality. This plan excludes the possibility of the eternal duration of sin and evil, and is indeed an illustration of the doctrine of "the survival of the fittest." with which no true philosopher can quarrel.

It is not difficult on this understanding to account for the interest the heavenly host are represented as having manifested in the work of human redemption. Peter says, "the angels desire to look" into these things. And so, undoubtedly, should we, if we, like them, had accomplished a successful probation

for endless life, and were cognizant of the fact that a plan was in operation by which other mortals might be exalted to the same destiny with ourselves. We should be eager to know how they were likely to come forth from the period of trial, and should be glad to have a commission charging us with their defense and help. This appears to be the present function of the angels. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?" It is no marvel, therefore, that they should have signalized the birth of Christ with multitudinous rejoicing and the voice of melody.

We like to ponder anything that may have been revealed concerning the angels. Jesus told the Sadducees that the accepted in the resurrection would be equal to them. The prospect of such equality is ravishing in the extreme, for the angels are deathless, and strong, and wise, and glorious to behold. There are no misshapen, dwarfed, repulsive forms among them, such as are now so common among the sons and daughters of men. They have no diseases, nor sorrows, nor regrets, nor pains of any description. They are never weary of existence or of work. They make no mistakes. Their delight is to do Jehovah's commandments and to hearken to the voice of his word. All their splendid powers are pledged to the celebration of His praise. It was on this ground first of all that they were so exultant at the birth of Christ. For whatever else might result from that event, they knew it would bring "Glory to God in the highest."

This fact ought to incline us to make ourselves thoroughly acquainted with the scheme that centers in Christ. If God is to be glorified thereby, we may be sure that the issues of redemption will be in every respect worthy of Himself. They will be inconceivably grander than mortal man has been accustomed to suppose. God is not glorified by that which is pal-

try and mean; much less by that which is hideous, and purposeless, and cruel. A Calvin may have been able to conceive a system by which the Divine being gets glory from the endless and vindictive sufferings of his helpless creatures, even though they be "infants a span long"! Such a conception is quite worthy that morose Genevan who burnt Servetus at the stake for presuming to differ from him on a theological speculation. But reason recoils from the blasphemous suggestion. God is not an omnipotent tyrant, from whose universe it would be a satisfaction to escape. It is immoral doctrine which teaches that any sort of glory can accrue to Him from the perpetual misery of sentient beings—be they men or be they dogs—however wicked and worthless. "Yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction" (Isa. x. 25).

It is high time that men adjusted their ideas of future retribution to the song of the heavenly host when Christ was born. The sternest results of his work will be consonant with the lofty strain of "Glory to God in the highest." Such glory could never be his if the wicked were allowed to triumph and curse the earth by their presence for evermore. His goodness requires that they be "rooted out of it," and "utterly perish in their own corruption."

And who cannot see that in the glory of God lies the only possible chance of well-being for man? It is not (as some would tell us) that God has been "seized with a craving for praise, and is dissatisfied unless men are continually telling Him how great He is." Human recognition and worship do not please Him on grounds that are merely personal to Himself. The sources of the Divine satisfaction are not thus restricted to the obedience of His creatures. If they were, how limited must have been His pleasure for the last six thousand years! There is not a virtue commanded, nor an immorality

interdicted in the Scriptures for reasons unconnected with human welfare. "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good." "The Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, *for our good always.*" His will throughout is the expression of his benevolence, and man is the advantaged party. This is shown by the connection in the song of the angels of peace and good-will amongst men, with glory to God. The well-being of the nations must have a Divine root. At present there exists little more than a mere verbal recognition of the Supreme even in countries professedly subject to Christ. There is any amount of glory to man—in columns, and statues, and paintings, and public speeches, and banquets, and the like; but God receives a very scant and heartless recognition indeed. Even Sir John Herschell, in his chapter on "The Origin of Force," seems studiously to avoid all reference to a Personal Creator. In polite and scientific society, the subject is adverted to (if at all) with a species of reticence and demur that indicate how small a place God occupies in the thought and sympathy of the men who comprise these fashionable circles. A very large percentage of the sorrow and suffering which now afflict the race is due to the practical atheism which everywhere prevails amongst mankind. The accursed selfishness which is so ingrained in the heart of average humanity can only be displaced by admitting the nobler sentiment embodied in this angelic song. There is no hope for the cure of so depraved and wicked a passion on any other conceivable plan. The Creator of heaven and earth never intended the gifts of His bounty to have so avaricious an appropriation. Read who will, the Divine land laws—the Divine labor laws—and the Divine poor laws, recorded in Leviticus and Deuteronomy; and then scan in the Prophets the kind of provision God has made for the future, when all the wealth of the nations will be under the control of a benign legislation that will

“deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also, and him that hath no helper,”—a form of government which will “fill the hungry with good things, and send the rich empty away.”

In view of this, it cannot be said that the prophetic song of the heavenly host was without justification. It is true the past eighteen hundred years supply no counterpart to its utterances. The history of the whole period is made wretchedly interesting by its wars. These have been of every conceivable sort. There have been wars of extermination and conquest, when the object of the invading forces has been to capture and destroy human life, the motive being savage thirst for blood, and simple lust of power. Then there have been wars of *territory*, arising from international disputes about frontiers. If you take a map you will see how arbitrarily the lines of dominion are indicated, and you may wonder on what geographical or other principles the countries of the earth have been divided. The hand of beneficence and justice has never traced those zigzag lines. Every one of them represents an amount of bloodshed and desolation of which it would be difficult to form an approximate idea. There have also been wars of *diplomacy*, in which the interests of whole nations have been at the mercy of political intriguers who have managed to grasp the reins of power. Courts and cabinets have again and again played this dreadful game, and involved the industrial and peaceful classes in a struggle not their own. The most ridiculous pretexts have been made an occasion for hostilities. A trifling breach of international courtesy, or an imaginary insult to a bit of woven stuff called a flag; or a piece of meddlesome dictation as to the policy a nation should pursue under certain circumstances—these have been made into excuses for a resort to arms. Quarrels thus occasioned are never settled, they are but postponed; they breed hatred, and grudge, and rancor without end. Wars of *religion* have also a foremost place in

the history of civilization, and some of the worst of these have been carried on in the sacred name of Christ. For an abstract principle, or a religious speculation, armies have mustered and fought to the bitter death. Wars of *patriotism*, too, have slain their tens of thousands, who have rushed to the field at the bidding of the senseless maxim, "Our country, right or wrong!" Then there have been numerous wars of *class*, in which the less privileged sections have striven to readjust the balance of wealth and opportunity, and do away with the glaring anomalies pertaining to social life. Added to the foregoing list is the interminable catalogue of home and local disagreements—families falling out over the disposition of the paternal property—neighbors quarreling about a drain, a hedge, or a party wall. I have known sons who have never spoken to their mothers for years, although living under the same roof; and merchants in partnership, seeing each other daily, and yet having no oral intercourse whatever, but making all their communications in writing, or through a third party!

What with all these things, and "strikes" and "turn-outs" in the commercial world, and the everlasting friction and nagging between one order of human beings and another, one would suppose that the multitude of the heavenly host might very well have spared their song for some more fortunate planet. Even the belief in what they sung—the belief that there is a good time coming, when there will in every deed be "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and goodwill amongst men"—has itself strangely enough been a fruitful source of social and family estrangement. To make this glowing theme the substance of our hope toward God, is often to prove by sad experience how true a prophet Christ was when he said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against

her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Nor yet may we stop and breathe freely at this point; for among those whose mutual acceptance of the truth concerning the revealed future has drawn them into fellowship, and who might reasonably enough have been expected to keep "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," there have occurred the most disgraceful bickerings, and the saddest manifestations of "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness." The truth has thus been sorely wounded in the house of its friends, and no one need seek collective identification with it in the expectation that all will be harmony and joy and peace. It is its hap to gather together a variety of explosive material that will always require the utmost caution in the handling, and constitute a source of ever present danger and anxiety. So it was in Apostolic times, and so it will ever be as long as men are sinful flesh.

But this angelic song permits us to indulge the hope that human life upon earth will eventually become a higher, nobler, purer, and more unselfish thing: and that mankind will at last be magnanimous and open-hearted, having perfect confidence in one another, loving as brethren, and ready to serve and help each other in all the grand offices and fidelities of a friendship that has its roots in Him who is kind even to the evil and the unthankful, and who sends the refreshing shower and the genial sunbeam alike upon the just and the unjust.

The work of him who was born in Bethlehem of Judea is not yet complete. He has still to introduce into the world a state of society in which God will be at the summit, and which will answer in every particular to the strains of this angelic song. The foundation has already been laid: the superstructure has still to be reared; and a glorious edifice it will be when done. A condition of things will then prevail for which the

accumulated horrors of the past will not seem to have been too costly and too protracted a preliminary. No more ignorance of God, and contempt of his word and commandments! The joyful nations walking in the light of His glory, manifested in His Son, and a mighty host of immortal ones redeemed from Adam's race! Fallen the superstitions of ages by which the perishing millions have been enthralled. Vanished forever the tyrannies and despotisms of the world's potentates! The enmities of centuries interred in an eternal grave! All questions affecting the tenure of the soil, and the means of subsistence, and the boundaries of countries, settled in a manner that will admit of no revival or dispute! War abolished to the ends of the earth, and peaceful, contented populations everywhere living in intimacy, and joy, and purity, and intelligence, and the fear of God, whose tender mercies will then be over all his works!

The heavenly host had a prescience that reached beyond the centuries of misery and misrule which have since elapsed, and took in the consummation of the Divine purpose in Christ. Had they only been guided by such impressions as might be derived from a foreknowledge of the world's history meanwhile, their song would have been pitched in a minor key. The nations which are supposed to be most under Christian influences are the greatest experts in the arts of war, and their chiefs enter their cathedrals after a victorious campaign and give thanks to "the God of battles." To Christendom we must needs look for the biggest iron-clads, the largest dockyards, the most powerful ordnance, the deadliest torpedoes, the best rifles, and the finest armies and navies in all the world! If the nations become less military (of which, however, there is not the faintest sign) it will not be because they have grown more Christian, but because they have advanced in the direction of common humanity and good sense.

It may be doubted whether any political or international question will ever be settled in any parliament by an appeal to the doctrine of Christ. The statesman who ventured upon such a means of buttressing his logic would probably be treated with derision and contempt, and would scarcely be likely to try so reasonable an experiment again.

There is no hope worth the name in such directions. But there is a panacea for every ill which burdens and afflicts humanity in God's revealed intention to fill the earth with his glory at the Apocalypse of his beloved Son—to do away with war and bloodshed and all the unutterable miseries which follow in their train, and to establish a universal kingdom which will enlighten and bless the nations and make their intercourse a fellowship of good-will and peace. We may be excused if we say there is none other hope. There is everything to compel us to this conclusion—everything in the past history of the world and in the present condition of the civilized nations—everything in the known tendencies of human nature, unrestrained as they are by the power of revealed truth; and everything in the sure word of prophecy, which presents to us in unmistakable language the appointed sequel of the long dispensation of strife and evil—an issue which many saints of God in ages past have rejoiced to anticipate, and of which the angels sang—a consummation transcendently glorious, and reaching far as man has trod, leaving nothing to be remedied, or suggested, or desired.

“Come forth of thy royal chambers, thou Prince of the Kings of all the earth! Gird thee with the robes of thy Imperial Majesty, for the voice of thy Bride doth call thee, and all creatures sigh to be renewed!”

LECTURE X.

THE FIRST CHAPTER OF EZEKIEL.

THE prophet Ezekiel was contemporary with Jeremiah and Daniel. He prophesied, therefore, at a time when the Jewish nation was placed in exceptionally adverse circumstances, by the retributive providence of God. As he himself states in the opening of the prophecy he was, when he received these Divine communications, by the river of Chebar, a stream of considerable length which flows into the Euphrates. The obscurity of the visions he beheld there gave rise to doubt among the later Jews respecting their inspirational value. This doubt, however, is said to have been removed by one Rabbi Hananias, who wrote a commentary on the book, in which all its difficulties were believed to be satisfactorily solved. Nevertheless, the visions themselves were forbidden to be read by those who were under thirty years of age. No doubt there are plenty, whose age is beyond thirty, who are not much wiser for their perusal. One venerable expositor dismisses the first chapter with the remark, that all the appearances were supernatural, and, therefore, defy the ordinary rules of explanation. What he might understand by the ordinary rules of interpretation we do not know, unless he meant those commonly resorted to by ecclesiastical writers. We are quite prepared to believe that such rules would furnish very little assistance to an earnest student of these sublime mysteries.

It is necessary, first of all, to have a clear perception of the purpose of God, as exhibited in the plain and literal por-

tions of Holy Writ, in order that the symbolical part of the Scripture may be understood. And it is astonishing with what naturalness and facility these otherwise inexplicable passages yield to the treatment which proceeds on this very reasonable assumption. Let a man once see his way out of the mist and fog of popular tradition, and come to understand that there is one God, and one Lord Jesus Christ, and one Eternal Spirit, which is the Father's energy, and the means whereby he perceives and performs; let him learn that man is mortal, under sentence of death because of sin, and can only live again by resurrection from the dead; let him realize that it is God's intention to fill the whole earth with His glory, to govern its affairs by the hand of His Son, Jesus the Christ, in conjunction with his immortal brethren, and to make it the dwelling-place of his beneficence, and praise, and holiness, for evermore—I say, when these great facts are apprehended, there is comparatively little difficulty in the deciphering of those hieroglyphical matters over which so many learned brows have bent and frowned.

The symbolism of this first chapter of Ezekiel is, we think, rightly taken to represent the Messiah of Israel upon his throne, surrounded by his saints, and all energized and made glorious by the spirit of God.

The prophet appears to have fallen into a species of trance, and while in that state he beheld a whirlwind coming out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the color of amber (verse 4). The phenomenon of air in motion is used in the Scriptures to represent the spirit of God. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." And Jehovah, in one of the Psalms, is said to make the clouds

his chariot, and to ride upon the wings of the wind. A whirlwind, therefore, may be taken as the symbol of a divine movement in a tempestuous and destructive manner. We may safely assume that of whatever immediate and local applications some of the prophecies might be susceptible, the general drift of their communications had relation to the time when the long promised blessing of Abraham would be matter of actual experience upon the earth, and the nation of Israel be exalted to supremacy and honor in the sight of all the heathen. This is indeed the salvation of God, touching which the Apostle Peter says, "Of which salvation the Prophets have inquired and searched diligently." We cannot, therefore, be wrong in seeking the meaning of this symbolism, in the events which prophecy connects with the final manifestation of God's saving health among all nations.

There are numerous Scriptures which warrant the expectation that the establishment of Christ's kingdom will be attended with appalling displays of Divine power, which might find their most appropriate metaphors in whirlwind, and cloud, and fire. The Prophet Habakkuk (iii. 5), alluding, no doubt, to this epoch, says, "Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet." Also, in verse 12, "Thou didst march through the land in indignation; thou didst thresh the heathen in anger. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, *even* for salvation with thine anointed; thou woudest the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Selah. Thou didst strike through with his staves the head of his villages: they came out as a whirlwind to scatter me." In Pro. i. 27, we read of destruction coming upon the wicked as a whirlwind. Hosea viii. 7, speaks of those who having sown the wind, shall reap the whirlwind. Nahum, referring to the description of Nineveh says, (i. 3), "The Lord hath his way in

the whirlwind, and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet." And this is his aspect as one who avengeth and is furious, and who comes to take vengeance on his adversaries. So in Zechariah vii. 14, Jehovah makes mention of the fact that He had scattered the house of Israel with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. The prophets are unanimous in their announcements of turmoil and devastation, and huge disaster coincident with the appearing of the Messiah to exercise dominion in the earth. War is to exterminate vast multitudes, whose carcasses are left to rot upon the ground. The slain of the Lord are to be many, from one end of the earth to the other. When the Great Prince arises for the deliverance of Israel out of the hand of all her enemies, there is, according to Daniel, to be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation upon earth. The populations are likened, in one place, to the sour grape of the earth, and they are to supply material for the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

This, no doubt, has a look of dreadful severity about it; but the history of mankind from the commencement affords no hope that the nations will ever slide into a condition of purity, and righteousness, and general harmony with the will of God by any law of moral development and progress at present known to man. Not until God's judgments are abroad in the earth will the inhabitants learn righteousness.

Probably the main reason why people shrink from the idea of the world's being brought by such forcible means to submit to God, lies in the value they have always been accustomed to put upon human nature. But the Prophets do not appear to have ever been embarrassed by any such conceptions of mankind. They rather ransack the universe for metaphors and illustrations sufficiently contemptible to set forth human worthlessness in the sight of God. Their minds were

thus familiar with the prospect of a wholesale clearance from the face of the earth of wicked men. Indeed, there are some types of so terribly disgusting vileness and depravity, that not even a prophet's moral perception is needed, to reconcile a pure-minded spectator to the thought of their being swept into oblivion before the summary vengeance of God. But whether we are able to regard such a prospect with resignation or not, it is beyond all doubt the revealed preliminary to the promised blessedness in Christ, that with a whirlwind and an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the habitation of unrighteousness, and darkness shall pursue his foes. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thess. i. 7-9).

The language of the symbol we are considering, calls to mind a passage in Jeremiah (iv. 6), in which the destructive operation of God's judgments toward Judah is similarly portrayed. "Set up the standard toward Zion: retire, stay not: for I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction."

"A whirlwind from the north" would, therefore, be a style of symbolical description which would prove very forcible and impressive to those who, in Ezekiel's time, had already experienced something of the kind, in the Babylonian invasion which desolated their land. It would, to the mind of each of his fellow-captives, be an intimation of unparalleled disaster and ruin. As such we may consider it. The event of which it is intended to serve as an illustration will be unexampled in the entire history of the world. The destruction of life and of property which will characterize the era of God's judgment

of the nations, will be without precedent in all the annals of human woe.

We have already quoted Paul's allusion to the "flaming fire" which is to accompany the Lord Jesus at his appearing. The symbol which Ezekiel saw was not the likeness of fire uncontrolled. There was a bright center to it—"out of the midst thereof there was as the color of amber." I take that to signify that the judgments which will precede the establishment of Christ's kingdom will be unmistakably Divine in their character, and not like the ordinary disasters which befall mankind in purely natural ways. There is probably a large percentage of calamity with which God has nothing to do. Troubles overtake individuals and communities with which no punitive idea can be associated. There is no distinct intelligence at work generating the force which bursts a boiler, or wrecks a ship. Hundreds of occurrences of this sort happen, and God is not responsible for their happening, and intends nothing by them. They belong to a large class of events of a purely fortuitous character, which take place outside the sphere of His purpose. To speak in the symbolic manner of this vision—there is no "brightness as the color of amber," in the midst of a fire that burns to the ground a Gentile factory, or theater, or hotel. God is not concerned in such matters, but just leaves the guilty race to fall into its own calamities, and escape them as best it may.

But the dire occurrences which this symbol may be supposed to foreshadow will be conspicuously divine in the causes which produce them. "All the heathen shall see my judgments that I have executed."

We may regard this part of the symbolism before us as setting forth not only the destructive operation of God's judgments upon the nations, but also the inauguration of a new departure in the history of His relationship to man. This

epoch is fitly styled "the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of his glory." Things will everywhere be put upon a different footing, and have a new start. There will be new magistrates, and judges, and princes, and kings, and priests—a new system from top to bottom, the world throughout—the last first, and the first last, the poor exalted, and the rich sent empty away, and mankind brought to a state of hearty and intelligent sympathy with all the beneficent and glorious will of God.

The Prophet proceeds (verse 5): "Out of the midst of the fire came the likeness of four living creatures." It would seem impossible that we should understand this description, had we only the words before us as a guide. We have, however, in Rev. v. another vision of the same character, no doubt, but exhibiting features which were not present in the symbol which Ezekiel beheld. Four living creatures are spoken of there also, and they are represented as saying, "Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." We conclude, accordingly, that Ezekiel saw in these four living ones a symbol of the totality of the redeemed. "They had the likeness of a man." The nations are to be governed by, and God is to be manifested in, a great multitude that have belonged to the human race. To the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, of which we speak. "We shall reign upon the earth," say the four living creatures in the Apocalypse. God is pleased thus to ordain, and to such as ourselves the call to His kingdom and glory has been addressed. He might have arranged it otherwise, and provided for the due regulation and adjustment of human affairs, by appointing over them an order of beings that never had any connection with the species. But this is not His plan. It is necessary that the authority of the future age should be placed in the hands of such as have had

practical experience of the weakness of human nature, whose characters, too, have been refined and perfected by trial, who have acquired patience and generosity, and a thorough knowledge of good and evil, and who have walked by faith in God's promises, and in obedience of His commandments in a day of darkness and transgression, when men have been filled with their own devices, and there has been no fear of God before their eyes.

Ezekiel further describes the faces of the four living creatures which he saw—verse 10: "They four had the face of a man and the face of a lion on the right side; and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle." To understand this, it is necessary that we refer to the military grouping of the Israelitish camp in the wilderness, as recorded in Num. ii. That camp consisted of the Tabernacle and the families of the house of Levi in the center, and a fourfold division of the remainder, ranged in due order, according to the respective ensigns or standards of the tribes of Judah, Reuben, Ephraim, and Daniel. Now, we gather that Judah's heraldic symbol was that of a lion. Reuben's, that of a man. Ephraim's, that of an ox; and Daniel's, that of an eagle. This was the marching and military arrangement of the Israelitish host. It is a point of great significance then, that the four forms of animal life, which were incorporated in the symbol seen by Ezekiel, should be characteristic of the nation of Israel in its aggressive relations. All who become the constituents of this corporation are Israelites. In fact, the Scriptures are not permanently concerned with any other nation. A full end is to be made of every other nationality, and the nation and kingdom that will not serve Israel, shall perish. God's salvation is of the Jews. His purpose is connected with the seed of Abraham, and His kingdom is the kingdom of Israel restored. Christ is to occupy the throne

of his father, David, and to rule over the house of Jacob forever.

Now how are those, who are not naturally of the stock of Abraham, to become engrafted thereon, and so be capable of representation in the symbolic cherubim, which Ezekiel saw? Well, God has provided a way in which this can be done. No stranger could become a fellow-citizen with the house of Israel, who did not submit to the rite of circumcision. And if we, as Gentiles in the flesh, desire to partake the privileges and blessings which God has promised to Israel, we must undergo what Paul speaks of as "the circumcision made without hands" (Col. ii. 11-12).

This is the all-important matter for both Jews and Gentiles, under the present dispensation. Fleshly descent from Abraham profits nothing, as far as regards the glorious facts portrayed in this symbol. "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly." "They are not all Israel who are of Israel." "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God." "We," says Paul, "are of the circumcision who worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

It is a fact that the Israelitish character of the Divine scheme is almost universally ignored in our day. Men have substituted for it all manner of Pagan ideas about heaven and hell-going, and consequently never dream of connecting themselves with the house of Israel in the manner described in the Apostolic Scriptures. Still less are they prepared to contemplate that house in the aggressive and military aspects in which it seems to be presented in Ezekiel's vision. We learn from Zech. ix. 13, that it is God's intention to use Judah as His bow and Ephraim as His arrow, and to make Zion's sons as the sword of a mighty man. And in Jeremiah li. 20 we have Israel spoken of as Jehovah's battle-ax and weapons of war,

by means of which he will destroy kingdoms and break in pieces the nations. In the subjugation of the world to Messiah's rule there will necessarily be war. The reigning powers are not likely to vacate their thrones without a struggle. Their attitude toward Christ has received prophetic description in the second Psalm, where the kings of the earth are represented as setting themselves, and the rulers as taking counsel together, against the Lord and His anointed. But all their opposition will prove futile and vain, for the Power of the Eternal will be incorporate in the mighty host which then shall claim jurisdiction over all the nations, and the grand result will be that the kingdoms of this world will become "the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ."

I know this is not the view which is commonly entertained in religious circles. The impression prevails that mankind are gradually to become Christianized, by the preaching of the gospel (or what is supposed to be the gospel). It is held that the world is but as yet in its moral infancy, and that in the course of untold ages yet to come, it will undergo such progress and development in spiritual directions as will result in the universal triumph and ascendancy of righteousness and truth. But surely if anything akin to the Christendom of the present hour is to be the final issue, the consummation is not calculated to excite much enthusiasm of desire. God has a shorter, a more effective and satisfactory plan, in His revealed purpose to establish his kingdom by His own irresistible might embodied in His immortal Son, and in the glorious hosts of His friends, whom He will admit to a share in the authority which will find its all-powerful and beneficent center in Him on account of whom the ages were ordained.

We pass on to notice the description of the feet of these four living creatures contained in verse 7: "Their feet were straight feet and the sole of their foot was like the sole of a

calf's foot." This part of the symbol depicts the retributive aspect of the work which the glorified saints will perform, in executing the vengeance of God upon the rebellious populations. We draw this conclusion from a prophecy to be found in Malachi iv. 2-3: "Ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked: for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." These straight feet are so formed in view of what is to be accomplished by their means. The righteous are to tread down the wicked, just as calves of the stall tread down the refuse in their joy and eagerness to be released. This is an inspired representation of the destiny of evil men. They are not to be restored to the Divine favor. They are not to have a second chance. Neither are they to be kept alive in agony. They are simply to be destroyed, and the righteous are to be employed as the instruments of their destruction.

Their feet, moreover, "sparkled like the color of burnished brass." This reminds us of what is said in Revelations of the similitude that appeared to John in Patmos: "one like unto the Son of Man, whose feet were like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace." It is remarkable, too, that in Micah iv. 13 we have brass used in a like symbolical manner. "Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thine horn iron, and thy hoofs brass, and thou shalt beat in pieces many people." Burnished brass, however, is suggestive of a purifying process, and the meaning doubtless is that it is not Israel after the flesh that are to be exalted to this glorious destiny, but Israel purged of all their dross. "Gold, silver, brass, iron, tin, and lead, everything," said Moses, "that may abide the fire, ye shall make go through the fire, and it shall be clean" (Num. xxxi. 22).

There is some impressive instruction for us here. The

feet that are to tread down the wicked don't belong to the common run of men. The character which finds its symbol here has been subjected to God's refining methods. This indeed is but another form of stating the Apostolic truth that "through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of God." Its great honors will not be indiscriminately bestowed. As human beings come into this world they are not eligible for any divine uses. They require to get rid of the characteristics that appertain more or less to all natural creatures. The truth finds everybody in this state—a state of unfitness for the kingdom of God. Our minds, all our intellectual and moral affinities, require readjustment and purification before we can be qualified to take part with Christ in the glorious work he is coming to do. The only means by which this can be accomplished consists of a diligent application to the study and practice of the Scriptures on our part. The neglect of this cannot be supplemented in any other way.

Now, each of these four living creatures had not only four faces, but four wings, and we read (verse 8) that they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides—their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward.

The presence of human hands in such a symbol is suggestive, no doubt, of the fact that what is here represented is connected with the race to which we belong. That is to say the company of the redeemed have been taken out from the multitudes of Adam's posterity. The work of setting up the kingdom of God will not be done by angels, but by an instrumentality developed from among men. God could indeed do it all Himself without making use of any agency whatsoever in the work; but He graciously invites co-operation, and by the ministry of the Apostles He has extended the invitation even to us Gentiles, who are naturally aliens from the

commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise.

Moreover, as hands are used to take hold with, their presence in this symbol may be indicative of the fact that the Divine work of which we are speaking will not be seized upon by any loose or yielding grasp, but that the agents employed will not let go till it is fully accomplished, and God's will is done in earth, even as it is in heaven!

And as wings are used for locomotion in the air, they may here stand for the idea that in the future aerial of political power the saints will not have their movements curtailed by any law of gravitation, but will accomplish whatever locomotion may be needed in any given case. In fact, as verse 12 has it, "Whither the spirit was to go, they went." They will just be the vehicles of the Divine power. Wherever that power takes them in the process of establishing the kingdom, there they will go—and go "straightforward"—no diplomacy necessary in their case, and no turning aside from their purpose by reason of obstacles great or small. All who stand against them will be as the chaff of the summer threshing floor which the wind driveth away. And so multitudinous will be their power that it will resemble the rush and roar of great waters.

The voice of the symbol which John saw was like unto the sound of many waters. Waters are the recognized figure in Apocalyptic symbolism for vast concourses of intelligent beings as we learn from Rev. xvii. 15. The noise of the wings of these living creatures which Ezekiel saw, was (verse 24) "like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, as the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood they let down their wings," and so the sound of battle ceased.

There is a very suggestive statement in verse 14, "And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a

flash of lightning," which we will notice before we pass on. This may give us some idea of the possibilities of the immortal nature. Perhaps Jesus intended a hint of the same sort in his conversation with Nicodemus. To be "born of the Spirit" is clearly a very different thing from what some people take it to be. It is to be able to come and go like the wind—to appear and disappear like a flash of lightning. No flesh and blood power can withstand the force that is capable of running and returning in this wise. It is the power of God, and it will in due time receive embodiment and manifestation upon the earth, in a glorious host who will act as the executors of His judgments, and the administrators of His will—doing His commandments, and hearkening unto the voice of His word.

In the 13th verse the symbol presents a further aspect of a very striking kind—"burning coals of fire, like torches, moving about among the living creatures." What may we understand by this? I think we may regard it as a manifestation of the Spirit of God, in the act of preparing the saints for the great work to be accomplished by their means. In the Apostolic age we learn there was a distribution of the gifts of the Spirit to every man according to the will of God. Some were more highly endowed than others, as we read in 1 Cor. xii. 7.

Now these spiritual gifts are to be the possession of all Christ's friends in the immortal state. It will then be literally true that nothing will be impossible unto them. The Spirit will energize them for their work, and the lamps and coals of fire will not cease to burn in their midst. We gather that there are special positions and functions to be assigned to those for whom they have been prepared in the kingdom of God. Some are to occupy places in close proximity to Christ, sitting on His right hand and on His left. "One star differeth from another star in glory: so also is the resurrection of the

dead." Every one will fill his appropriate place, and be endowed by the Spirit with the precise forms of qualification which it may demand. The fire will, first of all, move about among the living creatures, and so there will result the precise adaptation of every member of this glorified and immortal company to the particular function he may be required to fulfill.

We next find in verse 15 that this symbolism develops other details of a curious and interesting sort. A wheel with four faces, presenting the appearance of a wheel in the middle of a wheel. When they went, they went upon their four sides, and they turned not when they went. They were of large circumference, and were full of eyes.

We associate with a wheel the idea of rapidity of motion; and as the eye is the symbol of intelligence, we may suppose the interpretation of this part of the vision to lie in the fact that all the movements of the immortal host, which will be controlled by the Eternal Spirit, will not be of a haphazard description, but that perfect wisdom and discernment will guide their rapid locomotion. The wheels, to the Prophet's eye, did not seem to revolve as they went—their revolution being too swift for his perception. Motion on an inconceivably quick and gigantic scale, for purposes connected with infinite wisdom, appears to be the thought which may be most properly attached to this part of the Prophet's vision.

This idea is not too improbable to find practical illustration in the work of establishing the kingdom of God. We live in an age when the importance of rapid intercommunication is universally felt, and when very wonderful provision is made for it. We can flash our messages in a few seconds across 3000 miles of ocean, and have ourselves conveyed the same distance in a comparatively short space of time. There will be no diminution of such facilities in the period to which this vision

refers. The immortal rulers will in no case find distance an impediment to the effective prosecution of their work. They will never find themselves out-distanced by the fugitive transgressor, even though he should take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea. The ends of justice are often defeated now by the limitations of the present condition of existence. There will be no such barriers in the kingdom of God to those whose function it will be to detect and arrest rebellion, and to see that the will of God is done. Jesus discerning Nathaniel before he was visible to the eye of sense, is an illustration of the mode of perception which finds its symbol in these wheels so full of eyes.

Their beryl-like appearance, their beautiful sea-green color, may suggest the harmony of their movements, so rapid, yet so unerring and free from confusion. No unseemly crossing of each other's path. No misunderstanding of anything that relates to the glorious purpose of God. And no lack of moral fitness and beauty in their aims. There could scarcely be a more charming thought in connection with the subject. Swift for retribution, and for succor too. In the present order of things how many deaths occur and evils happen, because immediate assistance is not available! And often, in our very haste, what delays take place! The joyful day is coming, however, when beneficence and skill will have wings and wheels that will outspeed the shafts of morning light, and there will be no break down on the road, for the Spirit of Life will be the motive power.

It may also be that these wheels with four faces are intended to represent the house of Israel after the flesh, as arrayed in military form, under Divine direction. Those who have seen the movements of several battalions on review-day, will be acquainted with the wheel-like character of some of their proceedings. We have noted the Israelitish significance

of the four faces, which belonged to the wheels as well as the living creatures. There are several passages in the Prophets which seem to teach that God will make a military use of the nation of Israel in the subjugation of the Gentiles to His sway; as, for instance, in Zech. ix. 13, where the sons of Zion are to be raised up against the sons of Greece. And, again, in Zech. x. 3, where the house of Judah is spoken of as Jehovah's goodly horse in the battle. He has promised that he will get Israel "praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame" (Zeph. iii. 19). We read in verse 19 that "when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them." This statement may be indicative of the close connection which will exist in the future age between Israel according to the flesh, and the immortal saints. In the early stages of that Divine programme there will apparently be concerted action on both parts such as we have described—the mortal nation operating in the hands of the Lord Jesus and his glorified brethren, for the purpose of effecting the conquest of all might and dominion under the whole heaven, and placing Christ in that position of glorious supremacy which the concluding part of Ezekiel's vision assigns him.

The result of the whole is, that the entire sphere of their movements assumes a crystal-like translucence. They are arched over by a firmament bright and clear, the wings of the living creatures cover their bodies—no longer needed for the purpose symbolized in the earlier part of the vision. Christ and His friends are enthroned in their seats of undisputed power. There is fire and brightness round about, to indicate that light and heat and incorruptibility and life are incorporate in the substance of Him who occupies the throne, and become the source of a blessedness that is "as the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain." The rainbow is ever associated in our minds with Jehovah's covenant, which

guarantees the permanence of that great salvation which will result from the establishment of Messiah's throne upon the earth. It is an everlasting covenant—a covenant that relates to a period concealed, but none the less certain on that account—a covenant of life and peace, which ne'er shall end.

Ezekiel relates that when he saw this wonderful appearance of the likeness of Jehovah's glory, he fell upon his face. It was a gorgeous and dreadful, and yet most comforting spectacle—a vision of Elohim, as he says in the first verse—a symbolic representation of the Eternal One, manifested in a mighty host of Adamically descended, but now permanent, forms, for the purposes of His own praise and glory in the earth. As such it was a fitting preliminary to the mission on which the Prophet was sent—a mission to an impudent, stiff-necked, rebellious people—at a time, too, when God's affairs, upon earth, were all in a state of apparently hopeless confusion—His nation dispersed and down-trodden, His city in desolation, His holy Temple a ruin. To Ezekiel himself, this symbolism must have furnished a most opportune, and impressive, and consolatory assurance that better days were yet in store for all those who were waiting for God, and hoping in His word, and that a triumphant and glorious destiny was appointed for Israel, in the day of the full accomplishment of Jehovah's great purpose, when He will no longer require to be approached or apprehended by symbolic means, but when His tabernacle will be with men, and He will dwell among men, and be their God, and wipe away all tears from their eyes, and the last page of the history of the earth's exile from Him shall have been written, and its immortal population shall rend the air with songs of praise to Him who sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb.

LECTURE XI.

RELIGIOUS PRETENSE.

ALTHOUGH consistency is generally ranked among the virtues, it is, perhaps, in the religious department, that its exemplification is most seldom seen. Men do set some store by it theoretically, at all events, notwithstanding Emerson's suggestion that the word be gazetted as ridiculous henceforth. But, practically, few can be said to be good illustrations of the agreement which ought always to exist between profession and actual life. This is, no doubt, to some extent, the fault of the profession. It is possible to espouse doctrines in strict concord with which human nature cannot act, though it try ever so hard. The mind is burdened with incredible beliefs, which can have no appreciable influence upon the daily life. Men assume positions from which certain things are expected; society jams them into their place and keeps them there, and they must needs make the best of it, and try to wash the soil from their consciences, as well as they can.

The secular world is full of pretense and sham, as everybody knows. Business is conducted on this understanding. It is a case of slaying or being slain, and most people prefer the former. The merchant, when most anxious to sell, has to put on an appearance of supreme indifference to the occasion, and so wear an aspect that does not properly belong to him. It is not considered a crime of very great magnitude for a tradesman deliberately to make misrepresentations from motives of gain. Everybody does it, why should not he? He did not

create the state of society which seems to demand it; his better nature rebels against it; he would prefer a straightforward and honest way of doing things; but rents are high and taxes heavy, and competition keen, and he must either sacrifice his self-respect or his livelihood. Thus many, no doubt, are drawn into the vortex of deceit and falsehood against their inclinations, and when the first lie has been told the second is a comparatively easy affair, and the habit soon becomes confirmed and cannot be shaken off.

If all the people who sell goods that are better than any one else's in the world were gathered together, they would form a vast multitude. If the comparison, necessary to justify such an announcement, had to be made before any article was sold, there would not be much business done. It would take the dealer all his time. If all "Purveyors to the Queen," and all who have received "special appointments from the Royal Family" of a commercial character could be got together, we should be able to form some idea of the immense requirements of the present representatives of the House of Brunswick.

But who does not see through the transparency of such forms of dissimulation? They are taken for granted as necessary factors of our complex civilization, and they are excused because they are so palpable. This does not, however, abate the iniquitous character of them in the estimation of all who love righteousness and truth. Such things could not exist in a community distinguished by integrity and the fear of God.

In the religious realm, duplicity and pretense are not supposed so extensively to prevail. Here and there a case turns up in which a man has been wearing two faces under one hat, and whose flagitious behavior has created a scandal to religion in the neighborhood; but these instances are happily infrequent. The general condition of religious society is regarded

as such, that no sweeping charge of unrealness and artificiality can be brought against it. And doubtless there are vast numbers who are perfectly sincere, and in thorough earnest. No guile is to be found in their mouths. They would as soon think of cutting off their right hands, or plucking out their right eyes, as of consciously playing the hypocrite. It would be a needless insolence to withhold this tribute to their ingenuousness and conscientious zeal for what they have been taught to regard as right and true. They are not knowingly false to their professions.

This, however, is because they have not duly considered what those professions involve. There is necessarily a glaring disparity between the accepted creed of Christendom and the lives of church and chapel-going people. The two don't go together, and can't be made to go together. Few appear ever to have attempted to realize what is meant by the words in which they are accustomed to express their religious thought on many subjects—at some of which I propose here to glance.

This habit of verbal negligence is in most cases formed in early youth. Children are taught to repeat parrot phrases after men supposed to be their religious instructors. It does not occur to them to inquire into the import of such phrases. When a candidate for confirmation in the Church of England is being prepared to meet the Bishop, questions are put to him which can only serve as tests of his memory concerning certain formulæ which contain allusions to matters on which the widest disagreement prevails among educated men. He is required to say that he believes things which he can have had no opportunity of examining, and no effort is made to ascertain the grounds on which his profession of faith rests. The things he is made to say he verily believes have been matters of learned controversy for centuries, and yet he is expected to have no doubts about them! What can be the

value of a faith thus easily manufactured. The whole thing is a religious sham. It is as much my duty to doubt what is not proved, as to believe what is. And until children are instructed in these rudiments of common candor and integrity, we shall never have a generation of really honest men. Provision was made in the law of Moses for satisfying the curiosity of children who would desire to know the reason for some of its most important enactments. They were not expected to take everything for granted, and go through life without asking any questions. Read Exodus xii. 26-27; Ex. iii. 14; and Deut. vi. 20.

We here find that the faith of an Israelitish child was made to rest upon a good, intelligible basis of historic fact; and not upon the learning by rote of a series of theological propositions on which the utmost divergence of opinion had obtained.

We might take as another specimen of religious error, which passes as truth, owing to the lack of inquiry into it, the ordinance of the first day of the week, which is regarded as so divinely sacred that children are not allowed to indulge in laughter or play on that day. They are given to understand that its sacredness rests upon the Mosaic command to keep holy the seventh day. It is never pointed out to them that the seventh day is not the first—that Sunday has nothing to do with the Sabbath, nor the Sabbath with Gentiles. Their attention is not drawn to the fact that in 2 Cor. iii. 7 the Apostle Paul plainly states that what was written and engraven on stone was done away. Accordingly they grow up in entire ignorance of the subject, and are never made aware of the fact that the law of Moses was an essentially imperfect and temporary system—provisional and disciplinary, but not final in its character and scope.

The inconsistency of those who hold to the permanent

obligation of the Jewish Sabbath is seen in their habitual performance on that day of works which were distinctly prohibited by the Mosaic law. The fires they light, the food they cook, the journeys they take, are all witnesses against them, and they would see it if they did but take the trouble to read. Their affectation of Sabbath piety is therefore only an unintentional unrealness, having no foundation in anything that God has actually commanded them to do.

In the same category of artificial customs must be classed the practice known as infant baptism. It has indeed been historically attempted to trace this rite up to the days of the Apostles; but all who have candidly addressed themselves to the investigation of the subject know how signal a failure every such attempt has been. The arguments from the Scriptures themselves would convince no one who had not some interest in the maintenance of the established custom. Stress is sometimes laid upon the words of Christ to the disciples, when they rebuked those who brought young children to him that he might *touch* them (but not that he might *baptize* them), "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." It has been pointed out, however, that the disciples would not have scolded the little children away, if they had ever been accustomed to baptize them. When the clergyman administers this unauthorized rite, he says: "Doubt ye not, therefore, but heartily believe that he favorably alloweth this act of ours." But we cannot heartily believe that God "favorably alloweth" things to be done by His authority which He has never commanded to be done. When Aaron's sons offered strange fire before the Lord, they probably tried to get solace from the same sort of assumption: "Doubt ye not, but heartily believe that Jehovah favorably alloweth this act of ours." The man that gathered sticks on the Sabbath might

also have felt safe under a similar persuasion. God favorably alloweth what we do in obedience of His laws, but it is a mockery to pretend that we have His authority and sanction for what He has never enjoined. Ecclesiastical historians, such as Neander, and Church dignitaries, like Dean Stanley, have freely conceded that this practice is unapostolic, although, at the same time, they have expressed their approval of it. When the nearest cabstand has been known to furnish one of the sponsors for the infant whose unconscious face was about to be sprinkled in the name of the Trinity, the farce surely nears perfection. It shows how little people are accustomed to look into these things, and it certainly would not be to the advantage of their clerical guides to encourage them to do so. Regenerative efficacy is claimed by some for this ecclesiastical rite. Its subject is thereby believed to be constituted "a child of God, a member of Christ, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." The infant is regarded as having been "born of water and the Holy Spirit." It never occurs to the parties responsible to exercise their common sense in relation to such matters. This faculty is indeed proscribed and over-ridden by the authority of Mother Church. The alleged regenerative power must either operate physically, or mentally and morally. Nobody pretends that the change so mysteriously effected is corporeal in its character. And as an infant is utterly destitute of mind, or moral faculties, it is difficult to see in what particular department of its constitution the regeneration occurs. Who that takes part in such a ceremony can help feeling at the bottom of his heart that he is perpetrating or consenting to an egregious fraud! What a travesty upon the birth out of water and spirit which qualifies for entrance into the kingdom of God. A person can only be said to be born from that from which he emerges. The waters of baptism can only supply the means of a water birth when the

subject is buried in them. And as, according to Christ, that which is born of the spirit is spirit, it would seem that the New Testament "regeneration" is equivalent to a complete change of nature from flesh and blood, Paul which-says *cannot* inherit the kingdom of God, to an incorruptible organization which can and will.

There was a remarkable absence of anything akin to mystery and concealment about the Apostolic methods. Everything was open and above board. There was no legerdemain. These men had no idea of acting a part. They did not feel flattered and elated by an easy credulity. They courted investigation, assigned good and sufficient reasons for everything, were willing to be put to the test. "We," says Paul, "have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully: but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's," etc.

There is no greater sham than is to be found in the astounding claim to popular reverence put forth by the Episcopal Bench. If there is a useless institution amongst men, here we have it. We are not afraid thus to speak. Of any organization or appointment conspicuously divine, we should be the last to utter a word of disparagement. These men, however, are supposed to have forsworn the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, just at the precise time when they were about to embark upon a career whose most striking characteristics are peculiarly suggestive of this very phrase. They solemnly renounce "filthy lucre" when on the eve of reveling in its enjoyment. They are selected by the Prime Minister on avowedly political grounds, and then, with amazing indecency, declare that they have been moved by the Holy Spirit to assume the office of a bishop! The pretense is here so apparent that the wonder is any man can be found with sufficient

courage to go through with the performance. But the people love to have it so. They must be duped, or they are not satisfied. A legal fiction, honored by time and custom, is what best suits them. In its maintenance they are willing to produce their gold. They cannot digest simplicity and truth.

Indeed, when one begins a criticism of the clerical order he hardly knows where to stop. Go to Oxford or Cambridge and take stock of the young men preparing to take the cure of souls! Hear them discourse of the attractions of family "livings" and fellowships, and of a respectable position in society, and of their hopes of preferment! Note the interest they take in the coming boat-race, and the amounts they are ready to hazard on its issue! The astonishing thing about it all is, that society, by common consent, connects these men with the name and work of Jesus Christ, and is prepared to regard them by-and-by as his ambassadors, besides whom no man may presume to have exact and sufficient qualification to speak on his behalf. It requires the most vigorous effort of the human imagination to identify such a class in the remotest way with that toilsome and ill-remunerated "ministry of reconciliation," whereof we read in the Apostolic Scriptures. We can have no objection to those who can afford it choosing for themselves a literary profession, and moving in the circles to which their tastes incline them. The sham begins when their profession of the religion of Christ is made the stalking horse of their love of social honor and respectability, and of their worldly ambition. Mankind ought to know that a consistent exemplification of Christ's teaching is the most fatal disqualification for respectability that can exist. If you desire modern society to slam its door in your face, then you try to act out Christ's principles before men. You will be put down as deficient in good breeding at once. Men may hunt after high places if they wish to—they may join the world in

its amusements and pastimes if their disposition leads them that way—but along with this they can only pass as Christ's representatives and friends with those who have not eyes to see.

It is perfectly certain that if Christ were to reappear upon the earth he would find little congenial society among some of the men who make the loudest profession of his name. The case would have been worse still centuries ago. It has been declared "clear beyond denial, that for a century after the death of Edward II. the bishops were the tools of court bigotry, and often owed their highest promotions to base subservience. After the revolution, the episcopal order (on a rough and general review) might be described as a body of supine persons, known to the public only as a dead weight against all change that was distasteful to the government." Whenever were these men known to take the lead in denouncing any flagrant abuse? Against inhuman or immoral practices what reformer could ever count upon their united, spontaneous and vigorous support? When was their outcry heard against cruelty and oppression? When have they been known to take up the cause of the poor? Is it not a fact that their policy has been "to set their hands to no good movement until somebody else was likely to do it; upon which they have joined it in order to damp its energy, and get some credit from it?" Would Christ feel at home along with such men? Would he not rather have hurled at them invective as biting and remorseless as any he ever leveled at the heads of the Scribes and Pharisees in the days of old?

No one who has taken the trouble to read that description of Christ's religion which is presented in the New Testament, can have the smallest doubt that Christ and his Apostles discountenanced friendship with the world. John says: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

James says: "Whoso will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." Jesus says to his relatives: "The world cannot hate you, but me it hateth, because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil." That was the world of Jewish society in the first century. Is the world of Gentile society in the nineteenth century any better? How much does it care for his precepts? How is it disposed to treat his doctrines? What clergyman would be endured who demanded with reasonable earnestness the surrender of the whole heart and life, in untiring service to him, and who himself led the way? What man among their ranks would deliberately choose such a course as the surest way to preferment?

There is many a lady who would feel insulted if her Christianity were called in question, who yet wears diamonds and bracelets and silks and satins of sufficient value to purchase the necessaries of life for a dozen paupers all the year round! And yet she claims to be a follower of him who had no where to lay his head, and who said "Woe unto you that are rich!" I can understand how people should duly consider his example and precepts and then decide that they are not prepared to have anything to do with either the one or other. I can understand how they should, with due deliberation, prefer to live as polished heathens always have lived—but for the life of me I cannot understand how they should desire to write the name of Christ upon all this; nor how his professed ministers should be able to survey it without consternation and rebuke! Oh, but they go to church and say their prayers! Depend upon it they might just as well save themselves the trouble. "Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me: the new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with: it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." If there is one thing about Christ's teaching which would seem to be more entirely

out of the range of controversy than another it is this. You cannot have your run of worldly pleasure, and then slide into the joys of a future state. You cannot make the most of this life in a worldly sense, and then inherit the glories of the life to come. You cannot have a good time now, and then as well! The man or the woman who will not be outdistanced by the most thoroughgoing devotee of Bacchus or Mammon in the race of pleasure or in the strife for gold, is at liberty to do as he or she may please—only let them not name the sacred name of Christ—let them be content to pass as the cultivated heathens, which they undoubtedly are, and no longer seek to foist upon Christianity a policy which is as distinct from it as darkness is from light!

It has been said that "if the Archbishop of Canterbury were to speak and act like Christ for a single week, he would not have a friend left. him in London. If he, and the rest of the bishops with him, were to issue a solemn protest against the wickedness and extravagance of the rich, they would make themselves at once so absolutely offensive, that no man of wealth or rank would ever receive them into his house again. And this, and nothing less than this, is what Christ would do." No living man who understands the attitude Christ took 1800 years ago can have a moment's doubt upon the point. He has not changed, for he is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever—the same in his hatred of human selfishness and shameful indifference to a fellow creature's need—the same in his abhorrence of a state of society in which the strong oppress the weak, and the claims of mercy and goodness meet with no response—the same in his unmeasurable contempt of hollowness and hypocrisy and sham!

The disciples, on one occasion, remembered that it was written, "The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up." And if he were to come again, there would be much more in what he

did to call that ancient oracle to mind. The circles of fashionable Christianity would be eager to disown him, and the society which seeks to adorn itself by his name would pray him to depart out of its coasts.

We turn to the ordination service in the Prayer-Book, and find that the bishop is expected to bestow on the candidate for the clerical office the power to forgive or to retain sins! "Receive ye the Holy Ghost! Whose sins ye forgive, they are forgiven: whose sins ye retain, they are retained!" Is there any man who, in his sober senses, believes anything of the kind! Has God really placed my eternal destiny in the hands of a newly fledged curate, who may be my junior by 20 years, and vastly my inferior in knowledge, and experience, and common candor, and insight into human character. And is this awful power entrusted to him by virtue of a mere outward form? Can there be any imaginable pretension capable of and entitled to a more contemptuous and scornful dismissal by a rational mind? And yet the solemn farce is enacted at stated intervals with pompous circumstance, as though all mankind were in a state of confirmed and hopeless idiocy, and could not detect the sham! Is there any theory of Apostolic succession that would not immediately snap under such a strain? What conceivable view of ecclesiastical history can justify such an unmitigated arrogance and conceit? This mere assertion of the highest order of spiritual prerogative on the ground of its alleged transmission through centuries of apostacy and corruption, is all the evidence it has to offer for itself. It is an impertinence which grossly insults the understanding of every man of sense. Let a man come before me with such a claim who can work a miracle in attestation of it—as the Apostles could, and I will believe him. But let any one else attempt it, and I say bluntly with Carlyle—"This is my way, and that is yours; in God's name, adieu!" I don't want my sins for-

given, except by some one who is able to do it; and to *show* that he has done it, by releasing me from the power of the grave in the resurrection at the last day. Any one else is at liberty to retain my sins as long as he likes.

And what are we to say of a generation who profess to believe in an eternal hell of fiery torture to which the majority of the human race are to be consigned, but who can take their fill of worldly gratifications as though there was not the slightest occasion for alarm? One of the most illustrious exponents of this doctrine (the very mention of which is enough to freeze the vitals and curdle the blood) is yet able to write as follows: "I laugh louder and longer than any man. To me this world is a rose, and the universe a garland." "Suppose," says one of his critics, "this person were looking on at some horrible railway accident, and were to begin to 'laugh louder and longer than any man'—what construction would the by-standers put upon his demeanor? They would infallibly declare him mad." And yet he can indulge his mirth without limit, while, according to his own showing, a catastrophe which beggars all description is happening every hour within sight of his spiritual cognition! I tell you, dear friends, that "sham" is no word for it—you need to alter the pronunciation of the vowel and make it "shame," prefacing the word with the strongest adjective of your contemptuous vocabulary.

What a man really believes has involuntary control of him. He cannot, under such circumstances, help himself. If I really believed that my house was on fire, the strongest instincts of my being would compel me to rush to the door. The rapidity of my flight would be governed by the strength of my conviction as to the imminence and destructive nature of the peril. It may be possible for some portly rector to discourse from the pulpit (where he is safe from attack and secure against reply) upon the eternal agonies of the damned, and

draw vivid and harrowing pictures of what he supposes is going on in hell—and then throw off his robes and hurry home to a table that is loaded with the luxuries of this mortal life, and get out of temper with his butler, who, in mistake, has brought up out of the cellar the wrong year's bottle of port. I say there may be men capable of such miraculous mental transitions; but the verdict of common sense is dead and flat against them, and society will know what value to put upon their lurid anathemas, and how to discount their damnation dealing.

A belief of such inconceivable and overwhelming magnitude and gravity demands a corresponding behavior, and will inevitably get it. The man whose thought is oppressed by so frightful a conception will have no care or thought for anything else. What are the pleasures of society or the table to him? What else can there be in this wide world worth a moment's consideration? How can he do other than go about among his friends and neighbors with frantic gesture and with tear-stained countenance, imploring them to make good their escape from so fearful a doom while yet escape was possible? That such a man should ever think of getting on in this world—that he should ever think of marriage and home comfort—that the prospect of preferment or anything else should ever have the slightest attraction for him, is utterly out of the question. Men don't behave so in the presence of temporal disaster; their cheeks are blanched with terror and dismay at the sight of earthly and transient misfortune; is it credible, therefore, that they can really contemplate with composure the possibility of one human being spending eternity in motiveless, vindictive, and excruciating torture?

Yet we are asked to extend our respect and reverence to men who profess to believe that in the case of countless millions this is to be the upshot of God's moral government, and

who yet can find time to eat and drink, and joke and play, as if nothing very particular was going to happen!

Now the first indispensable characteristic of any religious system that is propounded for the belief and adoption of men, is that it be capable of real exemplification and thoroughly consistent profession. We want nothing in this line of things that we feel inclined to speak of in undertones, and with bated breath. We want nothing in the way of theory that we cannot admit as a distinct factor among the moral and religious forces which regulate our lives. Let us have something that we can understand, and really and truly believe. Don't saddle us with creeds and confessions that oblige us to play the hypocrite and forfeit every grain of self-respect. Produce your strong reasons—the strongest of all which will be your own thoroughgoing and uncompromising adherence to your faith in the ordinary walks of life. We don't want one creed for the pulpit, and another for the drawing-room. We would like something that will do for both—if indeed both we must have. If you are obliged to say that your doctrines are impracticable in the present state of society, why then abandon them like men, and yield up all the emoluments associated with them. Or, at any rate, let it be openly understood that you are but acting the part of a stage-player. Candidly confess that you are doing it for a living. Let the world know the precise basis on which you are conducting your ecclesiastical operations. You will find many to admire your straightforwardness, and even to support you on this distinct understanding. Men are not over-squeamish about such things nowadays. They know that it is hard work for a professional man to support his wife and family, if he once gets shunted off the beaten track. They have a suspicion that things are not just exactly square and honest in the theological world, and as they themselves are not always ultra particular

about their business affairs, they will be quite prepared to measure your corn by their bushel.

But of this be very well assured, that the religion of Christ is condemnatory of all pretense. Excuses founded upon the exigencies and expediencies of this present mortal life, will not avail with *him*. Shuffling and evasion may serve the ends of a worldly ambition, but they are fatal to all participation in the glory that is to be revealed. He will only surround himself with honest men. There shall in no wise enter into that immortal corporation that which worketh abomination or maketh a lie. His name stands for the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth: and that name will last when the whole present system of artificiality and deception and make-believe, has vanished into the abyss of rottenness and eternal night.

LECTURE XII.

DIVINE RIGHTS.

ALL civilized society rests upon the recognition of certain "rights" as held by its various members. But for such recognition the civil state would part asunder, and a universal reign of terror would ensue. The pauper has his "rights" equally with the prince—the idiot as well as the philosopher. The infant of a day, whatever the circumstances of his birth, finds shelter beneath this protection, and the man of hoary hairs can claim a similar defense. The words expressive of "mine" and "thine" must have early found their place in all languages beneath the sun. The fact they convey is one in the absence of which there could be no sort of permanent and peaceful association on the part of human kind.

We find in the Hebrew Scriptures that the state of society which they describe was one in which the "rights" of all its members were assumed and duly apportioned. There were the rights of the first-born,—the right of the *stranger* and of the *poor*,—the right to hold great revenues,—the rights of government and of the priesthood,—the rights of the individual,—and the rights of the whole community. "That which was lawful and right" determined the conditions of intercourse and cemented the communal relations of man to man.

This provided a basis of stable government and of a tranquil condition of society. The whole body corporate was knit together by joints and bands, and each member had need the one of the other. The task of government was simplified.

Men had only to learn their place and keep it—to understand what were their several functions, and attend to the duties which properly appertained thereto. The statutes defining the rights of all classes were intelligible to the universal understanding; there needed be no haggling or dispute as to their meaning. It was merely the work of Israel to obey. No provision was made for such political changes and agitations as are continually occurring in Gentile states. The constitution was fixed and unalterable, and its foundations were never out of repair.

This was due to the fact that the “rights” which were recognized in Israel were of Divine appointment. Their kings reigned by Divine right. Their priests were not usurpers of the sacerdotal function, but were Divinely selected for their office and work. No man might take such honor upon himself save he that was called of God, as was Aaron. When the family inheritance had lapsed under the pressure of heavy mortgage, “the right of redemption” provided for its restoration to the family of its original owners. Thus we read that the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, saying, “Behold, Hanameel, the son of Shallum, thine uncle, shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth; for the right of redemption is thine to buy it.” (xxxii. 7.) The very bond-servant had his position protected with rights, which his master could not ignore. There was no analogy between his case and that of the modern slave in Gentile communities, whose treatment has generally been uncontrolled by beneficent law. If a man dealt cruelly with his servant, the latter could obtain redress and compel his master to recognize his rights. He was not a mere beast of burden. Yet even if he had been, he would still have had his legal rights; for no Israelite was at liberty to do just what he might please with his ox or his ass. The very cattle were allowed one day’s rest in seven. “If thou

meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again." "If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to help him: thou shalt surely help with him." "Which of you"—Jews—"shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day?" "The righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." He does so, not merely because the animal is his property, and represents money value, but from motives of kindness and benevolence to the beast itself.

Now whence arise all the disputes and jealousies which so continually characterize the national experience of the Gentiles? There is no civilized state which has not its rival parties. There are no claims to honor and power and wealth which are not subject to challenge and demur. Whatever form of government you take, there are plenty of people ready to object to it and seek its overthrow. Why is this? It is simply because doubt exists more or less strongly as to the rights which are supposed to underlie all such assumptions. Men are not satisfied with the claims put forth on behalf of this or that established order, and so they are at the pains to endeavor to create an adverse state of public opinion upon the subject; or they resort to less constitutional means of bringing about the changes they desire. Thrones are thus shaken by popular convulsion, and all privileged classes are made to feel the insecurity of their position. It would not be so if all institutions rested on a basis of obvious and indisputable right.

But who is to supply that basis? What undeniable principle is to determine all such questions, and place them forever outside the arena of popular discussion? Suppose a suspension of the present order in church and state, in what way might men be wisely advised to go to work to fill the vacancies which would thus be created? Granted that the nations

must have both kings and priests, how are they best to be appointed? What class of men would be the most suitable for such offices? And what would be the value of the rights by virtue of which they were placed and maintained in their exalted position?

If we were asked to give a decision on such a question we should say: Don't crown lunacy! Let not incompetence rule! Whatever the precise quality and source of the blood that may course through a man's veins, do not permit it to determine the candidate's qualifications for a place of power. Look around among your very best specimens of culture and general excellence of personal character, and, without respect of persons, make your choice from them.

This canon, I need not say, has not been adopted hitherto. The potentates of the earth have by no means been the foremost in intelligence, in benevolence, in sterling worth. It is clear they have not attained their eminence by reason of such important characteristics. For the most part they have passed their lives in useless sport and splendor, and selfish luxuriance, as if all nature existed mainly for their advantage. The enormous revenues required for the maintenance of their regal pomp and extravagance have been wrung from hands that could ill afford the assessment, and that have gained no very substantial benefit in return. In days when kings were expected to lead their forces in battle there was some sense in the choice of the tallest, and strongest, and most valorous man in all the realm. Brute courage and muscle were not, under such circumstances, entirely despicable qualifications. But now no such necessity obtains. Monarchs, if they go to the field at all, generally manage to keep out of harm's way, and let subordinates run the risks. For the princes in thought and moral excellence no throne or scepter waits. These kings must needs go uncrowned, except in the silent admiration of the

few who learn to appreciate their worth. The monarchical profession is not made to depend upon personal merit, nor thrown open to fair competition. Inferior considerations govern access to its ranks, and forbid the aspirations of real capacity and goodness. In other walks of life it is different. No man can attain influence as a statesman, as a lawyer, as a physician, as a scientist, if he be not extraordinarily distinguished in his particular department. Reason would suggest that this should be the case all round, and that the accident of birth should never be allowed to settle any appointment to place or power. This rule would work havoc if universally and stringently applied. There would be many vacancies if all present holders of emoluments and honors were to be required to step down and wait the selection of the most competent and worthy occupants. The men who hold the most honorable positions in ecclesiastical society would in many cases, under such an arrangement, have to take a much lower place. Imagine an ordinance by which only the greatest geniuses and the most advanced scholars, and the most eloquent preachers, were eligible for the rank of bishop, what a difference it would make in the existing order! How few of their lordships would wear lawn sleeves after that! So if all the best livings in the Church were only the prize of real merit, what evacuations of snug berths would occur! And what a turnout of baseless pride and dignity there would be! The trade of the advowson auctioneer would be gone, and "presentations" would be conducted on a very different understanding.

Notwithstanding the transparency of the existing anomalies, a Divine sanction is claimed for them by their supporters. Kings regard themselves as elected by the grace of God, and priests consider themselves equipped and separated for their office by the Holy Spirit. It must have been a signal illustration of sovereign "grace" which placed on the throne a man

like Charles the Second or George the Fourth. Again and again the sacerdotal order have found it necessary to remind the people that they hold their office by virtue of a supernatural appointment. Otherwise some would be likely to conclude that the Prime Minister had had something to do with it; or that it was due to the fortunate circumstance that there was enough money in the family to arrange the necessary preliminaries. In the absence of anything like religious zeal or devotion to the interests of pure Christianity, or aptness to teach, men would be in danger of adopting the inference that these persons were altogether like themselves—just as worldly, just as mercenary, just as intent upon making the best and the most of the present life, and with every bit as keen an eye toward temporal advantage. They require, therefore, to take shelter beneath the plea that they are by no means ordinary mortals, but that to them has been Divinely committed the exclusive right to handle “the vessels of the Lord.” But if we were to pursue our inquiries into the foundation of all such current assumptions we should not find much Divinity there. And if these pretensions do *not* rest upon a supernatural basis, they are certainly fraudulent and delusive, and as such can no longer command our unqualified respect. We have no objection to the genuine thing. Before a king reigning by Divine right we are prepared to make our most lowly obeisance. A priest, exercising the functions of his office by a prescriptive authority, whose sacred credentials were beyond all dispute, would be a sight that would gladden our eyes. We should then have nothing to do but follow and obey. The trouble of having to think for ourselves about such matters would be spared us, and we could hand over our individual responsibility to those who had been appointed of heaven to see after our proper instruction in all that appertains to our duty. But, as the case stands, we are apt to be

bewildered amid a variety of rival claims upon our allegiance. If we follow Rome we place ourselves in antagonism to Canterbury. And if we allow the Divine right of a dissenter from both to dictate to us in spiritual things we have still to decide which branch of the nonconforming community may lawfully arrogate to itself this awful power. Under these circumstances what can we do but simply reject all such pretensions *in toto*, and take matters into our own hands, for better or worse? By this plan we shall lose nothing in the way of authority and infallible guidance, and shall escape much confusion and perplexity, and useless expenditure of money and thought.

Whatever rights may exist between man and man they are such as have been imposed by the exigencies of society—their root is not Divine except in so far as the powers that be are ordained of God, and we are required to submit to every ordinance of man while in a state of probation for eternal life. An enlightened man understands that these affairs are subject to a Providential manipulation for purposes that have been revealed, and that the whole system of oppression and tyranny and wrong will be abolished when the time appointed comes. The reasons which underlie his submission to “the powers that be” are therefore of a very different character from those which explain the loyalty of other men. They are loyal on mere political grounds: he is loyal for reasons that are Divine. His loyalty is a trial and a discipline to him—a part of the schooling through which he is required to pass on his way to the Kingdom of God. It is a tax upon his patience, and makes heavy demands upon his sense of benevolence and justice. Their loyalty is a mere hobby—a thing they indulge for the sake of excitement or business, or what they conceive to be the public good. They don't need to be reminded of their obligation to be loyal; but he requires occasionally to be

“put in mind, to be subject to principalities and powers, and to obey magistrates.” (Tit. iii. 1.) Hence, while he is ready to “render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s,” he is not interested in politics as such, and is quite willing to let the potsherds of the earth strive with one another. His politics are Divine, and therefore he looks down upon all party contests with disdain, simply contenting himself with an unresisting compliance with all legal demands. His citizenship is in heaven, from whence he looks for the universal Lord and Governor, Jesus Christ, to whom all power has been given, and whose all the kingdoms of the earth will eventually be.

All right is created by the Divine will, and there was once a time when kings reigned by such indisputable prerogative. The men that ruled were “the Lord’s anointed.” They “sat upon the throne of Jehovah.” This, however, has never been the case with other than Israelitish kings. The Pharaohs, the Nebuchadnezzars, and Cæsars, of the Gentile nations, have never been the representatives of the Most High upon earth. The power they have wielded has not been delegated to them by Him, although often enough He has used them as the instruments of His purpose. In this sense a Cyrus has been His anointed, and a Nebuchadnezzar His hammer, and a Roman army His sword. But such thrones have been established by iniquity, and built up by brute force. The power that happened to be weakest had to succumb. Britons find their way to India, and fight and conquer until the whole land is theirs. They have as much right to it, and no more, as France would have to these islands if by any means she could manage to establish her authority here. The rights which simply rest on superior might are those of savages who kill and take possession. On the same principle the burglar who effects his entrance into a man’s dwelling and successfully struggles with and overpowers the proprietor, might be said to have acquired

a right to live there and possess all the house contains. Such would be a miniature representation of the right of one power to hold the lands it has wrested from the grip of another. It would be widely different if the stronger power could produce evidence that it had merely acted as God's vicegerent in the matter, and had definite instructions from Him to go forth and conquer the weaker. But who dare pretend that such has been the case? The rights of no country can last longer than its power. They vanish the moment a stronger people appears upon the scene to challenge them.

This, it must be admitted, is not a very satisfactory foundation on which to base the right to hold anything in possession. The element of permanency is necessarily absent from such a tenure. Where would be Britannia's boasted right to "rule the waves" if a neighboring power only managed to outdo her in the matter of iron-clads and general nautical equipment? So long as national rights are a mere question of material resource and martial skill, and the preponderance of brute force, they are liable to continual menace and assault.

All national property is, more or less, the outcome of strife, and there is nothing that is inherently sacred and inalienable about it. Political economy has well been called "the dismal science." And this after centuries of varied experiment! What wiser thing can we do than patiently wait the application of heaven's own remedy? This will involve no degradation of individual energy—no dislocation of economic truth—no apotheosis of national or social injustice. The Divine right of kings will then again be a fact upon the earth. It was promised the Apostles by their Lord and Master, that in the regeneration when the Son of Man should sit upon the throne of his glory, they also should also sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The redeemed are

in the Apocalypse represented as saying: "Thou hast made us into our God kings and priests, and we shall reign upon the earth." There you have a kingdom and a priesthood, built upon the most solid and enduring of all possible foundations—fenced all round with rights that none can call in question. No unfriendly power will be able to challenge the legitimacy of the title of these rulers to their thrones, or ask—What business have you here? "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." It is for Him to say who shall exercise authority upon it. He did so once when the nation of Israel was organized in their land. His will was indicated in the choice of Saul and David and Solomon, to the theocratic seat of power. And when that constitution came to an end in the deposition of the last king of Judah, Jehovah said, "Remove the diadem, and take off the crown. . . . I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him" (Ez. xxi. 25, 26). Since the days of Zedekiah there has been no king reigning upon the earth by Divine right. But the prophecy just quoted intimates that there is to be a reversion to the former state of things 'as far as this question of royal right is concerned. One is to make his appearance who has a legal title to the throne of Judah, and of universal dominion. This was the very claim put forth by Jesus of Nazareth in the Gospel which he preached. It was "the Gospel of the Kingdom of God." Pilate did not slander him, nor misrepresent his claims, when he wrote over the cross, "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

The Bible teaches in unmistakable language that man is naturally a portionless creature, without any claim upon the recognition or good intentions of the Almighty Creator and Proprietor of all visible things; and that he can only establish for himself a title to a share in Jehovah's covenanted mer-

cies—"the sure mercies of David"—by an intelligent submission to God, for whose immortal Son all rights as regards this planet have been reserved, and whose mission it is to bring its populations beneath the scepter of righteous and infallible power.

The priests of that era will be the Divinely appointed mediators between God and mortal men. None will dispute their right to the honor of this exalted position, nor call in question their qualifications for it.

It was, under the law of Moses, expressly forbidden that the priestly office should be assumed by any not belonging to the house of Levi. On one memorable occasion, certain Reubenites and others complained of the pretensions of the Levites to the exclusive exercise of sacred functions. Their contention was that the whole community of Israel was consecrated to Jehovah. Moses proposed that the matter should be brought to a decisive test. They were all to come, each provided with a censer, to the tabernacle of the congregation. Aaron was to do the same, and God would then show which of them he accepted as his priest. Hardly had the smoke of their incense begun to rise when a streak of lightning darted from the sanctuary, and the two hundred and fifty usurpers fell dead! Thereupon Eleazar collected their golden censers, threw the unholy fire out of them, and made a covering for Jehovah's altar out of them. Ever after that, when an Israelite looked upon that altar, he would be reminded that God would accept no priestly service save that he had chosen.

There would be widespread desolation to-day if the question of priestly rights were to have a similar determination. As a matter of fact, Divine rights have never attached to any other priesthood save the Melchisedec and the Aaronical. There are no true priests upon the earth at the present time, save those who offer "spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God

through Jesus Christ." The pretensions of all to whom society accords priestly honors are false and unfounded, and as such unworthy the recognition of reasonable men. Than priestcraft, no craft has shown itself more unscrupulous, and impudent, and avaricious, and cruel. It has always traded on the ignorance and credulity of mankind. Where it has flourished there has been corresponding degradation among the masses that have been subject to its sway. The people have asked bread, and it has given them a stone. They have for a fish received a scorpion. The foulest pages in human history are those which record its doings. And yet it can lift its head among us unabashed at this very day, and walk the earth in broad daylight without shame, boasting its superior sanctity and its Divine rights! It has, however, its uses in the economy of God's providential government. Just as the children of Israel were directed not to drive out all the Canaanites at once lest the wild beasts of the field should increase upon them, so this corrupt institution whereof we speak has doubtless been permitted as a check to other and greater evils. By its spiritual sorceries it has bewitched the masses with superstitious fears that have operated for the greater security of the Commonwealth, and thus has proved an effective supplement to imperfect police arrangements. We are not disposed to undervalue the work that has been done by such agency in the transcription and translation of the Scriptures, and in the writing of books which have enriched our stores of useful knowledge. Nor are we against the setting apart of a body of men, and the furnishing of them with the necessary leisure and appliances for literary pursuits. But we do say, that in order to do this it is not necessary to make them priests, and clothe them with a reverence denied to ordinary men. Others than monks might have been appointed to copy out the sacred text. The knowledge essential to enable a man to write a useful com-

mentary or theological treatise need not have been restricted to those who have moved in ecclesiastical circles. Divine truth has never been burdened with patent rights, albeit there are many who seem to think that the order to which they belong has been exclusively entrusted with the work of its elucidation. A numerous class has discerned the baseless character of all such pretensions, and those who comprise it have freed themselves from the bondage of priestly interference and restraint, and have dared to investigate and think for themselves. The way has thus been opened for that perfect freedom of inquiry which the Scriptures invite on their own behalf, and which is necessary in order to the development of that robust mental and spiritual cultivation which they alone can foster, and in which consists all real qualification for the rulership and priesthood of the future, when all the phantoms and false assumptions of the present kingdom of darkness will have been superseded by the light and joy and liberty of the kingdom of God.

LECTURE XIII.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE BURIAL OF GOG.

THE burial of a military host, so numerous as to occupy a victorious nation seven months in the actual process of its interment, must be acknowledged a very striking prophetic incident. It is astonishing that it should receive such comparatively slight attention at the hands of the average student of the Scriptures. The reason, doubtless, lies in those systems of theology, everywhere prevalent, that have no solution to offer of the great problems of national existence which are becoming more and more serious day by day. It is a characteristic of the Hebrew Bible that it concerns itself entirely with the earth and man's relation to it, and nowhere encourages the hope of a translation to distant spheres. In support of this hope it is generally contended that the surface of the habitable parts of the earth would not provide accommodation for the innumerable company of the redeemed. But to say nothing of the bad arithmetic which is at the bottom of this contention, even if you reckon for all human beings from Adam downwards, the idea rises from an exaggerated conception of the final numerical issues of God's redemptive work. He does not intend to give permanence of being to any save those who in their respective generations have done his will. The overwhelming majority of mankind have uniformly despised his counsels, and followed their own ways. The objec-

tion referred to ceases to be entertainable when once it is perceived that man is only by nature an ephemeral form, whose breath is in his nostrils, and who is in no wise to be accounted of.

The earth, so far, has been the scene of all the incidents that have transpired in connection with the development of the Divine purpose. The kingdom of Jehovah in the hands of David and Solomon existed on the earth. The Prophet like unto Moses made his first appearance upon the earth, as a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"; and this same Jesus will assuredly "stand in the latter day upon the earth." God's will is to be done "on earth, as it is in heaven."

We have to deal in the present instance with details that have to do with the earth entirely, and that would be void of meaning on the current assumption that something celestial is signified whenever anything is foretold that does not fit the groove of established thought in relation to Bible matters.

Our remarks will be based upon what is recorded in Ezekiel xxxix. But before we say a word upon the contents of this remarkable chapter, it may be well to remind you that Ezekiel was one of those Prophets of Israel whose words were of Divine authority in the estimation of Christ and his Apostles. It is necessary to lay some stress upon this fact, because an impression prevails in religious circles that the Prophets are in a sense obsolete, and that their writings are by no means necessary to be read by those who wish to be acquainted with the details of the Gospel. It is apparently forgotten that we are exhorted to "be mindful of the words which were written before by the holy Prophets," and that Jesus himself continually quoted from them, and recommended his hearers to become familiar with what they had said. In Rom. i. 2, Paul distinctly declares that the Gospel unto which he had been separated had been Divinely promised afore by the Prophets

in the holy Scriptures. Any definition of the Gospel that is accurate will, therefore, leave room for all the statements concerning the future which are contained in the prophetic writings. But this is precisely what cannot be said of those gospel definitions which are so generally received in our day. Jesus and his Apostles preached "the glad tidings of the kingdom of God," and all that was to be found in the Prophets could also find a place in their proclamation. They could very well have incorporated the contents of the closing chapters of Ezekiel, and all other parts supposed to be of no particular interest or value to religious people now, with the glad tidings they announced.

The chapter before us details incidents connected with the establishment of Jehovah's kingdom. Its leading topic is the overthrow of the hosts of Gog, which are to invade the land of Israel in what are called "the latter days." What particular power is thus defined, and how its armies come to be in that part of the earth at this juncture, we learn from the previous chapter. At the beginning of that chapter Ezekiel is commanded to utter a prophecy against a certain northern power, which is confederate with a number of other nationalities for the purpose of destroying a newly formed Israelitish colony in the land of Palestine. Over this colony the protection of another power has been thrown, represented by "Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof." The power which the Prophet describes by the word "Gog" is spoken of as coming from his place "out of the north parts"—that is, out of regions which lie to the north of the land of Israel. And that there may be no mistake as to the epoch at which the prophecy receives its fulfillment, Jehovah says (verse 16), "Thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days." The "latter days" here mentioned must have

reference to the national existence of the house of Israel. The phrase indicates that their fortunes as a people are about to experience a change. We are aware that the early part of the first century is styled "the last days" in the New Testament, because that century saw the destruction of the Jewish commonwealth, and the dispersion of the Jews into various parts of the earth. It is evident, however, that those were not "the latter days" of Ezekiel's prophecy, for no such miraculous disasters befell the legions of Titus after the destruction of Jerusalem as those which are here predicted as happening unto this great confederacy from the north. For instance, in ch. xxxviii. 22, Jehovah declares, "I will plead against him with pestilence, and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone." The prophecy remains to be fulfilled, because this supernatural destruction has not yet befallen an invading force upon the mountains of Israel.

There are many indications that we are living in the days here spoken of. Recent years have witnessed the progress of various movements intended to facilitate the reoccupancy of Palestine by the natural descendants of Abraham. The Jews have been subjected to extraordinary persecutions in Russia and other parts of continental Europe. Such anti-Semitic hostility is marvelous in these days of boasted liberty and toleration, and strongly inclines us to the conviction that the hand of God is at work in Israelitish affairs, although not visibly as was the case in former years.

The northern power is represented in chap. xxxviii. 10, 11, as being attracted toward the Holy Land in consequence of the remarkable prosperity of its inhabitants. They are at rest; their villages are unwallied; they dwell securely without either bars or gates. Therefore they become an object of interest

to a nation whose historical policy has ever been of the aggressive order. Gog goes up there, as we gather from verse 12, "to take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn his hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land." This infant Jewish colony in Palestine, in the condition thus described, would seem to be one of the facts of the near future. All that is wanted is a distinct guarantee for the security of life and property, against which the waning authority of the Turk is the only remaining barrier.

But how shall we identify this power that hails from the north? We have an important clew to his identification in the designation he receives in chapter xxxviii. 2—"The chief prince of Meshech and Tubal." The LXX is said to have regarded the word "Rosh," here translated "Chief," as a proper name, and to have read the designation "Prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal." Gesenius defines Rosh as the "proper name of a northern nation mentioned along with Tubal and Meshech, without much doubt, i. q. *the Russians*, who are described by the Byzantine writers of the tenth century . . . as inhabiting the northern parts of Taurus; and also by Ibn Fossilan, an Arabian writer of the same period, under the name *Rhs*, as dwelling upon the river *Rha*, i. e. the Wolga." Fuerst in his *Hebrew Lexicon*, gives Rosh as the "*n. p.* of a people belonging to the Scythian king, Gog, who had their abode in the high north . . . mentioned with Meshech and Tubal . . . the former south of the Caucasus, the latter near the Black Sea." Louth also says: "Rosh, taken as a proper name, signifies those inhabitants of Scythia from whom the Russians derive their name and origin." These three words survive in the present day: Rosh, in the name of the country, "Russia"; and in the name of the language, "Russ." And we are told by competent

authorities that "the common appellation for Russian throughout the East 'Muscove,' preserves the form 'Meshech'; while Tubal is to be traced in Tobolsk." It is considered, too, that the very mention of bows and arrows in Ez. xxxix. 9 helps to identify this power, "which is perhaps the only civilized state in the world that still employs corps of archers."

The Russians have always been distinguished by their lust of conquest. Alison in his "History of Europe," declares that "every Russian is inspired with the conviction that his country is to conquer the world." And some have found evidence of such an ambition in that Panslavonic movement, whose object is to weld into one all the kindred nationalities that hold the Greek faith.

The Jewish colonization of Palestine will introduce considerable wealth into that part of the world, and as Russia will want money just in proportion as she extends her designs of dominion, she will naturally make a move in the direction where she thinks she can most easily secure it. A prosperous community, apparently unprotected, will seem to furnish her an excellent chance. Accordingly, we find that Ezekiel is directed to prophesy and say unto Gog:

"Thus saith the Lord God, In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army. . . . Thus saith the Lord God, Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the Prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them?"—Ez. xxxviii. 14, 15, 17.

The power which at that time exercises its protectorate over Palestine will resist this attempt at spoliation on the part of Russia. "Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tar-

shish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? Hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?"—verse 13. There has much been written to show that we have here a reference to the British power, whose heraldic symbol is that of a lion, as Persia represented her power by a ram, and Greece by a goat. It is notorious that England's interests in the East are such as to make her watchful of all Russian movements in that part of the globe. The prophecy then would require that the Lion encounter the Bear in a mighty struggle for ascendancy upon the mountains of Israel. Events seem to be rapidly leading up to such a crisis. The war in the Soudan will not be the last in which the British forces will engage themselves. Russia would like India; and only the other day it was reported that reinforcements from England were about to proceed thither. The government is credited with the belief that a great war is before the nation. The munitions of war are being shipped to the Mediterranean on a scale exceeding that of the supplies of this nature which were sent to the Crimea during the whole of 1854. Russia has adopted a new military organization and developed new ideas on the subject of tactics. She proposes to put more than two millions of men eventually in the field! Meanwhile Britain issues a proclamation dealing with the reserves and calling out the militia. Colonial assistance is proffered, and will not be refused. The Assyrian of the latter day is full of pride, and lust of territory and power. England knows it, and is therefore preparing herself for the inevitable struggle.

But it is not the Tarshish power, nor the prowess of Israel after the flesh, which is destined to accomplish the destruction of Gog. "It shall come to pass at the same time, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that

my fury shall come up in my face." "Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. . . . Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee; I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured."

That event will not only be an appropriate climax to Russia's career, but will signalize the end of Gentile dominion throughout the earth. For "I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them" (Ezek. xxxix. 21). Never again will Jehovah hide His face from the house of Israel (verse 29). He will then bring them again from the people, and gather them out of their enemies' lands, and be sanctified in them in the sight of many nations, and be jealous for His holy name. Before Him all human pomp and pride shall be abased, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. The nations that dishonor Him shall lick the dust.

As the Gospel which Paul preached was by him declared to be "the hope of Israel," and as this hope has its foundation in the things divinely testified in the Prophetic Scriptures, we cannot afford to be unmoved spectators of the events now transpiring upon the earth. We wait the revelation of the arm of the Lord as in the ancient days, for the deliverance of Israel out of the hand of her powerful enemy, and for the emancipation of the groaning nations from many-centuried misrule. On the ruins of all Gentile governments, He will establish an irresistible but most benign authority, under which the peoples of the earth shall gladly "beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks," and study war no more. The overthrow of a host whose burial will last seven months, and whose military accoutrements will serve the cities of Israel with fire material for seven years (Ez.

xxxix. 9), will not be too costly a preliminary in view of so magnificent and so permanent a result. There is, indeed, no hope for the-afflicted inhabitants of the earth in any other direction. Surfeited tyrants hold the reins of power, and vile men are exalted, and an inherited selfishness dominates the interests of the teeming millions, for many of whom it would have been better had they never been born! But "let the floods clap their hands; let the hills be joyful together before the Lord; for He cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall He judge the world, and the people with equity. . . . His righteousness hath He openly showed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered His mercy and His truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God."

Our wisdom lies in placing ourselves in accord with His revealed purpose, and in accepting the call to His kingdom and glory, addressed to us by the Gospel. Heirs to the throne of universal power are wanted. God has visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. Who, then, is willing to enter the list for such a candidature? Who aspires to association with that man by whom God has ordained that he will rule the world in righteousness—that great Prince of the house of David, whom He has raised from the dead, and made strong for himself? He is incorruptible—he is infallible—he is merciful and just; and all power has been given him in heaven and in earth. He is willing to confer his own immortal nature upon the perishing sons and daughters of men, and to give them a place in his glorious house, when human might shall be a vanished terror, and all the shields and scepters of the earth are his.

LECTURE XIV.

WHY WE STAND ALOOF.

LET me say first of all that we do not stand aloof as a matter of mere natural preference. There are great inconveniences and disadvantages connected with our posture of isolation from those movements on behalf of which so much zeal and piety are put forth. It not unfrequently happens that the temporal interests of men are advanced by reason of their religious connections, and a prominent seat in a church or on a revivalistic platform has often been found to be a profitable commercial investment. But there are no inducements of this order as the result of alliance with the friends of the truth. On the contrary, theirs is a form of collective association that in several cases has meant social disability and pecuniary loss. For of all kinds of hatred and ostracism, that has generally proved the most fierce and determined which has been generated for religious reasons.

There are very many whose fellowship on natural grounds is much to be desired. We can but admire their earnestness and the evident intensity of their desire to do what they believe to be the will of God; and if mere preference were to be allowed to govern our action we should doubtless no longer avoid their company.

We wish you further to understand that we do not by our attitude intend to illustrate any invidious distinction in respect of moral behavior, or to credit ourselves with moral excellencies and virtues for which those from whom we separate

are not also conspicuous. It is our endeavor to exemplify the mind of God in all these relations, and we cheerfully recognize the fact that so far as regards the duties which may be said to arise out of the social compact, there is much that is commendable in circles other than our own. But our contention is that this is not an affair of mere *morality* as the word is commonly understood, and that the Scriptural grounds of fellowship (which are the only true, and reasonable, and permanent grounds) are much more extensive than are those on which a claim to the most unqualified moral recognition may be established.

Nor do we in the least impugn the sincerity of our friends in so renouncing their company. We believe it is their conviction that they are right and that we are wrong, that they are doing God service, while we are acting a hostile part. No doubt they are prepared to credit us with a similar ingenuousness. But it will be apparent to all that nothing of any great importance can be established by this appeal to a man's sincerity, since there have been sincere adherents of every form of undebatable foolishness and error. The sincerity of the Apostle Paul was every whit as genuine before his conversion as it was after. "I verily thought with myself"—says he—"that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth (Acts xxvi. 9). A more sincerely devout man than Cornelius could not have been found in the whole of Palestine. He is described as "one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway" (Acts x. 1). Such an one in our day would be considered as in no need of evangelistic attention, but would be gladly welcomed as a fellow-laborer in the various ecclesiastical enterprises for which Divine approbation is claimed. If sincerity had availed for salvation, none would have been more eligible than Cornelius; yet it was necessary

that the Apostle Peter should be sent to this devout man to tell him words whereby he and all his house should be saved! (Acts xi. 14.) I have no doubt that much of the opposition that was encountered by the Apostles was most sincerely directed and inspired. In one case we read that "the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts" (Acts xiii. 50). It is impossible to suppose that their devoutness was accepted in place of a child-like submission to the Gospel; or that it gave them a title to that eternal life which the Apostles preached.

We believe, moreover, that in thus standing aloof from others, we violate no law of *charity* as apostolically delivered. Again and again it has been necessary for us to vindicate ourselves from the charge of gross uncharitableness in this matter. There are few charges that can be brought against a religious community of a more serious nature than this. If we are uncharitable in the Apostolic sense; if we are without the quality which Paul wrote so impressively about, we are justly excluded from the pale of righteous recognition, and are become "as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." The accusation, therefore, of uncharitableness is not to be lightly preferred or dismissed. We ought to be quite sure that there is abundant ground for it before we attempt to bring home so serious and so sweeping a charge. In order to do this it is indispensable that we know precisely what the word "charity" means, otherwise we are in danger of flinging mistaken and inappropriate epithets abroad.

Allowing the Apostle to be the interpreter of his own terms, we find on referring to 1 Cor. xiii. that a charitable man is one who "believeth all things," who "hopeth all things," and who "rejoiceth in the truth." Doubtless, Paul would have refused to recognize as charitable a state of mind from

which these characteristics were absent. The question is, what meant he by them? He surely cannot have intended to teach that a charitable man was ready to give credence to any and every story that might be told in his ear; or that his expectation and desire were excited by everything he heard concerning the future. It can admit of no dispute that Paul meant to say that a truly charitable man is one who believes and hopes for all that is matter of Divine testimony and promise. Indeed, without this state of mind it is clearly impossible that any man can answer to the remainder of this Apostolic definition, and rejoice in the truth. All charitable pretensions, from whatever quarter they may come, are to be tested in this particular way. They are valid if they reveal faith and hope in those directions which are Divinely indicated in the Scriptures of truth. That man is demonstrably uncharitable, in the Apostolic sense of the term (and for no other sense need we care), who for any reason fails to rejoice in what Paul understood to be "the truth."

Now it will immediately be seen that we are thus introduced to the main, and, indeed, the only reason for an attitude of separation such as ours. It is reduced to the convenient form of the simple inquiry, "what is the truth?" If a man does not know what the truth is, how is he to rejoice in it? And if he does not rejoice in it, how is he to answer to Paul's description of a charitable man?

It is very certain that the Apostle did not recognize as "charity" the kind of sentiment which in our day goes by this name. Because it would prompt to entire abstention from much which he distinctly enjoined.

Nineteenth-century charity is but another word for a compromising toleration, and Paul would be considered in many respects exceedingly intolerant. He used very strong language on several occasions of men who in our time would have

been embraced in the arms of what is called "a large-hearted and comprehensive charity." And those of whom he spoke thus strongly were not men who had made themselves conspicuous by immoral behavior of any sort (though no doubt he would have dealt summarily with all such); they were men who had in one way or another departed from that "form of sound words" which he had delivered by the authority of Christ himself. Concerning these he gave counsel to his brethren that they were to "avoid them" (Rom. xvi. 17), to "have no company with them" (2 Thess. iii. 14), to "withdraw from them" (2 Thess. iii. 6), to "turn away from them" (2 Tim. iii. 5), to "come out from among them, and be separate" (2 Cor. vi. 17). Such counsel doubtless exposed those who followed it to much misrepresentation and abuse; nevertheless it was as binding upon the friends of the truth as was any other Apostolic injunction.

There is, unhappily, wide disagreement among the readers of Paul's letters nowadays as to what he really taught under the general caption, "the truth." All parties representing all shades of religious conviction are prepared to quote vehemently and copiously from the Apostolic writings in support of their respective contentions and views. This may appear to make the task of deciding with what party the truth lies, one of peculiar embarrassment and difficulty to any impartial person who may be viewing the conflict from the outside. It does, no doubt, seem in the estimation of some as though all religious and theological questions had become involved in such complete uncertainty that it is no longer possible to make such points a reason for assuming an attitude of apparent unfriendliness toward those who may conscientiously differ from ourselves. They deny that it is in anybody's power to say for certain what the truth is on many points of importance, and, therefore, they would have us sink all differences and co-

operate on such broad grounds, as are generally assumed by those who regard the Bible as divine.

But we are not prepared to indorse this statement which affirms a condition of complete uncertainty and fog as the present state of all such questions as go to make up what Paul regarded as "the truth." If it were really so that no one was justified in speaking at all positively touching these subjects, the conditions of fellowship would not exist, or if they did they would be at the determination of individual preference and taste.

There is, we note, a growing disposition in all the churches to widen the entrance, and make more all-embracing the fold; and some regard it as an ideal state of affairs that all religious communities whatsoever should be willing to throw aside their distinctive characteristics, and unite in a common effort to advance what is regarded as "the cause of Christ." And, indeed, if the grounds of ecclesiastical separation are not such as affect any vital principle, it is difficult to justify the numerous separations that have occurred. If, for instance, *baptism* is not imperative, but may be left an open question to be settled according to individual inclination or opinion, in that case there would remain no reasonable ground for such a division upon this subject as is known to exist in the case of one denomination, which itself has suffered subdivision on the same point, although all its members hold that the ordinance is not absolutely indispensable to a state of acceptance with God.

We believe, however, that the Apostolic records are not in the uncertain condition that would justify the policy which is now so generally recommended and pursued—a policy of indiscriminate association for revival and general religious purposes—a policy without any well-defined beliefs touching the most momentous branches of human inquiry and hope.

How do we account for the element of mist which is said to envelop these questions, and which inspiration itself seems powerless to dispel? Why don't men and women come across the genuine and undoubted truth concerning all matters of theological debate when they read the Bible? Why is it necessary that books be written and lectures delivered whose object is to call attention to the first principles of the oracles of God? We believe the principal answer to these queries will lie in the fact that the Scriptures are approached with preconceived ideas on the subject of man's relation to endless life. Men come to the Bible, and conduct revivalistic and other religious movements, with the notion in their heads that they are deathless beings. And this one conceit deranges everything, and introduces confusion and mystery into every page of the sacred volume.

It is impossible for one who knows the truth on this point to co-operate in enterprises which are conducted on the very opposite assumption; or to regard such enterprises as having the least apostolicity of character and result. The Bible cannot be explained or harmonized on the current hypothesis of man's immortality. If there be thus error at the very foundation and starting point, all that follows must necessarily partake more or less of the same character. And, as a matter of fact, we find this to be the case. A very different salvation is needed for an immortal soul, and a very different Saviour, from those with which the Scriptures make us acquainted. Our kind and well-meaning friends say, "Why don't you join us at our glorious revival meetings," and we are compelled to reply, "Because your meetings do not present a single feature which we can regard as in accordance with the word of God: the Gospel preached there does not agree with what we find written in the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures; we are not able to persuade ourselves that men are so precious in God's sight

as they are made to appear. You address them as beings who are destined to live forever in happiness or woe; whereas we believe that entire nations of them go for nothing in every Divine estimate of their value, and are but so many perishing forms apart from God's purpose in Christ, to which those only are advantageously related who do His commandments and hearken unto the voice of His word. The Saviour you preach is not in any sense the same as He whom the Scriptures reveal. With you the Cross of Christ means the payment of a debt; while with us it is the vindication of God's majesty and holiness in the circumstances in which man has placed himself by transgression, the death of a representative sufferer who bore the nature of the disobedient to a grave which could not hold him for more than three days and three nights, by reason of his unblemished character before God, and who thus became a foundation on which others might build unto life eternal. Your Holy Spirit is not the same as that of which we read in the Scriptures, for there we find that men possessed of the Spirit always spoke in harmony, one with another, however relatively remote the ages in which they lived; and they were able to accomplish many wonderful works by the Spirit's power; whereas, in your case, no miracles are ever performed; the Spirit is made responsible for all manner of divergent opinion and practice which in no sense harmonizes with what the Holy Spirit declared in ancient times; and everything to which you point us as the work of the Spirit can be explained on natural grounds! According to your view it is the mission of Christ to save men from the torments of an endless hell; whereas we hold that he came 'that men might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' While you are straining every nerve to escape from an impossible doom, we see the grave at the end of every human path, and look upon Christ as the promised emancipator of men from its thralldom,

'the resurrection and the life.' You are looking forward to a celestial recompense, while we are led to anticipate an existence of glory and honor and incorruptibility upon the earth, in accord with the inspired declaration that 'the righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever' (Ps. xxxvii. 29).

"If we went with you we should be required to do and say things against which every dictate of enlightened reason within us would rebel. We should be expected to encourage men to hope for God's salvation, whom society refuses any longer to endure, and whom it consigns to a violent and ignominious death for the most horrid forms of crime! If we cast in our lot with you, it would mean that we had begun to expect that the world was to be brought to God by such agencies as those now in operation, a notion utterly untenable in view of the Apostolic declaration that 'God has visited the Gentiles to *take out of them* a people for His name' (Acts xv. 14). If we went with you we should only confirm you in what with all our hearts we believe to be an entirely hopeless and fruitless form of endeavor; and before we could do it we should have to surrender the conviction which has been borne of patient and prayerful study of the Scriptures, that the only hope worth entertaining is 'the hope of Israel' for which Paul was bound with a chain (Acts xxviii. 20), the hope of the promise made of God unto the fathers of the Israelitish nation (Acts xxvi. 6), the hope of the grace that is to be brought to the earth at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Peter i. 13)."

Now, before it would be possible for us to join hands with the promoters of any of the recognized religious movements of the day, we should require to get rid of these convictions, and this could only be done by the destruction of the evidence on which they are based, which cannot be as long as reason occupies her seat, and the Scriptures remain open in our hands.

We simply do not believe that the Bible teaches human immortality—which is, in fact, a contradiction in terms, for what is human cannot be immortal, and the moment it becomes immortal, it ceases to be human. Nor do we believe that in the inspired pages there is the slightest countenance given to any of the other doctrines on which the popular systems have to depend for their success. We do not believe that the Gospel consists of the story that is commonly told in pulpits about Jesus having appeased God's anger by his death, and suffered in the sinner's room and stead—thus rendering it unnecessary for men to do anything toward their own salvation. We could in no wise undertake to preach such a gospel as that, for to us it confounds every sentiment of justice, and every principle of reason; and has not, we are sure, the smallest countenance in any part of the Scriptures. The faculty by which we sift, and analyze, and judge, is distinctly invited to employ itself upon the things which have been revealed. It is a "reasonable service" which is required at our hands. Such a service is impossible on the current hypothesis of Christ's death. It is undoubtedly a part of the Gospel as proclaimed by the Apostles that Christ died for the sins of men according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. xv. 3). But in what sense is this statement to be understood? Are we to extract from it the idea that in dying Christ was the *substitute* of those who are to derive advantage from his death? That notion would surely commit us to a variety of embarrassing conclusions. It would mean that there was no chance for Christ himself—no possibility of his escape from the power of the grave, for he who suffers vicariously submits to all the conditions which properly attach to the case of him instead of whom he suffers. Man being under sentence to return to the dust because of sin, it is obvious that nothing could possibly rescue his substitute from the same fate, for the moment he

was rescued from it, his character as a substitute would disappear.

But it was also a part of the Apostolic Gospel that Christ "rose again the third day." He never could have done that if the current theory of his death were true. In that case the grave would have claimed him as its occupant forever, and there would have been no release for him from the death-penalty which man had incurred.

And then how are we to believe that in some mysterious way Christ endured while on the cross the entire accumulation of sufferings which were due to all mankind from the days of Adam downwards—sufferings that were to last forever—all crowded into the brief space of a few hours, and even then endured for the most part in vain, since it is the contention of our friends that only a fraction of the human race will actually experience the salvation which Christ died to effect!

You will readily see that these thoughts amount to a total disqualification for our joining in the popular religious movements of the day. We should simply be guilty of pretense and sham, were we to engage ourselves in a work which did such violence to the Scriptures, and offered such continual and gross affront to the organ by which we reason and judge.

We cannot believe that human beings are in danger of being "burnt alive forever," or of spending eternity in any mental condition of which such unspeakable torment would be at all an appropriate figure. And we discard this fiction on the authority of the Scriptures, which declare that destruction is the end of all ungodly men, and that the wages of sin is death, and that all the wicked shall pass away, and be no more, and utterly perish in their own corruption. Nor do we believe that the Bible anywhere affords real encouragement to that "hope of heaven" which is so dear to the hearts of devout men. Were we to fall in with the aggressive religious move-

ments of the times, we should have to keep our mouths shut on the subject of this most unfounded and delusive expectation, which is not only contradictory of Christ's explicit declaration that "no man hath ascended up to heaven" (John iii. 13), but also diverts the popular attention from the glories which do really await the faithful in the kingdom of God, a kingdom which it is God's good pleasure to give to all who believe His word, and do His will, and glorify His name (Luke xii. 32), a kingdom that is to be established on the earth (Dan. ii. 44), the kingdom of Israel restored, in the hands of the Lord Jesus, who to this end was born, and for this cause came into the world (Luke i. 32; Acts i. 6; John xviii. 37), a kingdom that will place a sheaf of scepters under the arm of the immortal Son of God, scepters which he will have wrenched from the grasp of the fallible potentates who have exercised authority over the nations of the earth; a kingdom that will tolerate no rival, and never pass from heir to heir; a kingdom by means of which the afflicted sons and daughters of men will be rescued from all the evils of their condition, and Jehovah's name be exalted from the rising to the setting of the sun.

Were we to join our religious neighbors in their well-meant endeavors, it would be necessary for us to keep silence on this glorious matter of our hope, without the mention of which we are persuaded there can be no proclamation of the Gospel which was preached in Apostolic times. We should have to content ourselves as best we might with another gospel altogether, and so render ourselves obnoxious to the solemn anathema which Paul did not consider too emphatic to be uttered respecting any who might thus subvert the testimony which he himself had delivered: "As we said before, so say I now again. If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. i. 9).

Nor is this all. For, in co-operation with the sects around us, which recognize each other's existence on a fraternal basis, we should be giving countenance to the proposition that men can attain a state of justification before God, without conforming to those requirements which were delivered in the first century by Divine authority as the sole conditions on which it was possible for any to gain eternal life. We find on examining the records which make us acquainted with the work of the Apostles, that they not only required men to believe their testimony concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, but also to be baptized in water for the remission of sins. This is a fact which no one will dispute who is acquainted with the Apostolic Scriptures. When, on the day of Pentecost, the devout Jews asked Peter what they should do, the answer was, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins" (Acts ii. 38). Nor later on did this same Apostle make an exception in favor of Cornelius. He asked, "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized?" And then "he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (Acts x. 47). The Apostle Paul also insisted upon the same form of subjection to the will of Christ, declaring in Gal. iii. 27, that as many of them as had been baptized into Christ, had put on Christ, and so become "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

There was undoubtedly perfect unanimity of practice among the Apostles as regards this ordinance. When the Samaritans believed Philip, "they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts viii. 12).

Now, is this the practice among all who are said to receive the grace of God in the present day? Are converts at revival meetings, and other religious services, required to be "baptized for the remission of sins"? Are not these painfully embarrass-

ing questions? Is it not a fact that nothing of the kind is insisted upon under such circumstances, and that men and women are allowed to depart from these assemblies without having their attention directed to the Divinely appointed means of becoming related to the work of Christ? Supposing that the subject matter of this popular preaching revealed no divergence from the truth as made known by the Apostles, by what authority would men be excused from submission to the Gospel in the way appointed? Has there been a further revelation of the Divine mind abrogating this law of immersion as the means of induction into Christ? Who will take upon himself the tremendous responsibility of affirming that the statute requiring those who believe the Gospel to be "buried with Christ by baptism into his death" has been authoritatively set aside? Who will venture to affirm that what God has commanded is matter for private choice, as convenience and taste may direct?

We must be excused if we elect to be guided by the Scriptures in preference to the customs of men. The most eminent ecclesiastic of the present day cannot boast a scrap of real authority to alter one iota of those commands which have descended from Apostolic times. He stands in no more favored a position as regards Divine obligations than that of the most ignorant and obscure of men. If he wants eternal life—if he desires to have a part with Christ in the matchless honor and glory which will appertain to the kingdom of God; if he aspires to a place among the immortal sons of Deity in the day of their manifestation upon the earth, then it is indispensable that he humble himself, and become as a little child, and thankfully submit to those arrangements which God was pleased to make by the hand of His well-beloved Son 1800 years ago, arrangements which have never been changed by Divine consent from that day to this, but which, alas! have

been very seriously modified and disregarded by men of corrupt minds, who early succeeded in drawing away the sympathy and allegiance of their brethren from the purity and simplicity of the faith, and who, by this means, inaugurated that evil state of things in the midst of which the light of the Gospel went entirely out (for anything history has to say to the contrary), and which filled the earth with a counterfeit imitation of the Apostolic original, which is now current everywhere as the genuine coin.

It will, doubtless, by this time, be perceived that we are in no sense qualified to take part in the religious operations that are going on around us. Even if we were to associate with our devout neighbors and kinsfolk in the furtherance of such schemes, our room would soon be very much preferred to our company, and our presence would be felt to be an inconvenience and a bore. For the truth would act as a fire in our bones. It would prevent us from holding our tongues, and settling easily down in the midst of what we knew to be fraught with fallacy and peril. We lament that it should be so. It is a grief and a pain to see so much zeal and devoutness and intellectual ability engaged on behalf of enterprises which start on false assumptions, and are bound to come to nothing, so far as eternal results are concerned.

These no doubt seem extraordinary, and even outrageous things for a man to say; and the first impulse is often one of mingled indignation and contempt at the apparent audacity of such a wholesale impeachment of the sectarian institutions of the day. That any one should have the temerity to arraign the whole of Christendom, and charge it with departure from the truth of God in respect of every element of it, is considered the climax of presumption, if, indeed, it be not the act of a madman. It is affirmed that the great and good of this and previous generations cannot have been in error! Why

not? Were they infallible? Had they the gift of inspiration? Did God speak through them as He spoke through the Prophets and Apostles in ancient times? Are we not at liberty to compare their utterances with those of the Divine Spirit, which are recorded for our instruction? Or are we incompetent for this work of comparison? Must we needs take everything as a matter of course? Must we go through life with our eyes closed, and our judgment and understanding sealed against all investigation? Is piety necessarily a guarantee of truth? May not devoutness be allied to grievous error? Does it not often happen that sincerity is the handmaid of superstition? Is it not a fact that men as often inherit their religion as the complexion of their countenances, or the color of their hair? Who will deny that it altogether depends upon what university or college a youth graduates at as to the particular brand he bears through life? Is it not notoriously inconvenient and difficult to make a change that involves the sacrifice of reputation and friends and livelihood, and to start life afresh on entirely unaccustomed lines? Are there not innumerable considerations which operate to check inquiry and to stifle dissatisfaction and doubt; and which abundantly account for the general loyalty of men to the baseless pretensions of traditional theology in this our day?

We earnestly beseech you to give these things your unbiased thought. The mistakes of others, however pious they may be, can never be any good excuse for you, as long as you are capable of searching for yourselves. Surely a man's only safety lies in his complete subjection to the will of God, as revealed in the Scriptures of Truth. A lie is none the less a lie, though excited multitudes run after it, and extol it, and praise the man who speaks it. Therefore we ask you to make yourselves acquainted with Divine truth—to go to the fountain-head of saving knowledge, and compare what you find writ-

ten in the Bible with the things you were taught in childhood to believe. If you go honestly to work in this way, we are certain the same result will follow in your case that has happened in ours—you will be astonished—as we were—that you ever could be so blind and foolish as to give credence to the dogmas in which you were reared; and you will be delighted with the wisdom, and the beauty, and the harmony which characterize the writings of the Apostles and Prophets, than which we have no other guide amid the confusion and darkness which God has permitted to prevail in the earth, but which will assuredly disappear in the presence of that Great Light which, in the person of the Lord Jesus, has already for a brief period and over a limited area diffused its glorious beams, but which is destined to shine again with matchless splendor, and to be the light and strength and joy of every man that cometh into the world.

PART II.

Miscellaneous Papers.

PULPIT PERPLEXITIES.

THE Bible was found to abound in declarations that were entirely useless for pulpit purposes. For example, what were we to understand by the phrase, "The times of the Gentiles," which occurs in Luke xxi. 24? We remember being struck with the words for the first time. They were used by a millenarian in our study one evening. But the phrase was as incomprehensible to us as if it had been spoken in the language of the Zulus. Our friend seemed to know what "the times of Gentiles" were, and as he made the mistake of assuming a like knowledge on our part, we resolved to "be swift to hear and slow to speak." The times of the Gentiles might have been synchronical with the pre-Adamite period for anything we had ever learned to the contrary. We neither knew what they were, nor when they began, nor when they were likely to end. The congregation would probably have been impatient under any attempt to engage their interest on behalf of a subject so entirely peculiar. There is no place for the prophetic periods in the nomenclature of the pulpit. What need people concern themselves about "times and seasons" who expect to be shortly hurried away "beyond the bounds of time." "The times of the Gentiles" is an empty, meaningless phrase to all who fail to realize the Scriptural distinction between Jew and Gentile, and who are unacquainted with the revealed purpose of God to restore again the kingdom to Israel, and bring down the pride and pomp of Gentile power. A ministerial friend of ours had mustered sufficient courage to read a paper at the monthly meeting of the fraternity on "The Return of the Jews

to Palestine," but his new-born enthusiasm toward "the outcasts of Israel and the dispersed of Judah" speedily encountered the derision of his learned associates, and he saw that his reputation for wisdom was at stake. What had such a subject to do with the great work of saving immortal souls?

We were no less perplexed with Paul's allusion to "the powers of the world to come," in Heb. vi. 5. It did appear as though these "powers" had been "tasted" by those of whom the Apostle was writing, but the precise truth therein involved was veiled in mystery, so far as we were concerned. Could the phrase signify that some of the early Christians had been "well shaken over the pit," as the Methodists say, in the process of being converted? Or did it mean that they had been favored with rapturous visions of the glory awaiting their arrival in the skies? If an unfettered understanding had been allowed to exercise itself upon the words, we should have found little difficulty in disposing of all such suggestions. We should have perceived how naturally and effectively the language defined the thought which the Apostle had before his mind.

The followers of Christ in the first century had a limited experience of those wonderful endowments of the Spirit, which will be the inalienable possession of all Christ's accepted brethren in the world to come. So would the interpretation of the words have read if we had known what "the world to come" was, and what "the powers" were which should distinguish it. We could see no manner of use for gifts of healing, and tongues, and prophecy, either in the heaven or the hell of pulpit discourse. But here was a "world" spoken of in which the power that produced these phenomena in Apostolic times was to have extended illustration. Clearly Paul's "world to come" was a widely different affair from that to which we were expected to direct the popular hope or fear. The latter was

rather "a world to go to" than a world to come. The conventional idea of "the next world" being associated with regions either astronomical or subterranean, we were naturally unable to perceive the significance and force of the Apostle's allusion. It would be interesting to hear a sermon upon the text. The effort to make it in any way serviceable to pulpit requirements would be sure to illustrate the ingenuity of the preacher in a remarkable degree. But we were not aware that by the Gospel men are invited to become the permanent embodiments, in a future age, of that "mighty working" whereby Christ is able to subdue all things unto himself, and so to be filled with the strength and wisdom required for the omnipotent and infallible administration of the world's affairs in an era when the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, and men shall no longer walk after the imagination of their evil hearts.

It was pretty generally assumed that "the powers" referred to were capable of being "tasted" in the nineteenth century, and to generate such a taste was the aim of every truly earnest and evangelical minister. But this assumption was but ill-supported by the facts of the case. Had it been correct, it would have followed that men behaved very differently under the operation of those "powers" nowadays from what they did in Paul's time. We used to wonder how the great divergence had come about, and whether the prevailing disregard for Apostolic methods ought not to be unceremoniously denounced. We were led to suppose that the Holy Spirit had guided the Church always, and that the multitudinous sections into which Christendom is divided afforded so many different illustrations of the manifold wisdom of God. But then we were perplexed by the endeavor to comprehend how "that one and the self-same spirit" came to prompt men to exercise antagonistic ministries, and advocate mutually destructive

theories! If we were all "called of God as was Aaron," why didn't we all proclaim the same doctrines and insist upon an unqualified submission to all that God commanded by the Apostles?

A further source of perplexity was occasioned us by the prevailing use of the word "destroy." We were not able to extract the popular meaning from any of the Greek words that are so rendered in the New Testament. *Apollumi* (the word most relied upon) is used in relation to objects the nature of which excludes alike the notion of torment and that of continued existence. The reader will appreciate our embarrassment the more readily when we remind him that we were required to attach the conception of interminable suffering to a term which in Matt. ii. 13 is used to describe Herod's intention toward the infant Jesus, "Herod will seek the young child to *destroy* him"; and which in Matt. v. 29 is used of the members of the body, such as an eye, or a hand, "It is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish," and which is used in Matt. ix. 17 of "bottles," and in Luke xxi. 18 of "hair," and in James i. 11 of "flowers," and in 1 Pet. i. 7 of "gold," and in John vi. 27 of "meat," and in 1 Cor. i. 19 of "wisdom," in a parallelism which leaves no room for a moment's doubt as to the real significance of the word. "I will *destroy* the wisdom of the wise, and *will bring to nothing* the understanding of the prudent." The problem was how to find the wisdom of the wise anywhere after God has brought it to nothing! This very word having been employed by Christ in his conversation with Nicodemus, to describe the fate of such as believe not in him (John iii. 15, 16), was well calculated to unsettle our notions on the eschatology of the Scriptures, which had hitherto been of the most approved orthodox pattern. It amounted to this—that what becomes of bread, and wine-skins, and grain, and flowers, and amputated

legs and arms, when the process described by the word *apol-lumi* is accomplished upon these objects, also takes place in the case of every living being that believeth not in the Son of God. And yet some of our associates in the work of the pulpit were wont to lay great stress upon that particular word, as leaving nothing to be desired in the way of etymological evidence of the truth of the current opinion touching the destiny of the unbelieving portion of mankind!

But not less perplexing were the difficulties attendant upon our endeavor to reconcile the theological conception of "hades" with its use in various parts of the New Testament. "The place of departed spirits" seemed a definition very wide of the mark in the case of 1 Cor. xv. 55. "O *hades*, where is thy victory?" Departed spirits are supposed to be with Christ, and if that is the *hades* state, it would appear in every way desirable that *hades* should retain its blissful occupants, as that would unquestionably be to the advantage of all concerned. But the Apostle celebrates prophetically the conquest of Christ over this very region where Lazarus, and the thief on the cross, and Paul are now said to be in unspeakable enjoyment. Why spoil their bliss by laying siege to the locality of it? And in what sense can the word "bliss" be applied to that which Christ comes to do away with? It seemed strange that Paul should have uttered so loud a burst of exultation in prospect of the very remote and comparatively unimportant occurrence which theologians dignify by the term "resurrection," but which in reality is, in their view, nothing more than the reunion of himself with a body that caused him to "groan" and to feel "burdened" during the period of his former connection with it. Our perplexity on this point was shared by no less eminent an individual than Edward White, of London, who has written somewhat extensively on these subjects, and who acknowledged, in the writer's

dining-room, "that matters would be much simplified if the belief were accepted which holds that hades means the grave."

An interesting series of articles might be written, entitled, "Important Scripture Texts that are of no use in the Pulpit." It was quite beyond our power to explain all that is said about Christ breaking the nations in pieces like a potter's vessel, and ruling them with a rod of iron, and giving his accepted friends authority over cities. We never remember hearing or seeing a discourse on Psalm cxix. 19: "Thou putttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross; therefore I love Thy testimonies." How were we to make the pulpit doctrine of retribution a reason for loving God's word? No one of our acquaintance who believed in eternal torment ever ventured to say that the doctrine caused him to love the Bible. In fact, we have heard preachers express a sort of regret that the Scriptures did teach the doctrine, and say how glad they would be if it were otherwise. But it was clear that the Psalmist did not desire that the wicked of the earth should be differently treated from the manner in which he said God disposed of them. He loved the testimonies which made known Jehovah's purpose to treat the wicked like dross. We, however, were not aware that "hellish pains to all eternity" had ever proved a very fruitful source of affection toward the documents which were said to authoritatively proclaim them to be the destiny of wicked men. It would never have done to read the passage as follows: "Thou consignest all the wicked of the earth to an eternity of suffering that beggars all description—therefore I love thy testimonies!" But the reason which the Psalmist gives for his delight in the Scriptures is one which appeals to the judgment of any pure-minded student of God's ways. Who that knows and loves the Bible does not earnestly desire that righteous men may universally prevail, and that all the wicked of the earth may be "put away like dross?"

Christ and David have a very slender pulpit connection with each other and we were in no little difficulty to account for the emphasis which the Scriptures lay upon their relationship according to the flesh. Why was it so imperative that Messiah's genealogy should lead back to Saul's successor and be kept in the line of David's house? His mission being to save "immortal souls" from the pains of hell, we could not, if our life had depended upon it, begin to give a reason why he must needs belong to a particular family in order to do it. The Christianity of the pulpit could in no wise explain those predictions which required that he should be "a rod growing out of Jesse's roots." Nowhere to our knowledge has this difficulty received from the clergy the attention to which its importance entitles it. It did not satisfy us to be told that Christ's descent was governed by the prophecies which went before concerning him, thus rendering it necessary he should be a Son of David. We desired to know why those prophecies were so framed as to engender this particular genealogical expectation? For it appeared that Christ could have answered to the requirements of modern theology equally as well, if, instead of proceeding from David's loins, he had been the descendant of Oliver Cromwell, or Frederick the Great!

We were rapidly getting out of conceit with all human remedies for the multitudinous evils which afflict the nations of the earth. A medical doctor volunteered his opinion to us that Sodom and Gomorrah were comparatively pure places to the fashionable suburb in which we were both residing and which had every advantage which clerical ministrations could afford it! We not unnaturally from this took a desponding view of mankind in general. If such a state of things could exist right under clerical influence, what might we not look for elsewhere, in communities on which the ecclesiastical sun can scarcely be said to shine at all? Clearly the world could

never be brought to God by clerically directed agency if this was anything like a sample. What then? We saw nothing except a change in human affairs of a character we were prohibited from speaking of—nothing save that government of the nations which God had promised by the mouth of all His holy Prophets since the world began—a government which we knew would at once and forever solve those pressing problems of social and national existence which are beyond the skill of the world's foremost men, and which will dispense purity and righteousness and truth and blessedness to earth's remotest bound.

We found the practice of infant sprinkling one of the most difficult of all human customs to defend with any show of earnestness. It was never possible for us to produce the ordinary arguments with any degree of enthusiasm. To show that the reference was not to immersion in such texts as Rom. vi. 4 and Colos. ii. 12—that there were infants included in all the whole households whom the Apostles baptized—and that the eunuch and Philip in coming to “a certain water,” only approached a little shallow brook about three inches deep and two feet wide—to convince the people that the “much water” of the place where John was baptizing near to Salim, was only selected in view of the drinking requirements of the camels and asses which accompanied the multitude that came to his baptism—to affirm gravely that infant sprinkling came in the room of circumcision, and, above all, to have to make it appear that the baptism which was accomplished in the sufferings of Christ, was but an aspersion of anguish and sorrow, and not a veritable submergence in the appointed “waves and billows” (Ps. xlii. 7)—and finally to have to contend that the whole thing was of but little consequence after all—all this required more practice in the art of theological gymnastics than we had managed to secure.

Our recollection of these baptismal perplexities was revived by an article contributed to *The Nineteenth Century* review, by Dean Stanley. This notable writer makes some admissions that are most damaging to his own position. Few are half so candid as the Dean of Westminster. We cannot do better than give a few quotations from his article, after the perusal of which the thoughtful reader must agree with him, that the subject of baptism "suggests many instructive reflections on Christian theology and practice."

According to Dean Stanley, "The baptism of the Apostolic age coincided with a new society that was intended to be a society of 'brothers'; bound by ties closer than any earthly brotherhood. . . . In that early age the scene of the transaction was either some deep wayside spring or well, as for the Ethiopian, or some rushing river, as the Jordan, or some vast reservoir, as at Jericho or Jerusalem, whither, as in the baths of Caracalla at Rome, the whole population resorted for swimming or washing. . . . Baptism was not only a bath, but a plunge, an entire submersion in the deep water, a leap as into the rolling sea, or the rushing river, where, for the moment, the waves close over the bather's head, and he emerges again as from a momentary grave. . . . This was the part of the ceremony in which the Apostles laid so much stress [but which Dean Stanley views with a mere "antiquarian interest"]. It seemed to them like a burial of the old former self and the rising up again of the new self. . . . This, too, is a lesson taught by baptism which still lives, although the essence of the material form is gone. There is now no disappearance as in a watery grave. . . . Every such case which we have known, every such experience in ourselves (of 'lying down in sleep and waking up'), helps us better to understand what baptism once was; and the recollection of that original baptism helps us better to apply to ourselves the language of the Bible concerning it—to that which now most nearly resembles it. . . . There was (in the first century) the yet more dreadful superstition that no one could be saved unless he had passed through baptism. . . . At last, however, with the new birth of the European natives the humanity of Christendom revived. One by one the chief strongholds of the ancient belief yielded to the power and loftier instincts, to use no higher name, which guided the Christian church

in its onward progress, drawing more and more unto the perfect day. First disappeared the necessity of immersion. . . . For the first thirteen centuries the almost universal practice of baptism was that of which we read in the New Testament, and which is the very meaning of the word 'baptize'—that those who were baptized were plunged, submerged, immersed into the water. That practice is still continued in Eastern churches. In the Western churches it still lingers amongst Roman Catholics in the solitary instance of the Cathedral of Milan—amongst Protestants in the austere sect of the Baptists. It lasted long into the Middle Ages. Even the Icelanders, who at first shrank from the water of their freezing lakes, were reconciled when they found that they could use the warm water of the geysers. And the cold climate of Russia has not been found an obstacle to its continuance throughout that vast empire. Even in the Church of England it is still observed in theory. Elizabeth and Edward the Sixth were both immersed: The rubric in the public baptism for infants enjoins that, unless for special cases, they are to be dipped, not sprinkled. But in practice it gave way since the beginning of the seventeenth century. With the few exceptions just mentioned, the whole of the Western churches have now substituted for the ancient bath the ceremony of sprinkling a few drops of water on the face. The reason of the change is obvious. The practice of immersion, Apostolic and primitive as it was, was peculiarly suitable to the southern and eastern countries for which it was designed, and peculiarly unsuitable to the taste, the convenience, and the feelings of the countries of the north and west. Not by any degree of Council or Parliament, but by the general sentiment of Christian liberty, this great change was effected. Not beginning till the thirteenth century, it has gradually driven the ancient Catholic usage out of the whole of Europe. There is no one who would now wish to go back to the old practice. It had no doubt the sanction of the Apostles and of their Master. It had the sanction of the venerable churches of the early ages, and of the sacred countries of the East. Baptism by sprinkling was rejected by the whole ancient churches, as no baptism at all. Almost the first exception was the heretic Novatian. . . . In a version of the Bible which the Baptist church has compiled for its own use in America, where it excels in numbers all but the Methodist, it is thought necessary, and on philological grounds it is quite correct, to translate John the Baptist by John the Immerser. . . . But speaking generally the Christian civilized world would have decided against it. It is a striking example of the triumph

of common sense and convenience over the bondage of form and custom."

And so this ecclesiastic goes on to belaud "the spirit which lives and moves in human society, which can override even the most sacred ordinances." The foregoing extracts supply abundant material for enlightened criticism. We do not remember encountering elsewhere so unblushing a repudiation of the right thing on the part of a professed ambassador of Christ. The policy pursued has for the most part been that either of silence or misrepresentation of the real facts of the case. It is therefore refreshing to have the truth told, even by one who refuses to act accordingly. Our perplexity would not have been diminished had we been in possession of the foregoing facts before the time of our transition from darkness to light; for we should have wondered who authorized these entire departures from Apostolicity of practice, and whence Dean Stanley obtained the liberty he uses in congratulating his co-religionists upon the changes he so faithfully depicts. Mankind have chosen their own methods of approaching God, and substituted the creatures of their "tastes, conveniences, and feelings," for the Divinely appointed means of procuring eternal life. We were never able to compare modern with Apostolic customs without a sense of great uneasiness, and a consciousness of danger to ourselves. For it was not possible to overlook the fact that God has always insisted upon the most exact conformity with His revealed will, and has again and again punished trifling divergencies therefrom with death. The cases of Aaron's sons, who offered strange fire before the Lord, and Uzzah, who put forth his hand and took hold of the Ark to steady it, and Saul, who failed to accomplish the whole slaughter of Amalek—and the directions given to Moses in the Mount to make all the belongings of the tabernacle after the pattern that had been

shown him—were all sufficient to convince us that God will not be trifled with, and that such as turn aside from His ways at the suggestion of what they call “common sense and convenience,” are simply “sporting themselves with their own deceivings.”

To realize the situation even approximately requires some personal experience of it, with its ceaseless anxiety and ever deepening sorrow. The consequences of fidelity under such circumstances are all too obvious: for it is a remarkable feature in human nature that it is ever ready to resent the utterance of unwelcome truth, and to clutch at fictions of the most transparent kind. Israel persecuted her Prophets because they would not speak smooth, deceitful words—and some of the brethren in Paul’s day became his enemies because he told them the truth. We have even known men quarrel with their medical advisers, because they interfered so with their “convenience and taste.” Truth of any sort is generally disagreeable to the natural man, but especially the truth concerning man’s utterly claimless and unentitled condition before God, as a creature under sentence of death.

We were persuaded that many of our acquaintances in the ministerial profession were disposed to share our misgivings as to the general soundness of the position. And as to the congregations, the only question respecting which it was possible to excite or sustain their interest was whether or not the dogma of eternal torments was true; and having decided in the negative, they were quite ready to let all other points go by. From a considerable experience of both ministers and people we are prepared solemnly to record our conviction that there are few belonging to either class whose ideas on sacred subjects are not more or less fashioned by considerations of worldly expediency. We have indeed been informed on good authority, that many of the anonymous contributions to the

Bible-nullifying literature of the day are from the pens of clergymen of the Church of England. The editor of a leading theistic publication informed an acquaintance of ours that such outrageous dishonesty was being continually exemplified in his own periodical. Yet he connived thereat, and gladly accepted the disgraceful co-operation of men bound by the Prayer-Book and the Thirty-nine Articles. One writer has not too strongly alluded to things clerical as follows: "As for ministers of religion, these, being called perpetually into a practical application of the received doctrine of their church, are of all men least able to inquire into any fundamental errors in that doctrine. Eminent persons among them will nevertheless aim after a purer truth than that which they find established: but such cases must always be rare and exceptive. Only by discarding ministerial service can any one give fair play to doubts concerning the wisdom and truth of that which he is solemnly ministering: hence that friend of Arnold's was wise in this world who advised him to take a curacy in order to settle his doubts concerning the Trinity."

DOES DEATH END ALL?

REVIEW OF A LECTURE BY DR. JOSEPH COOK OF BOSTON.

THE form in which Dr. Cook puts the question makes accurate reply somewhat inconvenient. The skeptic would answer it in the affirmative; while the orthodox believer would say "No." We should say, Neither of these answers is sufficient to cover the whole ground of the inquiry according to the Scriptures. In the case of mankind universally and without respect of character, death certainly ends all *for the time being*, for it is testified that "the dead know not anything"

(Eccl. ix. 5). Death also ends all absolutely and forever in his case who is spoken of in Prov. xxi. 16: "The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead." But Dr. Cook's inquiry needs a different answer in its application to those whom Jesus speaks of as "the children of the resurrection," and who are to be promoted to a higher existence in the world to come. (Luke xx. 36). The hope of the resurrection, however, does not constitute the subject-matter of the Doctor's affirmative. He labors hard to prove that all men are naturally endowed with immortality; and among other forms of presumption on which he relies in support of this view he mentions the migratory instinct of the bird. There is the climate related to this instinct; and God, who keeps His word with the lower faculties, will provide a climate for Dr. Cook, when he needs it. The argument might be worth considering if, on independent grounds, it could be proved that all men survive death; and if the bird could be shown to wing its flight to another climate after it was no more. But, as a matter of fact, its migratory instinct is terminated with its dissolution; and the climate related to that instinct is of no use to a dead bird. No doubt there is a climate, in the sense of a glorious future, based upon the promises of God; but, suppose the bird is not alive to go to it! No doubt men have aspirations and hopes in the direction of immortality, "but man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the spirit and where is he." The mistake lies in assuming that the possession of these cravings and instincts is equivalent to the possession of that incorruptibility and perfection to which they point. The traveler's burning thirst while crossing the desert does not bring the bubbling spring to his side; and yet thirst is "a craving which God has not mocked." The quenching of it is a question of circumstances. So, "He that will love life, and see

good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (1 Peter iii. 10).

According to Dr. Cook, man has "a constitutional tendency to look for judgment to come." But a tendency that inheres in human nature would be found in all men, and would survive all attempts to get rid of it; whereas a skeptic would certainly claim to be an exception to Dr. Cook's statement, and declare himself destitute of any tendency whatever to look for judgment to come. If an impression of this sort exists in any man it is no more constitutional than Dr. Cook's fondness for the study of Carlyle. These notions about "judgment to come" can be modified or abolished by education, and vast multitudes of men have no ideas on any such subject. It is simply untrue that "men were made so as naturally to anticipate reward or punishment." Naturally we are devoid of anticipation reaching beyond the affairs of the present life. This is easily illustrated by the case of one who has been born both blind and deaf—one who has never seen a ray of light, nor heard a wave of sound. What notion has he of a judgment to come? None whatever. If by some miracle he could be put in possession of these absent faculties, it would be some time before he conceived the idea which is said to be constitutional to man. Some one would have to talk with him concerning "judgment to come" and tell him what the words meant. If Dr. Cook had been born in the wilds of Africa, and never come into contact with his kind, he certainly would not have had the anticipations he now cherishes. He assuredly would not have had his present conscience—perhaps no conscience at all. Surely conscience is altogether a result of training and is to be distrusted or relied upon according to the quality and degree of the culture of which it is the product. Men's consciences are as diverse as the colors of their hair. A Ritualist has a conscience which a Quaker would feel inclined

to laugh at. The conscience of the Apostle Paul was not the same after as before his conversion. The case would be different if it could first be proved that every man had received his conscience directly from "the Father of lights." The Bible declares nothing about the future which we could have known by natural means.

Dr. Cook wishes to know what that is that shines through our eyes and flames in the forehead in the high states of intellectual and emotional excitement. He desires the Materialist to tell him what shines in the living face under excitement and that is never seen in a dead one. The Materialist might ask him a similar question about the countenance of a tiger or a dog. What is it that makes the eyes of such an animal flash with excitement that is never seen in the face of a dead quadruped? Surely not the animal's immortal soul. The true explanation applies equally to man and beast. Both possess a certain amount of vital energy derived from Him with whom is the fountain of life, and which at death returns to the great ocean of Universal Power, in which all creatures live and move and have their being. That all-pervading Spirit of the living God (which Solomon declares to have been in man and beast alike (Eccl. iii. 19), and which Dr. Cook mistakes as the immortal soul) is "the adequate cause of form in organisms, and the power which directs the movements of germinal matter."

Dr. Cook mentions such men as Thomas Chalmers, and Walter Scott, and Abraham Lincoln, and Milton, and Shakespeare—and sees in their high intellectual capacity an unanswerable proof of their having survived the stroke of death. But, if the argument were sound, there would be no particular need to mention such illustrious names as these. It would be equally to the point were the inquiry made to include so many savages. Somehow, the reasoning does not appear quite so

cogent when put in some such form as this: "Is there no Kaffir anywhere in existence now who died 100 years ago? When those thousands of Zulus fell in the late war, was it only the breaking of so many splashes in the sea? Did death end all with those Red Indians who retired before the advancing tide of Western civilization? Does a Bashi Bazouk go out of existence like a throttled gas jet?" It is an instructive fact that, in order to make an effective argument of this order, you must have a lot of splendid names to use, and call to your aid men who are renowned in the world of literature, or statesmanship, or science, or art. Fools, and idiots, and untutored barbarians only help to spoil such an argument, therefore leave them out, and bring forward only men of intellect and fame! It is less difficult to associate the idea of immortality with cultured Britons than painted savages.

If the duration of a creature's existence is in any way to be inferred from the measure of that creature's mental capacity, we are bound to come to some unfavorable conclusions touching the immortality of many whom we know. If cleverness proves immortality, what about those who are hopelessly dull? There is quite a graduated scale in the world of animal life, and if mental or physical superiority justifies an inference or establishes a proof in favor of endless existence, then the existence of some men and some brutes ought to be of longer duration than that of others.

Dr. Cook quotes the words of Socrates, "spoken just before he took the fatal (?) poison": "You can bury me, if you can catch me. Do not call this poor body Socrates. After the poison shall have done its work, I shall depart to some of the occupations of the blessed; and I would not have you say at my interment, 'Thus we bury Socrates.' Say that, 'You bury my body.'" Against this might be placed such declarations as the following: "Devout men carried Stephen to his

burial, and made great lamentation over him" (Acts viii. 2). "Joseph died, being 110 years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt" (Genesis l. 26). When Jesus would raise Lazarus from the dead, he did not address an immaterial something that had vanished from the earth, but something that was bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, and covered about the face with a napkin: "Where have ye laid HIM?"

The audience applauded Dr. Cook when he said: "It is not more wonderful that we should live again, than that we should live at all." But that is another matter entirely. There is a great difference between living *again*, and never ceasing to live. The one is resurrection according to the Scriptures; the other is immortal-soulism according to Socrates. Would a reasonable person on reading Genesis iii. 19, ever think that the sentence of death was such a cheerful affair as religious writers try to make it appear? Suppose we raise the inquiry, "How is it that men die?" Here is a dreary, desolating, heart-breaking occurrence from which none are exempt. What's the reason of it? A whole earth's population following one another in quick succession to the grave, and few seem to care to know the reason why. Can we know the reason? Here we have it: "By one man sin entered into the world and *death* by sin, and so death passed upon all men" (Romans v. 12). What sort of death? We have a description of it in Genesis, as a returning to the dust of the ground. To attempt to show that Adam was threatened with what is called spiritual death is against the argument of Paul, who shows (1 Cor. xv.) that death's sole remedy is provided by Christ in the resurrection. The theological systems of the day deny that the death spoken of in the Divine threatening to Adam as a returning to the dust, is the death from which Christ came to save men. Before there can be what is called *spiritual death*

there must be spiritual *life*, for obviously a man cannot die in any sense, unless he has been previously alive in that same sense. The Ephesians, whom Paul spoke of as having been "dead in trespasses and sins," were so from the beginning of their career—they were born into that condition, and had never been anything else, until the Gospel came and changed their relation to the law of sin and death, which otherwise would have destroyed them with an utter and everlasting destruction. The resurrection which Paul said had come by Christ (1 Cor. xv. 21) would be a strange sort of remedy for "death to holy feeling and practical piety."

It is clear from Isaiah xxxviii. 18-9, that Hezekiah did not possess those thrilling anticipations of disembodied felicity which enter so largely into the religious compositions of these days! He would have been greatly astonished if a man like Dr. Watts could have visited him during his sickness and said:

" I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers."

They tell us that Hezekiah and David did not know what Paul and Jesus knew about immortality, or they never would have spoken as they have done on the subject of the death state. It is astonishing that people who hold the words of David in such light esteem, should yet sing the Psalms which contain these expressions as if they believed them to be worthy of all possible reverence. Let us be consistent anyhow! If we don't believe that David had the truth on the subject of the death state, let us eliminate from the Psalms we sing all his references to the matter. David knew something about immortality, if we were to credit Peter. Being a prophet, and knowing certain things before they happened, he "spoke of the resurrection of Christ that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption" (Acts ii. 31). At any rate, David knew as much as Paul concerning the death state.

Suppose Paul's conscious personality had in the article of death been ushered into the glorious presence of Christ, there to abide in unspeakable blessedness till the resurrection took place—say 2000 years later on; and suppose Paul had known that such was going to be the case, however could he have exclaimed, as he does (1 Cor. xv. 32), "What advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." One would think that 2000 years of conscious presence with Christ—and, therefore, of inexpressible joy and felicity—would have been a prospect calculated to make a man use very different language. But Paul saw no advantage in the future (no, not so much as might be inferred from the migratory instinct of the bird) unless the resurrection inaugurated it. And the resurrection has not taken place yet!

If men desire an immortal existence, they must become favorably related to the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom God has given power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. "This is the Father's will who hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day" (John vi. 39). Has the Father given every human being that ever lived to Christ? "The Son quickeneth whom he will" (John v. 21). Will he quicken all in whom a pulse has ever beaten? If all mankind that ever trod the surface of the earth are destined to live "as long as God shall live," how came the Apostle of the Gentiles to speak of them as "being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them?" (Eph. iv. 18.) If death did not end all for some people, what meant Solomon when he wrote Proverbs xxi. 16?

There is great unsettlement in the religious world and men are trying to reconcile their reverence for the Scriptures with their intelligence, their observation, their common sense. Such a reconciliation is possible but not so long as the Bible is

regarded as responsible for the dogmas of the pulpit. The general situation is much more depressing and sad than people think. The nations are passing away in the vanity of their minds in ignorance of their destiny and of the only way of salvation that has been provided in Christ. It is no use for men, like Dr. Cook, to "weary the heavens with beseeching glances for one glimpse of those snatched from them in the fiery chariots of pain," for they are dead, and it is testified that even David hath not ascended into the heavens. "Robert Burns, singing his ode to 'Mary in heaven,' and Dante, expressing his hope of meeting Beatrice in the celestial spaces," were both of them ignorant or unbelieving of the wholesome words of Christ, "No man hath ascended up to heaven." The fact is, we can know nothing whatever of these things unless we study the Scriptures. Science and Philosophy can, at the most, only offer a "may be" to our distracted minds. Outside the Bible all is uncertainty, conjecture, absence of demonstration. The wisdom of the world of Paul's day, comprised theories of immortality akin to those which are popular and current now; and of that wisdom the Apostle declared it was "foolishness with God." The present confusion, however, is only for an appointed time. The veil is not to be spread over the nations forever. Its removal is the work of that wondrous Being, who is now at the right hand of God, but who is shortly to return to the earth, that he may judge the living and the dead, and give eternal life to all His friends. And when thus His house is organized, that glorified and immortal company will issue forth to do a great work in the earth—to rule the world in righteousness, to sweep away every Gentile abomination, and every refuge of lies, to dispel the gross darkness which now covers the people, and to introduce an era of enlightenment and purity and blessedness, in which mankind shall dwell together in unity and peace.

IMPENDING CHANGES IN HUMAN AFFAIRS.

No thoughtful person possessing the smallest acquaintance with the Scriptures of the Prophets can regard the present constitution of human society upon the face of the earth as furnishing even the rudiments of a condition in which God would be well pleased. It is a state of ignorance and superstition, and poverty and selfishness, and deceit and violence, and manifold woe, which fairly sickens the heart that tries to realize it, and has learned to long for the great salvation of God.

Take the realm of politics, and see the need which exists for sweeping changes in this department. There never has been a nation upon the earth able to boast an entirely satisfactory form of government, except one. And the reason why that government was satisfactory was because the human element was absent from its constitution. We refer of course to the nation of Israel. If all the nations of to-day got their laws from the Lord God of Israel, what a different state of things there would be! Think of the vast multitudes of statutes that would require to be abrogated, and the tens of thousands of lawyers who would find their occupation gone! In the first place, all the rulers would be Divinely appointed. They would not mount their thrones for any such reasons as those which would be considered satisfactory in this era. God did not choose Moses or Joshua or Samuel or David and put them in authority over the house of Israel because they were elected by ballot, or because they were the legitimate descendants of some illustrious family of chieftains. Human government is a very unsatisfactory affair whichever way you go to work. Suppose you have an autocracy as in Russia. There you have despotism embodied in a single individual, who can

show no good reason why he should exercise it—great power in the hands of one man who would be incompetent to wield it rightly were he a hundred times wiser than he is. Suppose you have a limited monarchy as in England. In that case you have a figure-head,—a piece of human decoration at the summit of your affairs,—a human being put upon a throne, for ancestral reasons, by a number of other human beings who really themselves hold the reins of power, some of them by inheritance, and some because they have managed, by hook or by crook, to get the largest number of votes at an election! Suppose you have a republican form of government as in America or France; even then, the counsels of your nation are not sure to be controlled by wisdom, for the chances are that the intelligence and real worth of the country will be outnumbered at the place of voting by consummate boorishness and downright rascality.

But suppose God wished to provide a government for the nations after his own style. Would He be likely to let ignorance and swinishness, and rowdyism and selfishness, and mere blood determine the matter? Would He not rather say beforehand to those whom He might call to so high a distinction: “Now I promise in due time to exalt you to inherit the earth; I promise to give you authority over cities, and power over the nations, provided that you will just do my commandments, and submit to present dishonor and evil in obedience to my will.” Well, God *does* intend that the world shall be governed—not by tyrants, nor yet by the polling booth, but “by that man whom He hath ordained.” Accordingly, you are invited to become candidates for a place of honor and authority in His kingdom, and this invitation is the message of the Gospel which is so little understood in these days.

And not only is the mode in which men now become rulers unsatisfactory; they also are unable to do the work that

requires to be done. Their inability arises from a variety of causes. In the first place, they are all fallible men, and however well-disposed they may be they are continually brought face to face with problems that defy their skill. Our judges are bound to be guided by the sight of their eyes, and by the hearing of their ears. Society needs judges who can give an accurate decision without waiting to hear the evidence—just such as He who is spoken of in the eleventh of Isaiah. When the power is in hands like His, there will occur none of those distressing episodes which show how possible it is for the innocent to be condemned, while the real offender is enabled to escape. That king is the person of whom the woman of Samaria spake, when she said to her fellow-citizens: "Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did." He will have access to the most secret chapters in human history, and so be able to dispense with all the cumbrous and creaking machinery by which law is now administered.

Then it often happens that excellent measures are obstructed and put aside lest their adoption should interfere with some vested interests or other. Many plans for the good of the commonwealth, that have engaged the sympathy and confidence of eminent men, cannot be proceeded with because other men are not wise and philanthropic enough to give them their support. And so it comes to pass that huge anomalies and shameful statutes are handed down from generation to generation. There needs a government that can simply dash all these obstacles aside, and send all selfish monopolists empty away, and put into immediate operation whatever scheme may be necessary for the welfare of the society at large.

The kingdom of God completely answers the requirement, for when Christ returns to the earth he will make short work with all who stand against him. Imagine a Ruler to whom

the whole earth belonged—the absolute proprietor of all its broad acres and waving forests, the lord of all the fowls of the mountains, and of all the cattle upon a thousand hills—one who owned every square yard and every solid brick in the center of any desired improvement, and one who needed not to consult a second party as to what should or should not be done, and whose wisdom and beneficence were equal to his universal proprietorship and irresistible power! No one can deny that the advent of such an one would be an incalculable boon. It is our privilege to proclaim that in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, now at the right hand of God, an ample provision of this very kind is awaiting the appointed time. He will scatter all the proud in the imagination of their hearts,—the riches of the Gentiles shall be poured out at his feet, and there shall not remain a spot upon the face of the whole earth that shall escape the scepter of his righteous and beneficent rule.

“ The famished crave in vain their fill
While teems the fruitful earth.”

And this bears upon the general question of the world's wealth. How unequally it is distributed at present! A large proportion of it is in the hands of men who either consume it upon their lusts or hoard it up for heirs who long to see them dead. The very bishops take care that their “personalities” shall be sworn by the help of several ciphers; and only the other day one of them was reported to have given the astounding amount of £5 to the relief of the distressed in his city, out of an income of £5000 per annum—and to have entertained his friends one night during the late terrible frost, at a grand ball in his palace! This is but part of a measureless crying evil, which no legislator feels competent to approach.

People go through the principal streets of the large cities,

and think them wonderfully grand places—but let them extend their survey, and pass along the courts and alleys and general back-slummery to be found in all great centers of population. Keep in the fashionable circles of society—have brilliant gas-burners, and thick curtains over the drawing-room windows, and a bright fire in the grate, and plenty of sumptuous fare on the table—don't go among the poor and the degraded, and such as have no helper—and you will probably cherish a very comfortable conception of things in general, and regard the world as a very prosperous and attractive institution. Alas! in what monotonous, grinding, bitter toil the myriads pass their days: and for their unremitting labor what a miserable pittance do they receive? The much-needed change will embrace such sore evils which are done under the sun, and it will inaugurate a day when man will everywhere love his neighbor as himself, and life will be freer, purer, and nobler in every sense.

Consider, too, how that your very best type of human statesmanship is subject to ultimate removal by death. Even if there were rulers capable of accomplishing some of the good we have described, the world would have to lose them after a time. But the impending change in politics will bring with it an order of rulers who will enter upon their work endowed with all "the power of an endless life." They wont be here to-day and in the coffin to-morrow. They will have reached the condition which the Lord Jesus has already attained, of which condition Paul speaks when he says "Death hath no more dominion over Him" (Rom. vii. 9). When the world gets a man to conduct its affairs who reveals great capacity for his office, it wants to keep him as long as it can. But by-and-by death comes, and does not respect even the persons of eminent and useful statesmen, but ruthlessly bids them descend from their seats of power, and hands them over to cor-

ruption and the worm. Your John Brights and W. E. Gladstones "do they live forever"? God, however, has purposed to provide the earth with incorruptible rulers,—rulers whose energy will never know abatement, and whose judgment will never err through weakness, and whose thrones will never be made vacant by the hand of death. But the honor will not be indiscriminately bestowed. It will only be the portion of such as have done the will of God in their respective generations, by a hearty belief of His testimonies, and obedience of His word.

When this great change occurs it will revolutionize the world's religion. There are many who wish to make it appear that the spectacle of confusion and rivalry which Christendom presents is, taking it all in all, good and acceptable in the sight of God—something which it is desirable to consolidate and extend and render permanent. How different the picture drawn in Zephaniah iii. 9. "Then will I turn to the people a pure language that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent." This will never be the case so long as men are permitted to make their own religion. There has in England been an "Act of Uniformity." There is going to be another, but a *Divine* one next time. It will be put in force when the time comes of which Jeremiah speaks (xvi. 19): "The Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, 'Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.'" There will be a duly authorized representative of the Deity, accessible to all who seek instruction in the ways of God; and the present darkness and delusion will be forgotten in the glorious light of that great and notable day of the Lord.

And what changes will occur in the world of letters! There are millions of tons of books in the earth at the present time that will be of no use in the kingdom of God. They will

all be "burnt up with unquenchable fire," probably, as was the case at Ephesus when, under the power of the Gospel that Paul preached, "many of them which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all" (Acts xix. 19). In the age to come all literature will be subject to a supervision that will insure the production and survival of no writings that will not bring glory to God. On the back of every volume, as well as on the bells of the horses, and on every pot in Judah and Jerusalem (Zech. xiv. 21) shall be "Holiness unto the Lord." All theological writings (mere vehicles of human tradition) will assuredly be consigned to destruction; and all works of fiction, and law books, and "oppositions of science falsely so-called" will share the same fate. The ephemeral literature of those days will not be produced to sell, but will be subject to the one ruling principle which will pervade all departments of industry and enterprise and subordinate them to the mind of God. If you could compare the *Times* newspaper of to-morrow with the press of the future age, you would be struck with the difference. The leading articles would show no resemblance whatever. There would be no sporting or theatrical intelligence in the columns of *The Millennial News*; no lists of ecclesiastical preferments and appointments; no notices of the sale of advowsons by auction; no advertisements under the Bankruptcy Act; no deceptive announcement thrust before the eye of an enlightened and discriminating population; no mendacious paragraphs of any kind—all would savor of the highest intelligence, and the strictest integrity, and the most perfect beneficence, and God would be the Alpha and Omega of the whole. The vapid, vacuous, trashy pages now so abundant, but which only could find readers in an age of gross darkness and forgetfulness of God, will certainly disappear from the gaze of men, who will have something incomparably better to read.

And the probability is that the barrier to human intercourse, which is created by the existence of so many different languages, will be removed—either by the general diffusion of the power to interpret tongues, which had such signal illustrations in the case of the Apostles on the day of Pentecost—or, what is perhaps more likely, by the whole earth again becoming of one language and of one speech. The confusion of tongues was a punishment in the first instance, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that there will be a return to that mode of communication which was employed by the Elohim with Adam before his transgression. But whatever the language may be it will be the best adapted to the conveyance of Divine thoughts, which will be the prevailing thoughts of that grand epoch, and be as much more elevated than current conceptions, as the heavens are higher than the earth.

And Art shall trace her pencil and tune her lyre to the glory of Jehovah's name. Man has managed to divorce the beautiful from all thought of God and made it subservient to his own desires. There are miles of picture galleries, and acres of statuary, and hundreds of monuments in public squares that will be abolished together with all that in any way bears witness to the pride and folly of humankind. This needs must be if the Lord alone is to be exalted in that day (Isa. ii. 11). What an age that will be when God will be distinctly associated with all that is sublime in architecture, and thrilling in music, and beautiful in art—when no man anywhere shall seek in any way to glorify himself or his fellows—but all aspirations and capacities shall be filled with the thought of Jehovah's supremacy as the One out of whom are all things—the Giver of every good and every perfect gift.

The commerce of the world, too, will undergo a complete transformation. The day arrives when the mortal inhabitants of the earth will have perfect confidence in one another's

word—when oaths will be done with, and the era of shams and shoddy and deceit of every conceivable kind will be over forever—and when man shall speak the truth with his neighbor, and walk in the fear of the Lord all the day long. And this mad, fierce, devilish competition which leads men to act as though they would like to sweep all their contemporaries off the face of the earth—will have no place in the coming order of things; for mankind shall everywhere be controlled by that wisdom which cometh from above, which is full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy (Jas. iii. 17). Go on the Exchange flags any day and study the scene from a Bible point of view. (You are pretty sure to be the only spectator *so* regarding it). If you are acquainted with the purpose of God, you know where all these people will be fifty years hence; and though they now put on airs, and are evidently on the best of terms with themselves, you will be able to reckon them up. You picture them as each lies in his coffin, and see of what little consequence are the things they are chattering so excitedly about, from the standpoint of the cemetery! And you think of the day when all business centers will be the scenes of intelligent intercourse and perfectly rational and sincere salutation, and when stocks and shares shall have ceased to be regarded as the be all and end all of human existence. The time will come when the highways of the earth and the chief places of concourse will be trodden by a very different type of character from the incarnations of vanity and conceit that now strut about the city streets—and when human society will lose its desert aspects, and be made to bud and blossom as the rose.

And to crown all, there will be a great change in the duration of human life. The Scripture which is our warrant for this assertion is found in Isa. lxxv. 20. The trade of the coffin maker and the profession of the doctor of medicine will

almost die out in those times. The power which was manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ, and by which he went about doing good, and healing all manner of sickness and disease among the people—will again be in active operation, and the result will be the great lengthening of the years of mankind. In the present scramble for bare existence, the human powers have scarcely a chance of due development, and life passed under such unfavorable conditions is little better than an abortion. But in the age of which we speak men's surroundings will no longer be the product and outcome of selfishness and greed. The squalor and wretchedness in which tens of thousands pass their days will be done away. Their gloomy and cheerless abodes, and the miserable thoroughfares in which those abodes are situated, will be banished from the earth. The subjects of Messiah's reign will have abundance of all good things. Their dwellings will be the scenes of contentment and purity and affection, and the fear of God will be continually before their eyes. The hours of labor will be shortened, and men will find interesting and elevating occupation for all their leisure moments; and all the arrangements of that era will be ministrant to the health and well-being and longevity of the earth's inhabitants: the mourners will seldom be seen about the streets, and the whole race will reach a degree of physical and mental development that will be a suitable introduction to the interminable state beyond the thousand years of Christ's rule when an immortal population shall occupy the earth, and there shall be no more curse, and God shall be all in all.

THE LEGISLATION OF THE FUTURE.

OF none of the kings of the future age will it ever be said that he "began to reign" in such a year, and died later on.

Death hath no more dominion over any of them. The attributes of their being henceforward are imperishable glory and strength and an unerring wisdom that will qualify them for every conceivable work which the purpose of God may require them to do. Would that the world were now in the grasp of such a government! How easy for them to enter the legislative palaces of the nations and bid their occupants disperse and come there no more! What a trifling thing for them to do—to take hold of the world's wealth and say:—The distribution of this is now going to be regulated on entirely different principles. The unreasonable hoards of enormous capitalists shall no longer exist side by side with the life-long toils and sufferings of those from whose half-paid labor their excessive wealth is wrung. We are here as the representatives of the invisible God, to whom belongs the gold, and the silver, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, and it is ours to see that life everywhere is made beautiful and bright and pure and free, and that mankind are released from the necessity of crushing, dwarfing labor, and given the opportunity of doing justice to the powers wherewith they have been endowed! Land owners, lords of the broad acres for which you have neither toiled nor spun, we tell you that your tenure has expired, the earth has been given into our hands, and we are about to make our own appointments of its soil! Lawyers, you may burn your books and parchments, for you will never want them more; the statutes are all abrogated which gave them their value: the law is now to go forth entirely from Mount Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem! Merchants, distress yourselves no longer over the fluctuations of the markets, the commerce of the world is in wiser and better hands than yours, the prices of industry and of all commodities are fixed and you cannot alter them! Politicians, trouble not yourselves about the prospects of your party, there is only *one*

party now all over the face of the earth; we release you from all the cares of state, and bid you seek the congenial retirement of private life! Men of letters! cease to rack your weary brains, your occupation is gone and no one will buy your merchandise any more! Musicians! stay your melodies, and wonder; we will give you something better than your oratorios and operas and sonatas and overtures. He that formed the ear has given us control over the sounds that are henceforward to ravish it, and we will see to it that those sounds are not discordant! Men of science! arrest your studies, the door is wide open now, at which you have been knocking so long: in us are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and we are about to show mankind things you never dreamt of! Physicians! you may destroy your prescriptions and cast away your surgical appliances: bring your patients to us, and however diseased and malformed they may be, we'll heal and straighten them at a word, for we are "the tree of life whose leaves are for the healing of the nations." Municipal bodies! we bid you disband. "Authority over cities" has been committed unto us; we'll light your streets for you, and take charge of all your improvements, and abolish your back slums, and regulate your taxation, and make life worth living all round! Clergymen! enter your pulpits no more; your day is over and your work is done, for God has provided the people with pastors according to His own heart who shall feed them with wisdom and understanding!

Such is the picture which rises before the vision of him whom the Prophets have instructed. It has never presented itself to any other eye.

The "Kingdom of God," which Jesus preached, is a Divine reality, not indeed as a matter of present fact, but of future power and glory. We recommend any one who may be suffering from distress of reason on Bible grounds to turn their

attention to the good news of that kingdom as unfolded in the entire Scriptures. Let them duly consider what this Gospel means, and then let them ask themselves if it is possible for such glad tidings to have been run off the reel of the unaided genius of man. No philosopher, no politician, no poet, no philanthropist that ever breathed, has, out of his own brain, produced so wonderful, so satisfactory, and so comprehensive a scheme. That all human pomp and pride and power should be brought low, that the tyrant should be dethroned and all the honorable of the earth should be brought into contempt, that no man should be allowed to have more wealth than benevolence, that all authority and power everywhere should be placed in *their* hands who have made this honor their self-denying expectation and desire, in an age of universal disregard of the promises and commandments of God—that wars should be made to cease unto the ends of the earth—that all the nations should be subjected to one central authority, and have uniformity of law and religion and currency, and a constitution securing to all classes true liberty, and abundance, and enlightenment, and leisure, and safety, and occupation for hand and brain, and all the conditions of physical and social, and mental and moral well-being, which are possible to human imagination and hope. And that the permanence and efficiency of this scheme should be guaranteed by the power, the infallibility, the deathlessness of that one Ruler in whom this glorious arrangement of things should find its center, the immortal occupant of the throne of David, the inheritor of the promises made unto the Israelitish fathers—surrounded by a mighty host of brethren who share his nature, and exercise with him a joint rulership of beneficence and strength, and truth and justice, under which the whole earth shall smile with intelligence and peace and plenty and the very trees of the field shall clap their hands. To say that

all this is pure invention, is to credit the inventor of it with an originality, and a sublimity and wealth of genius, which is not often displayed by literary men, and which, in our judgment, can only belong to any man by inspiration of God.

WHAT THE BIBLE REALLY TEACHES,
IN THE OPINION OF THE LATE CARDINAL NEWMAN'S
BROTHER.

AT the close of a lecture, on a recent Sunday evening, it was announced to us that a gentleman in the audience wished to have some conversation with us. We were accordingly introduced to one who proved to be a person of culture and independent means (about fifty years of age). He was acquainted with our parentage, and had been a pupil under the same master who had taught us the rudiments of an English education. Thinking he might be wishful to know somewhat more of the truth than can be well presented in a single lecture, we yielded to his entreaties and went with him to his house. He soon informed us that he also had discarded all ecclesiastical religion, and had brought himself no little trouble by so doing—his former friends having all given him the cold shoulder. We hoped that such a sacrifice would in his case be more than compensated by the satisfaction which arises from the conscious possession of the truth, but we were amazed when it presently transpired that he had accepted the dismal alternative which rejects the Scriptures and trusts to what are pompously designated “the dictates of moral sense.” We were ushered into a splendidly upholstered library, whose shelves were mainly devoted to theistic and agnostic literature. “You see,” said he, “though I have given up church and chapel-going, I have not arrived at your conclu-

sions: I don't think you have found the right thing yet." Then sundry works were brought down of which we confessed our entire ignorance. Had we read Newman's "Phases of Faith"? Our only knowledge of the book was derived from a somewhat unsatisfactory reply, by Henry Rogers, several years ago, under the title "Eclipse of Faith." Our friend thereupon remarked that if we would promise to read it, he would send us a variety of printed matter that would put everything in its proper light, and deliver us from Bibliolatry forevermore. Our reply was, that we had early gone into the question of the claims of the Scriptures to be considered Divine, and it had been answered to our entire satisfaction. We had never been in the habit of refusing to examine clever criticisms of an unfavorable character; but that our faith had remained unshaken, and we were quite convinced that it is impossible to account for a multitude of historic facts, except on the hypothesis of the truth of the Bible. Was a Divine revelation impossible? And if so, does the impossibility rest with God, or with man, or with the medium of communication between the two? Was such a revelation improbable? If so, on what grounds? And who are the proper judges of improbability in such a case? Was the fact of *death* capable of rational explanation apart from the Bible? "Here, now, Mr. B., you have a race of beings existing under every variety of condition, ranging from abject misery and squalor to opulence and comfort—all fond of life and prepared to use measures to prolong it—but all dying. I want you to give me a good reason out of this library of yours for this mournful and most distressing circumstance. You say men are the children of God, and that the opening chapters in Genesis are entirely legendary and mythical—what explanation have you that will shed any light upon such stern matters of fact as the coffin and the cemetery? If all people upon earth are sons and

daughters of God, why does He permit them to die? And if death is not an event of Divine appointment, *how* comes it to pass—where, when, and by what means did it originate?" The reply to this question neither reflected credit upon our friend's theological position, nor was calculated to enhance his reputation for candor, nor caused us to set a very high value upon his large and costly collection of books. After much desultory conversation, during which our friend contrived to get as far away as possible from the fact of man's corruptibility and the question of a future state, we separated; and in the course of a few posts we received two books by Newman, one entitled, "Religion not History," and the other, "Phases of Faith, or Passages from the History of my Creed."

The author of these works (Francis William Newman) is brother to Cardinal Newman. The two men have taken very opposite courses, and present a theological contrast exceedingly striking and peculiar. The one is a representative of a huge system of imposture which has dominated Europe for many a benighted century: while the other is "Emeritus Professor of University College, London," and both were, if we are correctly informed, fellow-students with Mr. Gladstone at Oxford. At any rate, the name of the author of "Phases of Faith" stands for great learning. His appears to be a very varied culture, for he has written a "Handbook and Dictionary of Modern Arabic"—also a "Treatise on The Difficulties of Elementary Geometry"—another on "The Philosophical Classification of National Institutions": besides translating English poetry into Latin verse, and Homer's Iliad into unrhymed English meter. He has, moreover, written a work in which he claims "A Common Basis for Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism"—also something about "The Soul; its Sorrows and its Aspirations," and some Didactic Religious Utterances," etc.

It is certainly interesting to find a man of such parts, who (though he rejects the Bible) declares that the Scriptures do not teach the principal doctrines which are gravely propounded in their name. The following extracts about the Gospel will show that Mr. Newman, as far as knowledge is concerned, was at one time "not far from the kingdom of God."

"Indeed the received books of the Christian Canon itself made clear what was the primitive Gospel or good news. It was the proclamation of a coming *Divine kingdom on earth, in which Messiah should rule in person and his saints sit on thrones by his side.* [Italics Newman's.] If people will shut their eyes, they cannot see this; but the fact is as clear as can be. A truly fascinating proclamation it was, to a world trampled down under Roman tyranny. Messiah was to descend from heaven, not at the end of the *world* (as our English version erroneously has it), but at the end of *the age*. A new and blessed age was thereby to be established. The times of refreshing were to come from the presence of the Lord, who would send to the cruelly wronged nations Jesus the Christ for restitution or re-establishment of all things, according to the words of the holy prophets. The glorious prophecies held up in Daniel and Isaiah especially had long been the delight of the Jews. They were necessarily the infant-food of the Christian church. From this source it learned of what kind the kingdom of God would be: to have renounced these glowing predictions would have been suicide. Neither James, John, Peter, nor Paul, could have dreamed of such a procedure: only a later age, after Jerusalem had perished, could deride as 'Jewish' the glorious hope of Messiah's earthly rule, unveiled in Hebrew prophecy. Even a Hebrew psalmist, without allusion to a Messiah, had announced that Jehovah would get the victory over the heathen with His right hand and holy arm; and make known His salvation to the end of the earth; therefore he calls on all the people to rejoice and the floods to clap their hands, because Jehovah *was coming* to judge the world in righteousness. His kingdom was to be fundamentally new, exterior, and visible, a real kingdom of heaven on earth. All pagan rulers were to be dethroned. The day of the Lord of Hosts was to be against all that was proud and lifted up, against high towers and fenced walls, against fleets, war horses, and chariots and royal pomp. The pride of all glory was to be stained: the honor-

able of the earth were to be brought into contempt. The Lord alone was to be King: let the earth rejoice!—truly this righteous rule is, as it was, 'the desire of all nations.' When announced as *imminent*, in conjunction with the stern call to repent of sin and be converted to a holy life,—a call to which the conscience of mankind responded,—it is not wonderful that so many listened and believed. Not that this Gospel was 'good news' to everybody. Of course it was not so to the princes of this world, against whose power it was proclaimed. Roman emperors were able to understand so much. But 'the day of the Lord' was not only to overthrow all that is high and mighty; it was also to burn up the meaner sinners. Some one has said that Christianity is founded on the doctrine of hell fire; *which seems to me an error, if hell mean an eternal or a lasting fire* [italics ours]; but undoubtedly the doctrine of *God's fiery wrath* against sinners on 'His great day' was cardinal to Christianity. In Isaiah, as in the Apocalypse, Messiah was to tread the winepress of God's wrath, and to stain all his raiment with blood. According to the other notion, also military, a fire was to go before him, and burn up his enemies, the wicked of every class. . . . All who had heard the Primitive Gospel, understood that it was a day of vengeance as well as of mercy, a day sudden and sharp. . . . A day to be wished for by saints, but to be dreaded by the wicked and by obstinate unbelievers. That this great consummation, the bringing down from above a divine King, accompanied by angels and by saints raised from the dead, who would destroy tyrannies and idolatries, was to come *speedily*, is attested in the first three Gospels and in the Apocalypse, in the Epistles of James and Paul, and in the first Epistle of Peter."

[The writer here proceeds to elaborate an argument against the Gospel of the kingdom, based on the fact that it was not established in the life-time of the Apostles, and considers that this renders their testimony in other particulars untrustworthy.]

On page 14 of "Religion not History," he proceeds:

"The broad fact now specially pressed, may be briefly stated thus: 'The original Gospel taught the *speedy* return of Christ from heaven in *visible* glory and power to establish a righteous rule over the *earth*.' With Paul it was clearly an axiom. When he wishes to dissuade Christians from going to

law with one another before heathen magistrates, what is his argument? 'Know ye not that *the saints shall judge the world?* And if the world is judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that *we shall judge angels?*'"

[The writer then quotes Luke xxii. 28-30, where Jesus promises that the Apostles shall eat and drink at his table in his kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, and remarks as follows]:

"No man of common sense ever used such plain prosaic language without expecting to be understood literally. To invent a spiritual interpretation of such words is against common sense. Whether Jesus did or did not utter them is too hard a question for me to decide; but they never could have passed as his, in a book accounted sacred, unless a most vivid belief in a literal kingdom had possessed the collective church. . . . In the Apocalypse the saints are to sit with Christ on his throne, and to wear crowns, and be kings and priests, and reign on the earth. To give up this magnificent dream—this delicious expectation of a speedy and total overthrow of human misrule, by the direct interference of miracle, was very difficult and painful; but at last the progress of time made it inevitable, in spite of the vast authority of the Apocalypse, as the writing of John the Apostle. The belief in the 'millennium,' lasted on with the vulgar and with some eminent Christians, after the most thoughtful and educated men of the church had abandoned it and frowned upon the Apocalypse as did Luther."

The foregoing is a fair sample of much that may be extracted from the writings of a man who for years has employed his genius upon the vain task of destroying the only foundation of human hope. Such quotations will serve to show that when unbiased culture is brought to the perusal of the Scriptures, the result is favorable to the truth in at least some of its essential elements, and demonstrative of the unscriptural character of those traditions which constitute the christendom of the present day.

REMARKS INTRODUCTORY TO A LECTURE ON
THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.—MARCH, 1881.

THE subject of to-night's lecture, though uninteresting to the majority, has very great interest indeed for those who soberly and intelligently ponder the present evil condition of society. The civilized world has just been exercised with horror at the fate which has befallen one of its most distinguished potentates. It has taken European society many centuries to develop into its present dangerous and unhappy condition. "The Autocrat of all the Russias" having survived five previous attempts to accomplish his destruction, within a period of fifteen years, succumbs at length to the sixth. The tragic occurrence is variously regarded; but to none is it suggestive of deeper or more solemn thoughts than those it has engendered in our own mind.

The Russian Emperor has met with his death by the assistance of modern science, whose discoveries have placed a terrible power in the hands of revengeful and desperate men. The event teaches us at least that it is not in merely scientific directions we are to look for the specific and catholicon for the universal evil. What, if dynamite is useful in the quarry, cannot it also be used to blow a monarch in pieces? Man has found out many secrets of physical law and motion; but he has failed to discover a means by which the knowledge of those secrets may be withheld from the malignant and intrusted only to the benevolent of the race. Science does not give all her students conscience and the fear of God. It yet remains that the most terrible crimes may be done by her aid, and that, too, in the abodes of the most splendid civilization. The world needs a power in the midst of it that can, at any distance, prevent the application of scientific facts to purposes

of cruelty, cowardice, grudge, and hatred. And we are here to affirm our conviction that this much-needed power is destined shortly to receive visible embodiment in the earth in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is now at the right hand of God.

In his absence the world is compelled to resort to measures of repression whose futility will every now and then become painfully apparent. Death itself has no alarms for men of the Nihilistic pattern. They are said to have satisfied themselves that there is no possibility of life beyond the grave, and they would as lief perish with that which they destroy as survive it. However much we may abhor their evil deeds, there is a sense in which we can indorse their belief that "all the world is out of joint; that no mere combination of peaceful men can set it right: but that there must be turmoil and upheaval before the world will see truth and do justice." These men, however, fail to realize the fact that if "peaceful men" cannot rectify the world's affairs, neither can any combination of disappointed, reckless, remorseless citizens. The mischief has roots that are too deeply embedded. How admirably that arrangement of the Most High, spoken of in the Scriptures as "The Kingdom of God," meets every exigency of the present situation! Russian politics, together with those of every other nation under the sun, will then be dealt with for the first time in a reasonable, satisfactory, and permanent way. There will be no fallible autocrats for tyrannicides to kill, but there shall be in that day one King only, whom no explosive can destroy, and whose irresistible and beneficent authority shall be recognized in all the earth.

The spectacle of one mortal man ruling (despotically or otherwise) over eighty millions of mortal men, can never be regarded as a permanent institution. He whom the Prophet Daniel speaks of as "ruling in the kingdom of men and giving

it to whomsoever he will," does not intend that man shall always hold the reins. It were a dismal prospect for Russia, and every other country, were the rulership destined to remain in hands such as those which now wield it. What though "the portrait of the late Czar is hanging in most of the Russian homes"! It remains that there is something about existence in that great territory which makes it hardly worth having to hundreds of thousands who cannot escape from it to any improved condition. With its vast military organization, kept up by the very blood and bones of the people, who by it are held fast down in a state of poverty and wretchedness it would be difficult to describe; and with the system of respectable and consolidated tyranny systematically practiced by the corrupt but powerful occupants of Russian high places—men of whom it is said that they can "sign away a citizen's liberty by a single stroke of the pen, and revenge a personal affront by consigning their victims to the living death of existence in a Siberian mine"—no wonder that insurrectionary movements do not become extinct, or that some citizens of that country should seem to get fire into their veins instead of blood!

We are not so badly off here in England, but still there is plenty of misery and discontent among the inhabitants of these islands. We need a monarch wiser and more powerful than any who has borne rule in the land hitherto; one who will see that the poor are looked after; that the innocent are never condemned; that the laws never bear hardly upon one class to the exclusive advantage of another; and one who will everywhere exalt the name of God.

The lecturer will now endeavor to convince you that such an one is coming. What we regard as sure indications that the Lord Jesus is about to return to the earth have not been got up to suit the events after they transpired. The things that have taken place in European politics during the

last thirty years were matters of scripturally generated expectation before their occurrence. Those who have never examined the evidence we have to present on the subject are scarcely qualified even to raise an intelligent laugh over it. An honest search into these things is worth your while for a variety of reasons. At present it is difficult to obtain anything like extensive recognition for the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ; but the day will come when his name will have ceased to be a theory and will be a great and terrible fact in all the earth; when men will find it impossible to leave him out of their calculations, or close their eyes to so signal an illustration, as he will be, of the wisdom and mighty power of God.

CHRIST'S PROMISE OF PARADISE.

CHRIST'S words to the dying thief are regarded as indisputable evidence that he and the malefactor were together, in a separate state of existence, on the very day they died. "Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Now where is Paradise? Paul was once "caught away" in vision to it. In our version the word is translated "caught up," but it is precisely the same word as that used in the Acts, where we read that "the spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more." In Rev. ii. 7, Jesus says: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." And in verse 26 of the same chapter, he promises to give the same class (those who overcome) "power over the nations." As the nations are upon the earth, it is but reasonable to conclude that Paradise will be upon the earth also, since they that are to rule over the one are to eat of the tree of life in

the midst of the other. The Scriptures of the Prophets contain many allusions to the changes by which certain parts of the earth's surface will be transformed, in the age to come, and made verdant and beautiful beyond comparison with anything now to be seen. "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" (Isa. xli. 3). If Jehovah does this to Zion, then the whole region will be indeed and of a truth "the Paradise of God." There was certainly no such paradise at the time when Jesus spoke those words to the dying malefactor. But can we doubt that his promise had relation to the happy state of things described in the language quoted from Isaiah? "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." The man's request was for a future good—not for any of which there was any immediate prospect. And Jesus told him that it should be granted. The day which the malefactor had in his mind, was the day on which he should be with Christ in the paradise of God. It has been frequently pointed out that there is an instructive use of the word "*semeron*," here translated "to-day," in the Septuagint version of Deut. ix. 1: "Here, O Israel; Thou art to pass over Jordan this day." As a matter of fact the passage of the Jordan was accomplished some two months after Moses spoke those words. The Greek translators also rendered by the same word the statement contained in Psalm ii. 7.—"Thou art my son: *this day* have I begotten thee"—a declaration which Paul distinctly applied to the resurrection of Christ, which did not take place for centuries after. The word, therefore, does not necessarily refer to the actual day of twenty-four hours which may be current at the time it is used; but rather to the day or period connected with the particular event in relation to

which it is employed. In the case we are considering, the event was the coming of Christ in his kingdom. This was the subject on which both he and the malefactor were thinking; and it is as though Jesus said to him "This day, which we both now anticipate, thou shalt be with me in Paradise." For Paradise will be a glorious fact in the earth when he comes to establish his Kingdom, and to restore the desolations of many generations. As a matter of fact Jesus was not in Paradise with the thief on the day he spoke. Paul says, he died and was buried. And so far was he from being in Paradise on that day that Peter says his soul was in hell between his burial and his resurrection. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." And Dr. Eadie says: "It is thus obvious that the argument based upon the idea that Christ's soul went to sheol, and his body to the grave, has no foundation. The Hebrew does not warrant this distinction. Christ's soul, in such an idiom, is his entire person. Now, what is meant by sheol? It is a place where corruption is seen—the region of the dead. So the Apostles understood it. Though Messiah was to die, death's power over him was to be very limited. He was not to be abandoned to his dark dominion. His body was to be so short a time in the grave as not to suffer the ordinary process of decomposition." There is no scriptural warrant for the current conceptions of future life. All texts and all arguments that can with the least plausibility be used in their support, turn out when fairly tested to be moldering props. The only remedy for death is resurrection. Since by man came the one, by man has come also the other; and there is not a word in the whole Bible to deprive either of these great facts of its tremendous significance.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

SOME texts are quoted to prove that righteous men go to heaven when they die. Jesus went to heaven, it is true, but then he ascended bodily, and he said to his disciples: "Ye shall seek me: And, as I said to the Jews, whither I go, ye cannot come: So now I say to you" (John xiii. 33). And yet we are asked to believe that those disciples have been with him in heaven for 1800 years! This astonishing demand is made of us on the strength of a few passages of Scripture which are thought to give it every possible countenance. It is important, therefore, that we should duly consider them. The scene which occurred at the Lord's transfiguration is supposed to be triumphant evidence on the point in question. There appeared on the mount, Moses and Elijah, who talked with Jesus. This occurrence was styled by Christ, a "vision." He charged those who were witnesses of it, saying: "Tell the *vision* to no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead" (Matt. xvii. 9). Now a vision was not always a reality, though it might be presented to the mind with all the vividness and force of a reality. When Peter was miraculously delivered from prison the record states, that "He wist not that it was true that had been done unto him by the angel, but thought he saw a vision." He thus distinguished between what was true or actual, and what was but a subjective impression on the mind, as we see things often in imagination and in dreams, when there is no objective reality to correspond with what we thus behold with the mental eyes. But it may be asked, how on this theory we can account for the conversation that took place between Moses and Elijah and Christ. In answer to this question, we should refer to the case of the vision which Peter saw of a great sheet, knit at the

four corners, and let down to the earth, full of all manner of living creatures. He was in a trance when he saw it, and heard a voice, and replied to what that voice said. But the whole thing took place in Peter's brain. It is quite possible, therefore, for conversation to have been carried on during the vision of the Transfiguration in a similar way. If, however, Moses and Elijah were really present on that occasion, it is still certain that they were not present as disembodied spirits, but as men of form and substance like Christ himself; Elijah never died, and if Moses was there he must have been raised from the dead. So that the narrative cannot be very successfully quoted in proof of the idea that dead men can live again without bodies.

REAL IMMORTALITY.

CHRIST preached a *real* immortality, very different from that of Egypt and Greece. His doctrine on the subject was dogmatically affirmed. It did not rest on assumption, conjecture, or guess. The proofs of it were not such as men might gather from the writings of the philosophers of pagan countries. It was an immortality peculiar to inspiration, and not to be demonstrated independently of it, by the logic of the schools. He brought it to light by the Gospel. Apart from the Gospel he could never have made it known. This very fact distinguishes it in the most striking manner from all the conclusions upon the subject which men may have arrived at by the inherent force of their own understanding. If his immortality be a fact, theirs is a fiction of the most pernicious and baneful type. Both cannot possibly be true. Theirs is immortality without a body. His is immortality in tangible and visible form, attainable by resurrection from the dead.

Theirs is congenital immortality—his a conditional bestowment. Theirs is held to be a present fact of human consciousness—his is a future inheritance. Theirs is for *all*—his only for as many as the Father has given unto him. Which looks the most real, and most likely? There is something about the common view which people take of this question, which fails to yield true satisfaction in the test moments of human history. Men and women find it hard work, just before the coffin-lid is screwed on, to persuade themselves that death has not really and truly done its work! I confess, I cannot see anything particularly entrancing in the prospect of a bodiless and impalpable existence. This may be owing to some defect in my mental constitution, but there certainly appears to me to be nothing tranquillizing or inviting in the vague expectations which are popularly entertained with regard to a future life. In Christ's doctrine, however, I can see a definiteness and substantiality and glory, which meet all the cravings of my mental and moral being, and make it possible for me to hope and trust without violating my reason in the process. "I will raise him up at the last day." "He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto the body of his glory." There is nothing ghostly and bodiless about that! I am offered a nature that will be just as substantial as my present one, and far more real. For where will the reality of my present organization be one hundred years from now? It will be simply impossible to predicate reality of it at that distant period. It will, in the natural course of things, have completely disappeared from the universe. But Christ invites me to partake of a nature that will never disappear as long as eternal ages roll—a nature from which the law of sin and death has been eradicated, and whose every atom and pulsation will thrill with an energy imperishable and divine. All that is connected in the Scriptures with the immortality which Christ

revealed has a reality about it which presents a thrilling contrast to the supposed forms of disembodied felicity by which it is sought to engage the hope and aspiration of men. No man who believes that when he dies he will be conveyed to the skies, has the remotest conception of the manner in which he will employ his celestial activities and spend his time. The occupations of that heavenly existence are generally held to be mainly of a musical sort, and harps of gold are mentioned as a prime attraction. But nobody seems to be at all sure. They are quite willing to leave all such details until they get there. Their hope rests on no real promise, and therefore can hardly be expected to fasten itself on any real features of the heavenly state to which they aspire. It is very different with the hope set before us in the Gospel. That hope is founded on God's covenants, made with the fathers of the Israelitish nation thousands of years ago. It relates to a state of blessedness to be realized upon the earth at a time when all sublunary affairs will be under the jurisdiction of His glorious Son, and when the authority everywhere will be placed in tried and trusty hands. "To him that overcometh will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron." There is something very real about that. We can understand it. It commands our perfect admiration and sympathy. There is nothing vague and shadowy and sentimental in the prospect. It is precisely what is needed. Were the nations in the grasp of such a government now, what an altered state of things we should see? Is it not, think you, destined to become a divine reality? It is not too good to be true, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it! These are the things which belong to the Bible system of faith, and they appeal strongly to our sober sense. We can think of them and anticipate them, without requiring our reason to abdicate her throne. They satisfy the profoundest instincts of

our being, and the most exacting benevolence can ask for nothing more.

THE BIBLE AND ITS INTERPRETERS.

It is a remarkable fact that both the mystical and logical methods of interpretation (as they have been termed) have been applied to the Vedas and the Koran as well as to the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. The fate of all writings claiming a supernatural character has been to excite discussion and disagreement as to their precise meaning. This is peculiarly the case as regards the Bible in the present day. There perhaps never was a time when its students were more widely separated in opinion respecting its teaching than now. A symposium on so vital a topic as "the Atonement" has recently been published, and mainly serves to show how far apart the recognized spiritual guides of the people are in their conceptions of the subject. In their attempts to recover and exhibit the Apostolic exegesis of the question, each writer has added one of his own, and has been careful to quote what has seemed to him the strongest texts.

This, indeed, has always been a characteristic feature of Biblical controversy. Each contention has had its textual strongholds, and has shown a reluctance to face the passages cited on the other side. Such tactics are very suggestive of unfairness and alarm. A Calvinist would refuse to be drawn away from such places as Rom. ix., and an Arminian would show no particular eagerness to follow him there. The Universalist has the eye of an eagle for such texts as speak of God's abounding love, and his willingness that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth; but prefers to quietly pass over the inspired allusions to the "destruction"

and "end" of wicked men. The advocate of the dogma of endless sufferings would never think of believing in anything of the kind were it not for a few texts in the New Testament which appear to him to admit of no other interpretation, although the meaning he attaches to them is horribly at variance from the express statements of Scripture in numerous other parts. It is notorious that a controversialist, who wished on Bible grounds to defend the Athanasian doctrine of the Trinity, would not begin his work by quoting the words of Paul in 1 Cor. viii. 6: "To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things." Neither would a Unitarian be likely to revel in the passages which declare Jesus to have been the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, and the express vehicle of His power and wisdom to men. Those who anticipate a final catastrophe, in which the material heavens and earth are to utterly vanish, are generally content with a single quotation from Peter, and are impatient of any suggestion, based upon the prophetic Scriptures, that would be likely to invest the Apostle's language with a more reasonable significance than that they suppose attaches to it. The history of polemical warfare has abundantly illustrated the truth of Professor Jowett's remark that, "In seeking to prove their own opinions out of Scripture, men are constantly falling into the common fallacy of opening their eyes to one class of texts and closing them to another. The favorite verses shine like stars, whilst the rest of the page is thrown into the shade."

Now it seems to us that no method of interpretation is admissible that does not allow of its being brought to bear upon every text that can possibly be cited. The Bible has been compared to an elaborate mechanical contrivance which an unskillful hand cannot put together, but is embarrassed by a redundance of parts for which no proper use can be assigned; while one who is acquainted with the exact princi-

ples of its construction can readily fit every wheel and cog into its appropriate place.

Nor is this a work which demands a superhuman ingenuity. Procure the right key, and the mysteries of Divine revelation are mysteries no more—a place and a use is found for every text. The system that finds itself encumbered with an accumulation of Scripture statements it cannot satisfactorily dispose of stands self-condemned as unworthy the confidence of such as believe the holy oracles to have proceeded from an immutable and infallible source.

Philo and Origen made what is known as the *allegorical* method of interpretation the instrument of a very wild and exaggerated exegesis. By the same means Swedenborg reduced the Scriptures to a book of enigmas to which the term "revelation" could only be applied by an excessively ironical use of language. The historical residue left after this kind of treatment is hardly worth mentioning. According to Emerson, the plan of Swedenborg was to fasten each natural object to a theologic notion—"a horse signifies carnal understanding; a tree, perception; the moon, faith; a cat means this; an ostrich that; an artichoke this other." He would see a spiritual meaning in Pharoah's chariot wheels, and a Divine significance in Rahab's scarlet thread. Job's seven thousand sheep and three thousand camels stand for the *external* principles of goodness and truth; and for the *internal* you have his five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred she-asses! The words of Psalm cxxxvii. 9: "Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones," are to be thus interpreted: The daughters of Babylon being intended to represent sinners, the "little ones" must stand for sins, while the stones against which these sins are to be dashed are none other than the ten commandments, or the "two tables of stone." Whew!

That there are symbolic and allegorical sections in holy writ is of course beyond all doubt. The Bible is an Oriental book. But they are surely to be distinguished as such without the exercise of so much straining and ingenuity. Occasionally this characteristic is distinctly alleged, as when Paul says: "These things are an allegory"; or as when the Apocalypse opens with the intimation that Christ sent and signified the message which it contains by his angel unto his servant John.

The method which sees broad literality everywhere subjects the reason to no less severe a strain. It makes no allowance for the fact that the sacred writers did not use the language of a science that would have appeared erroneous and even unintelligible to themselves, but in their descriptions of natural phenomena employed the phraseology of appearance merely. Hence it maintains that the earth must be a plane, because the "ends" of it are spoken of; and that the sun must revolve around it inasmuch as the Bible uses terms which imply that such is the case! The stars are mere points of light at no great elevation, for are they not dismissed in one brief sentence in the account of the Creation as though they were not of much consequence—"He made the stars also"? The wicked will surely be tormented forever, in literal fire and brimstone, by a great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and a prodigious tail, for is not this plainly asserted in the Book of Revelation? The literalists look for signs of Christ's coming in the firmament above their heads, and are thus prepared to be "dismayed at the signs of heaven," like the heathen of Jeremiah's day.

Is there no choice of method except that which commits us to the one or the other of these two alternatives? Must we stultify our reason anyhow? Surely not. There is a way of treating the Scriptures which does no violence to either

them or us. This way conducts us to the figurative hypothesis only, when the literal is obviously excluded. We may determine when this is the case by the general analogy of Scripture, and by a diligent comparison of one part of it with another. While recognizing the use and value of symbolic forms of speech and giving due license to the language of Hebrew poetry, we are led to give to what is strict prose its obvious significance, and to read all metaphorical portions by its light, concluding that these latter are to be understood in a manner that will not introduce confusion and contradiction into the sacred writings. The great mass of revealed truth will undoubtedly bear the treatment expressed in Hooker's well-known canon that, "In all our interpretations of Scripture the farthest from the letter is commonly the worst." The first principles of every science need to be apprehended at the outset of our inquiries. This is especially important to remember as we take up the Bible. Theological preferences and previous suppositions will but warp our powers of analysis and judgment. The Book should simply be allowed to tell its own tale, and no party efforts should be employed to wrest its meaning either to this side or that.

THE TITLES OF THE PSALMS.

WITH the exception of thirty-four, there are titles to all the Psalms. Many of these titles are found to contain untranslated words. King James's translators, no doubt, experienced much uncertainty and difficulty in attempting to explain the terms which occur in these superscriptions—and, therefore, thought it best to insert them in their original form. Nor can a great deal be said on behalf of much more recent

endeavors to arrive at a satisfactory understanding of their meaning. Of the antiquity of these inscriptions there can be no doubt since the Septuagint has them. They are supposed to have been settled by Ezra, who rendered great service in the matter of Jehovah's testimonies, and showed himself a true "scribe of the law of the God of heaven" (Ezra vii. 12). The inspirational value of these superscriptions has been controverted by many who have believed the Psalms themselves to possess Divine authority. Their genuineness, however, appears to have been undisputed by many ancient critics, and it is but a lame attempt which some of the moderns have made to show that the titles are occasionally at variance with the contents of the Psalms. Considerable ingenuity and assumption are required to put anything like a face on this endeavor. We may safely assume that the titles of the Psalms are worthy to be regarded as correctly indicative of the occasion and sentiments they express, and, therefore, deserving of accurate conveyance into the English tongue. Much useful information on the subject is accessible, and we have availed ourselves of perhaps the best help to be had in the preparation of this paper. Following the example of a writer in Kitto's "Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature," we will take the untranslated words of these superscriptions to the Psalms in their alphabetical order. The first on the list is *aijeleth shahar*—(Psalm xxii.). These words are generally supposed to signify "hind of the morning," and to be indicative of the melody or tune to which the Psalm was intended to be sung. If this view be correct, then it would follow that the appointment of a particular melody to be sung to the words of any special song is not beneath inspiration. Psalms like the twenty-second are not to be put to any sort of music. Discrimination is necessary. God is a God of order and fitness in all His ways, and He would not have the suffering of His well-

beloved Son sung about in other than sad and plaintive strains. According to some, then, the title of this Psalm is merely an intimation "to the chief musician" (the choir-master of the temple), that it was to be sung to the melody known as *aijeleth shahar*. Dr. Good, however, render it: "To the Supreme. In the midst of gloom," and he contends that the words of the title are thus literally translated. The application of the Psalm to the Lord Jesus in the day of his crucifixion is placed beyond all doubt, and it comes with singular appropriateness from his lips, as an address to the Father in the midst of unexampled gloom. And God, after all, is "the Chief Musician." "He that planted the ear, shall He not hear?" There would have been no music in the Temple or anywhere else but for Him, "out of whom are all things." And we know that He was addressed by Jesus "with strong crying and tears" in the hour and power of darkness.

Alamoth forms part of the title of Psalm xlvi. It is suggested that the word means *virgins*, and was intended to indicate that the music was entirely for female or "soprano" voices. It cannot, however, be shown that virgins were admitted to the choral arrangements of the temple, unless we except the three daughters of Heman, who, in 1 Chronicles, xxv. 6, are spoken of, together with his fourteen sons, as "under the hands of their father for song in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God." Dr. Good thinks that the primary meaning of the word is that of a "veil, cover, envelopment," and that it is applied to whatever is, at present, unopened to the view. Regarded so, the title may become an appropriate intimation that the Psalm will best be sung by Israel when God has accomplished her final deliverance from all her enemies. Psalm forty-six may then be sung in anticipation of that future time, whose long-continued "covering or envelopment"

is beginning to be removed in the epoch of returning favor to Zion, when God shall help her "at the peep of the dawn," and the whole earth shall melt at the sound of His voice.

The word *altaschith* is placed over Psalms lvii., lviii., and lix., in addition to the designation "*michtam* of David." There has been much discussion as to the meaning of the word *michtam*. Some have derived it from a word signifying *gold*, and understand it as indicating a golden Psalm (*vide margin*), because of its great excellence, or because of its having been traced in golden letters. While others have supposed that the word denotes a poem engraved on a monument or pillar. Its meaning, however, is made sufficiently clear by its use in Isaiah xxxviii. 9, where it is applied to the song or poem that Hezekiah wrote on his recovering from sickness. That was the *michtam* of Hezekiah. The margin renders *altaschith*—destroy not; but Good is of opinion that the *al* here is not a negative particle, but one of the designations borne by the Deity. David's enemies had been disconcerted, and the Lord had delivered him from the hand of Saul. "To the Supreme," then "the God of discomfiture and spoliation," who sends from heaven and saves me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up (Psalm lvii. 3), I dedicate this *michtam*. The few Psalms which bear this superscription may well be used to celebrate the ultimate overthrow and destruction of the ungodly. There will be some triumphant *michtams* of the *altaschith* sort sung in that day, but, meanwhile, the saints are not to resist evil, but to be meek as lambs and harmless as doves.

There are fifteen Psalms called "Songs of degrees," a title which, as it stands in our version, conveys no particular meaning to the uninstructed reader, but which certainly has a very interesting significance. What is there peculiar about these Psalms that they should be thus designated? Without men-

tioning the various suggestions that have been offered in explanation (all more or less ingenious), it seems most likely that these Psalms were prepared specially for the use of the children of Israel, on the occasion of their visits to Jerusalem, from distant parts of the land to keep the appointed feasts. They were, therefore, "songs by the way"—march songs—psalms and hymns intended to "deceive the road," and prevent the mind becoming engrossed in any but spiritual contemplations. The journeys of Israel from remote regions to join the great congregation would be accomplished in companies, and it was necessary that special provision should be made for their spiritual sustenance while on the way. Without these "progressionary songs" companionship, even to keep a Divine institution, would have been likely to minister to the dictates of the fleshly mind, and so the object of the pilgrimage have been defeated. Men traveling together in Oriental lands were wont to relieve their sense of weariness or monotony by a song—perhaps of war, or wine, or romance, or lust. But Jehovah had arranged that Israel should sing always of better things, and that the tribes of the Lord in their advance toward the holy hill of Zion should be required to celebrate that great goodness which He hath showed to the house of Jacob. The nations of the earth in the age to come as they go up to Jerusalem annually, to worship the King of the Lord of Hosts and to keep the feast of Tabernacles, will also have their songs of degrees, and God's praises will thus be continually in their mouths. Happy pilgrims to such a shrine, and with such excellent cheer by the way!

Gittith is found over Psalms viii., lxxxi., and lxxxiv. Of the meaning of this word, Good's explanation is by far the most interesting we have seen. He renders the titles of these three Psalms—"To the Supreme, at wine-press tide." These Psalms themselves bear pretty clear internal evidence that

they were intended for use at the feast of Tabernacles. "Thou shalt observe the feast of Tabernacles seven days after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine" (Deut. xvi. 13). So joyful an occasion was fitly celebrated by the songs which bear the title *Gittith*. And the wine-press tide of the future age may well call these ancient Psalms into intelligent and grateful requisition again. For then indeed Jehovah's name will be excellent in all the earth, which (as Good renders it) will rehearse His glory to the heavens which then bear rule—(Psalm viii. 1). Then Israel, restored to her land, shall sing aloud unto God her strength, and blow the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on her solemn feast day (Psalm lxxxi. 1-3); while her experience will be that a day in Jehovah's courts is better than a thousand—(Psalm lxxxiv. 10)—an experience in which the obedient nations will be permitted to share. There will be plenty of everything that is good and pleasant in those days, for it is a wine-press tide song, which says: "The Lord God will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly."

Jeduthun begins Psalms xxix., lxii., and lxxvii., and need create no difficulty, since a person of that name is mentioned in I Chronicles xvi. 38, 42, as one of the leaders of the Temple music. The word has been rendered in the sense of *ordinance* or *decree*, and the title construed as an address to the Deity, concerning His ways and dispensations toward mankind, which are generally characterized by much that is mysterious and trying to the natural mind. The Psalms over which the word *Jeduthun* is placed are certainly of this order. Still, nothing more may have been intended than a form of dedication to the superintendent of that portion of the Temple service which employed "instruments of the song of God." These, no doubt, would be far inferior to the musical instruments of the present day. Jeduthun would, no doubt, be

greatly astonished to see what vast and noble musical machines are now produced. We are nearing the time when it will be said: "The Lord hath need of these." Primitive instruments, such as the psaltery, and harp, and cymbals, and sackbut, and dulcimer were suitable to an era of shadow and imperfection; but there are more splendid things in music in store for Jerusalem when her light has come, and the glory of the Lord has arisen upon her.

Psalm lvi. bears an extraordinary title in the words *Jouath-elem-rechokin*—which have been rendered "on the oppression of the band of exiles." The Psalm was probably composed at Gath, whither David had sought refuge from the fury of Saul. Some translate the words "the mute dove among strangers." The contents of the Psalm would seem to justify either rendering. *Mahalath leannoah* (Psalm lxxxviii.) is generally regarded as a direction that the words be sung to the accompaniment of flutes, whose soft, dulcet notes would be peculiarly suitable to the expression of the mournful sentiments the Psalm contains. Thirteen Psalms bear titles in which the word *maschil* occurs, which indicates that those songs are distinguished for the practical instruction they embody, and are specially adapted to make men wise. The title of Psalm ix. is said to present "a perfect riddle, owing to the various readings of MSS., and the contradictory conjectures of the learned." *Muth-labben* is an expression that has been subjected to an almost amusing variety of translations: for example—"upon death to the son—death makes white—with virgin's voice to the boys" (i.e., to be sung by a choir of boys in the soprano)—"unto Ben" (who was one of the "singers with instruments of music," mentioned in 1 Chronicles xv. 18). Dr. Good, not unnaturally, has sought a clew to the signification of the title in the contents of the Psalm, which deals with a great and decisive victory achieved on behalf of the speaker by the in-

terposition of God; and he contends that the words "*al-muth leben*" mean, "on the death blow," or, "on the deadliness of the blow." The exegesis he conducts to a conclusion which does not lack force or probability, and which certainly has the effect of making a connection apparent between the title of the Psalm and the Psalm itself, which the other suggestions scarcely admit.

Neginoth (Psalm iv.) stands for stringed, and *nehiloth* (Psalm v.) for wind instruments, while *sheminith* (Psalm vi.) probably means "music in the lower notes," answering to our bass, which would quite suitably express the sentiments of the Psalm of whose title it forms a part. *Shiggaion* (Psalm vii.) indicates that in the song subjoined, the writer has discarded method, and fully liberated his ecstatic feeling. The idea conveyed by the word is that of "a branching out at large," wherein the inspired poet wanders from one subject to another in true rhapsodical style. The truth is well calculated to produce such a state of mind at times. Who has not experienced an occasional rush of exciting contemplations which prompt us to leave one subject and go to another before we have done justice to the first? There is a good deal of the *shiggaion* character about the prose of the Apostle Paul—a fact which sometimes makes his argument difficult to follow, and his writing hard to be understood. The sixtieth and eightieth Psalms bear a superscription in which occur the words *shushan-eduth*. It is generally agreed that *eduth* means "a testimony or memorial"; while *shushan* signifies "lily," and was probably the name of an instrument bearing some resemblance to the lily, or a melody so designated because of its sweetness. Good regards the Psalms as national or standard testimonies of the special intervention of Jehovah in a period of great danger to the Jewish throne and government, and considers that this is expressed in the title which is

placed above them. We have many pleasant memorials of God's power in our possession, on which we do well to meditate as we indulge in the hope of its renewed and more glorious revelation in the approaching day of Christ, when no Divine institutions will be menaced, but all evil doers be consumed from off the face of the earth.

Higgaion and *selah*, though not titles, are yet untranslated words occurring in the body of certain Psalms, and to them it is desirable to attach a definite significance as we read. They are found together in Psalm ix. 16. The margin renders *Higgaion* "meditation," but the probability is that it was used in connection with *Selah*, to indicate a change in the character of the musical performance. *Gesenius* is quoted as affirming that the expression *Higgaion Selah* means "instrumental music-pause"; that is, "Let the instruments strike up a symphony, and let the singers pause." One of the joys which await the faithful in the kingdom of God will, doubtless, consist in the perfectly exquisite and intelligent manner in which all musical sounds will be regulated and employed. There will be no Gentile vacuity about such sounds when that time comes. The diabolism of the present dark and dreary night has managed to make a huge misappropriation in this department, and it is very depressing, to find "the Chief Musician" absent from all their thoughts who now command the greatest luxuries of the ear. This will be put right by and by, and all men will learn to praise the Giver of every good and perfect gift with the spirit and with the understanding also. Mankind will be interesting in those days, and society will not be such a perfect Sahara as every true saint must needs feel it now to be.

ANCIENT JEWISH SECTS.

FOR a considerable period prior to the Christian era, three important religious sects existed among the Jews: Sadducees, Pharisees, and Essenes. In addition to these, there were parties known as Scribes, Lawyers, Grecians, and Herodians. We can form a better idea of New Testament history by understanding the peculiarities of these various sects and parties.

The Sadducees were firm adherents of the Mosaic law, whose asperities they refused to tone down. They were therefore regarded with dread as administrators of justice. Their ranks comprised the wealthier and more conservative of the Jews. They did not believe in angels or the resurrection or spirits. These doctrines they discarded on the alleged authority of the Old Testament, which, they affirmed, gave no countenance to any such ideas. But Jesus took occasion, in one instance, to show them that their logic rested on false premises. He showed them that the resurrection might be inferred from the language God used to Moses at the burning bush, when he called himself the God of Abraham (Luke xx. 37).

The Pharisees were a more numerous class. It was their endeavor to adapt the law of Moses to what they conceived to be the requirements of modern life. They showed a readiness to listen to new ideas. The traditions of the Elders had equal, if not superior, authority in their estimation, with the Pentateuch itself. Jesus accused them of having made void the word of God by these traditions, and of having taught for doctrine the commandments of men.

The Scribes were men attached to the various synagogues, or religious meeting-houses, which sprung up throughout the country during this epoch. They copied out the rolls

of the law, and it was their business to understand it, and give the sense of it to the people. The necessity for such an institution arose from the fact that the law was written in the old Hebrew; whereas at this time the Hebrew had ceased to be spoken or written by the common people. Their language was Aramaic, neither Hebrew nor Greek, but a fresh dialect. The Scribe would read out in the synagogue passages from the Scriptures, and then translate and make such comments upon them as he might consider suitable. The lawyers were of the same rank, but their work appears to have been more particularly restricted to the interpretation of such parts of the law as dealt with questions of property and social life in general.

The Grecians or Hellenists consisted of such Jews as encouraged the study of Greek literature. They had come in contact with Grecian ideas, and sought to break down that exclusiveness which had heretofore been so prominent a characteristic of Hebrew thought. They were very unpopular, both with the Sadducees and the Pharisees.

The Essenes are not mentioned by name in the New Testament. We only become aware of their existence by certain forms of incidental allusion which occur in our Gospels. Philo attests that there were many of them in Syria and in Egypt. In Judea they are said to have numbered about four hundred thousand at the beginning of our era. They were strict Jews, but their ceremonial was such as to exclude them from the altar at Jerusalem. They held and practiced the community of goods. They had all things in common. To join them, it was necessary for any one first of all to merge his private property in their general fund. From that fund each member received whatever he might absolutely require in the way of food and clothing. In journeying from place to place they took no sort of provision with them except a sword for defense against

robbers or beasts of prey. Their dress is said to have been pure white, like that of Egyptian priests. They are credited with the questionable virtue of having looked down on marriage as a weakness. They were cleanly in their habits, but would not use any oil to the skin, because the oils usually procurable in the market were manufactured by idolators. From candidates for admission they exacted stringent and frightful oaths. Every one swore solemnly that he would keep nothing from the rest, and die rather than reveal the secrets of the community.

Judas the Galliæan belonged to the sect of the Essenes. When Cyrenius became chief governor of the western half of Palestine, Augustus Cæsar decreed the usual Roman registration of income to be made with a view to taxation. Judas stirred up the hill-people of Galilee to resistance of this tax by a foreign idolator. He spread revolt through the population. But Roman resources were equal to the occasion. Josephus relates how the Essenes and other followers of Judas were put to death with horrible tortures. They were racked, twisted, burnt, and broken, yet they addressed their tormentors with irony, and yielded up their lives cheerfully as about soon to recover them.

The Herodians were so called from their original connection with the house of Herod the Great, as members of his domestic establishment. They were Jews who sympathized with his designs of complete subjection to the Roman government, and fell in with the worldly and idolatrous customs which he introduced. "The leaven of Herod," against which Jesus cautioned his disciples, was a spirit of compromise and indifference in relation to all divine things, based upon motives of carnal interest and policy. So far as it could be regarded as a doctrinal symbol at all, it was akin to the belief of the Sadducees. The temple was rebuilt by Herod, and adorned

magnificently. In his later years he cast off all pretense to the Jewish faith, and introduced a variety of Roman practices. His reign as King of Judea—a title he gained by his influence with Mark Antony—brings us to the close of the interesting period whose saddest feature was its absence of any open vision or manifestation of Jehovah's hand in the affairs of the house of Israel.

TWO PERIODS OF DIVINE SILENCE.

THE times in which we live reveal several points of resemblance to the period of Divine silence which extended from the events of the Old Testament to those of the New. The latest date to which the Hebrew canon conducts us is the time of Alexander the Great. This monarch is not indeed spoken of by any of the Prophets as having already come upon the scene. But in 1 Chron. iii. there is a genealogy which will take us thus far. And in Neh. xii. 22, the name of Jaddua is mentioned as having held the office of Priest until the reign of Darius the Persian. Now Josephus states that this Jaddua was in office at the time when Alexander invaded Judea, that he went out to meet the conqueror as he approached Jerusalem, that the latter went with Jaddua to the temple to worship and offer sacrifice, that he was shown Daniel's predictions relating to himself, and gave the Jews permission to live according to their own laws, as well as freedom from tribute on Sabbatical years.

Thus we are safe in affirming that the Old Testament history brings us down to the time of Alexander. The exact date before this, at which the voice of God in prophecy ceased to be heard, we cannot determine. Revelations were made unto Daniel in the third year of Cyrus the Persian. Haggai

and Zechariah prophesied in Palestine after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian exile. Malachi comes later still, for the temple-service had been restored, and the very remembrance of the captivity had begun to fade away. He is supposed to have delivered his prophecies after Nehemiah's second return to Jerusalem, about the year 420 B.C. We hear the voice of God for the last time (before John the Baptist's day) in the utterances of his servant Malachi. Ezra and Nehemiah were devout men, and did a great work; but neither of them appears to have been made the express vehicle of Divine communications, if we exclude mere historical matter. The former occupied himself in the transcription and editing of the Scriptures, and there is evidence that later scribes than he gave the sacred records here and there a finishing touch.

Since the close of the New Testament canon there has been no revelation of the Divine mind. We hear the words of no Prophet. There is not a man upon the face of the earth whose words carry with them the weight of a delegated Divine authority. There are, it is true, plenty of pretenders to the prophetic function—men who would have us accept what they say because they say it, and because society accords their utterances a sort of inspirational value. But we can regard them in no such light. There is also an abundant religious literature, as there was in Maccabean times, but none of it will ever become canonical, and be received as of equal authority with the words of Apostles and Prophets. God spoke his last word nearly eighteen hundred years ago—His last until He speaks again by a greater than John the Baptist, or any born of woman. When He spoke before it was to a few of the sons of men, but when He speaks again all shall hear, and his voice will shake not the earth only, but also heaven. That voice will be the death-warrant of all religious sects and con-

roversies. What a variety of ecclesiastical parties and corporations we have! This was a feature of the former period of Divine desertion. The guiding hand once withdrawn, religious society became disintegrated, and there was none to point the way. Devout minds were thrown back entirely on the sacred books. These are our only sources of infallible direction, so long as God refrains from audible speech. Some are fain to trust "the voice within," but the trouble is, that such inward voice does not tell the same tale to all. Its instructions depend suspiciously upon the varying culture and capacity and prejudice of different individuals. What can we better do than betake ourselves to the diligent and prayerful study of the holy oracles, which bear unmistakably the stamp of heavenly wisdom and authority, and are "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." Here we may learn the way of salvation, for surely there has been no annulling of the commandment going before in the ministry of the Apostles. The methods they prescribed have not been superseded for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. The gospel they preached, and the ordinances they delivered, are still the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes and obeys. No man is warranted in suggesting any modification of their teaching and requirements. We know of no other means of access to the Divine mind. They preached one faith, one hope, one Lord, one baptism, one God and Father of all.

We have another point of resemblance between the two periods in the reigning discord which, prior to New Testament times, embittered all social and political relations. Those four centuries were filled with faction and strife. Men essayed the task of self-government, and the civilized world

became a scene of war and terror. We have indeed advanced far beyond that epoch, in general knowledge, in industrial arts, in scientific developments, in the amenities of social life. But passion is as violent and as cunning now as then; the vast populations are not less degraded; international interests are not much freer from menace and assault. It seems that the kingdom of men is a failure from every righteous and beneficent point of view. The world needs a *Divine* hand to administer and regulate its affairs—a hand that shall overthrow the throne of iniquity, and scatter the people that delight in war—a hand that no human power can challenge or restrain—a hand that shall deal effectively and permanently with all the great national problems which press for solution in vain, which are the despair of statesmen, and the distraction of politicians the world throughout. In that Great Prince of the house of David, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, and him who is to rise and reign over the Gentiles, we have the sovereign remedy for all the ills which now waste and harass the sons and daughters of men. And though he has been withdrawn from the earth during these woe-stricken times of the Gentiles, yet we know he promised to return; and in any promise made by one whom God has raised from the dead we may very surely and safely confide. The Apostolic testimony consisted largely of the declaration that God would send him again, and rule the world in righteousness by his hand. No one can say that such would be an undesirable sequel to the centuries of oppression, and want, and vice, and misery which have elapsed since his departure from the earth. The throne of universal empire belongs to him by indisputable and unalienable right; for God has appointed him the heir of all things, and on account of him hath ordained the ages. "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break

them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth."

Toward the end of the period we have been speaking of, there were many who were "waiting for the consolation of Israel," and "looking for redemption in Jerusalem." And so there are now. Scattered up and down the earth, there are communities of devout men and women, whose eyes are strained eastwards to catch the first rays of that sun of righteousness which they believe to be about to dawn upon our night. These wait, as did their brethren of the first century, for the Son of God from heaven, and daily look for that blessed hope. And they consider it their duty to invite attention to what they cannot but regard as the only possible means of deliverance from manifold evil, apparent to all, but which, though terrible while it lasts, is destined to early and permanent removal by the power and wisdom and goodness of Almighty God.

A REASONABLE SERVICE.

No one who believes in God can reasonably deny Him the right to the exclusive adoration of mankind. All forms of life and power are the results of a certain inscrutable energy of which He is the source. The plant does not owe its development to the fortuitous addition of layer upon layer to its exterior, but is perfected by means of a mysterious principle of appropriation within it which we are accustomed to call its life; and that life is part of the primitive force which is fundamental to all being, and to which insanity alone would deny the attribute of intelligence. We read of it in the Scriptures as "the Spirit of God." It is in every living diatom, and in

every living man. We cannot go from its presence. It is even in Sheol, energizing the worm that feeds upon the dead. There can be no exercise of thought or perception without it. The organisms from which it has been withdrawn are mere inert accumulations of matter, which soon lose shape, and commingle with the dust. Out of God are all things. Science is really declarative of this revealed truth in its ascription of universal phenomena to one source of power, which, however, it hesitates or refuses to name.

It follows that every human manifestation of power or skill is but the exercise, in a limited way, of what proceeds from him. The creature is, at the most, but the vehicle or instrument (voluntary or otherwise) of a something that is independent of itself—something that antedated, and will survive it.

There has ever been a tendency in human nature to extol the man who may have displayed exceptional qualities of brain or muscle. We learn from Romans i. 25, that even the house of Israel lapsed into this form of idolatry. They “worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator.” It is the commonest and most general of current tendencies among both Jews and Gentiles. A word has been coined from the Greek to express it. The *apothecosis* of any great public character means that he has been exalted from what he previously was, and deified. The Gentile press uses the term to describe the adorations which are often recorded to illustrious men—living or dead—by the generation which is smitten by a sense of their greatness.

The Scriptures are quite peculiar and unique in this respect. They never extol men for their mental adroitness, or as having played a conspicuous part in some popular movement. Those characters whom they mention with approval receive such mention because of the excellence of those spiritual qualities

by which they were distinguished. The faith of Abraham—the meekness of Moses—the patience of Job—the courage and fidelity of Joshua, in executing the Divine commands—the holy zeal of the Prophets—any feature, indeed, which had a spiritual complexion, receives due recognition; but no praise to man as a natural creature, however endowed, ever appears under the seal of the Divine approbation. This is most remarkable, and no one need be at a loss for an argument to prove the inspiration of these documents who duly considers the fact.

It is noteworthy, too, that while the civilized world is full of monuments erected to the memory of men of genius in science, warfare, music, statesmanship, and art, it has no marble nor bronze for such men as Moses, Samuel, David, or Paul—men whom God has in honor! Those who have feared Him, and trembled at His word, and upheld the honor of His name, have never won the applause and engaged the sympathy of those whose tastes have all run in mere natural grooves. The impressions produced on their brains are due to the common humdrum circumstances in which their ephemeral existence is passed. They are inappreciative of higher sensations. These form the gaping crowds who offer the incense of their adulation to the hero of the day.

The right estimates of society are those which are formed according to the Divine standard. With mankind as we know them it is notoriously no reason for congratulation that they know and understand God. The place He occupies in their thought and affection must be microscopically small, judging from the kind of inspiration which shapes their lives. If the elements of personal glorification were withdrawn from many a public career, its chief incitement would be gone. The doctrine that “virtue is its own reward” is false in fact as well as theory. Its exponents would not care for its exemplification

in circumstances of comparative isolation and obscurity. God, however, can be glorified in a desert, where only the moods of silence and solitude prevail.

The good opinion of mortal men does not arrest the process of putrefaction, nor import a single ray of light into eyes that have been closed and fixed in death. The applause which once ravished the ear, is heard no longer in the grave. Where's the benefit of a recognition you are not conscious of? What's the great use of a torchlight procession, after the march to the charnel-house is past?

The case is widely different with him whose sole aim in life has been to glorify God, and who has been content to pursue a path of obloquy in obedience to His commands. There is hope in the death of such an one, hope that the God whom he has served will raise him up even from the dead, and promote him to endless life, and lift him high with such honor as never fell to the lot of mortal man—honor that will last “when gems and monuments and crowns have moldered into dust.” To share that honor with God's immortal Son, we may well be content to disdain the homage of the present evil world, and accept for a while a portion of shame. We can afford to pity even the Princes of the Gentiles, and to lavish our commiseration on all the great men of the earth.

The grounds on which the world confers its recognitions are never akin to those on which God is prepared to put honor upon men. It *apotheosizes* success, and does not care to inquire scrupulously into the measures by which that success has been attained. A smart rogue may move unabashed in society. He may morally and intellectually be beneath contempt, but, if by grinding the faces of the poor, and half-paying the labor of those in his employ, he manages to amass a fortune, people will bow down before him and move off the causeway to let him pass. The gilded rascality of mankind is

one of the most depressing facts of the present time. The Lord of heaven and earth has other rules by which He estimates a man's fitness for the glory He has purposed to bestow.

"The Lord of hosts hath purposed to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth" (Isa. xxiii. 9). This means the overthrow of the civilization of the period contemporary with the fulfillment of the prediction. We can, by a vigorous effort of the imagination, picture the change that would be produced everywhere, if it could be said that the Lord alone were exalted. No scope for personal ambition—for pride of place and birth and talent, and lust of power. Down to the ground comes every piece of masonry or bronze which stands for the commemoration of human greatness anywhere under the sun. Not a volume remains to be prized as a testimony to the genius of mortal man! Not a "pleasant picture" hangs upon the wall for the purpose of displaying the skill of the artist whose work it was! Not a chord in music is struck to the praise and glory of the performer. Not a discovery in natural science is made the occasion of boasting by the man who finds it out. Not a speech is delivered by human lips which brings to the orator himself one single ripple of applause! How few there are who would in their present state of sympathy be able to endure such a condition of things! And what need there is, in all cases, of the purifying discipline which true enlightenment supplies!

It has been charged upon the Israelitish nation that they have never given much encouragement to "the fine arts"—sculpture, painting, and the like. The blame of this is laid to that part of the Decalogue which says: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is

in the water under the earth." (It is, by the way, a curious circumstance that these words should be found upon the walls of churches, and read out to the people as part of their moral obligation, when at the same time graven images are to be seen up and down the building, both inside and out.) But why did God prohibit this species of art in the case of the Israelitish nation? Why did He require that they should never lift up a tool upon a block of stone or marble or wood, for the purpose of forming it into a resemblance of any living thing? Why not allow them to make a statue of Moses, or of Joshua, or any of their illustrious men? Because this would have completely contravened the principle by which He Himself demands the sole attention of mankind, and refuses to give His glory to another.

The large cities of the nations would surely present a very altered appearance were He alone exalted everywhere. Men would step about with less haughtiness of carriage, and not comport themselves as though the universe belonged to them, and ought to be much obliged to them for allowing it to bear their avoirdupois. Society would then be truly interesting, and all the grave problems which now perplex and harass the nations would be disposed of forevermore. Blessed be His glorious name, that He should have purposed an interference by the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ, the result of which will be that true religion will become a universal and matter-of-course thing in the earth, and God be distinctly and inseparably associated with all the processes by which mankind embellish and occupy their minds; and with all the pursuits whereby they fill their leisure and gratify their heart's desire.

ADDRESS AT THE GRAVE.

I.

DEAR FRIENDS: It is natural that those assembled, as we are, in the presence of death, and who feel themselves to be also in a death-stricken condition, should, on such a sorrowful occasion as this, direct their inquiries toward the question of a future life, and desire to know whether there are any reasonable grounds on which to base the hope of its reality: under what circumstances it is to be inaugurated and experienced and to find out all ascertainable facts concerning it. This is, obviously, a question that cannot be determined by mere natural preference and longing. It is quite possible for us to entertain desires that will never be gratified, and expectations that are doomed to disappointment. The bare fact that men wish for conscious existence after death does not necessarily prove that they will realize their wish. If it be urged that God will not mock an instinct which is so generally characteristic of the human mind we are bound to recollect that natural instincts do not by any means invariably precede the realization of the object to which they point. The instinct of a hundred flocks of birds in winter prompts them to seek for food which lies congealed by frost, and covered by snow, hopelessly and entirely beyond their reach. The gratification of our desire for endless life is similarly dependent upon appropriate conditions. There are those indeed in whom that desire does not exist, and whom an evil habit of mind has completely reconciled to the prospect of a lapsed existence when they have reached the limit of their present mortal being.

We shall feel that we are limited to the Scriptures in our search for reliable information on this momentous subject.

All else is mere speculation, conjecture, guess. Science can offer us nothing positive that is at the same time balm to our wounded sympathies. In the holy oracles lie our only source of consolation. Their revelations alone can suffice to dry up our tears, and give us resignation under the sorrow that has lacerated the joy of all our hearts.

The comfort that it is customary to resort to when surviving friends meet to perform the last offices for the dead, is not such as our deceased sister would have desired us to express over her remains. Her hope was far different from that which is commonly entertained. It was based entirely upon the promises of the Most High. She knew that by those promises it was alone possible for us to become partakers of the Divine nature, and escape the corruption of the cemetery (2 Peter i. 4). To be of real service, comfort, when sought to be administered, must rest on fact and not on fiction. It must be grounded on what God has said he will do. Our sister, therefore, wisely adjusted her expectations to the Scriptures of truth. She did not anticipate a translation to heavenly joy when death had done its work. Her hope was identical with that of the saints of God in all ages. She looked for an everlasting inheritance upon the earth, as Abraham did, unto whom the promises were made (Gal. iii. 16). She placed reliance in the covenant which God made with David, and which he wisely enough regarded as "all his salvation and all his desire" (2 Sam. xxiii. 5); a covenant which spoke of his house "for a great while to come," and enabled him triumphantly to exclaim: "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for he will receive me" (Psalm xlix. 15). With Job she could say—"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body yet in my flesh shall I see God." She had read in Isaiah xxvi. 19, "Thy dead

shall live, my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, and the earth shall cast out the dead." She remembered God's promise in Hosea xiii. 14, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death." She could join with Hannah, the mother of Samuel, in celebrating the praises of Him who "killeth and maketh alive; who bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up" (1 Sam. ii. 6). She confided entirely in that resurrection doctrine which filled the Apostolic ministry in the first century, to the exclusion of every other hope regarding a future life. She knew that the dead would lie in the silence and darkness of the grave until the Lord Jesus calls them forth by the mighty power which God has given him for the purpose. She regarded them as in the position in which David, and Hezekiah, and Daniel, and others believed them to be—as asleep in the dust of the earth, their powers of memory and thought and affection now no more—"perished" indeed, as Paul says in 1 Cor. xv. 18, if there be no resurrection. By submission to the Gospel in the way appointed by Christ, she placed herself in harmony with this Apostolic testimony, and now waits in the unconsciousness of death the return of the great life-restorer from the heavens. She had no sympathy with the sentiment which affirms, "It is not death to die." In that idea, so preposterously expressed, she discerned the root of the whole mischief which so generally hinders the popular recognition of the truth as proclaimed by the Apostles. She accepted the Scriptural rather than the current definition of death, as—a returning to the ground. Fact, here, may not be so agreeable as fiction, but it is better to know precisely how the case stands. God's dispensation to man because of sin, was never intended to form a pleasant feature in the history of the world.

And now, dear friends, I wish to bring home to your

minds and my own, the affecting truth that in the natural order of things we shall soon all be in the position of her who lies before us in this coffin; we shall all be related to this question of resurrection in a way that will not admit of the exercise toward it of personal choice. We were nowhere to be found a little while ago, and must shortly revert to that precise condition. Once in the grave, we are there forever, unless Jesus says, "Come forth." This makes our future existence dependent upon him in a manner entirely unknown to the doctrinal systems in which most of us have been reared. We are frail and perishing men and women, and we need a gospel that deals with these obvious facts of our present existence, and offers us a final and glorious emancipation from the dominion of weakness and the grave. Such a gospel we have in that which constituted the grand theme of Apostolic discourse. How important that we should heartily embrace and hold it fast. Let us be admonished to do this, and to govern our lives—not by the maxims of this present evil world—but by the revealed will of Him in whose hand is the breath of every living thing, and the soul of all mankind; for "the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

ADDRESS AT THE GRAVE.

2.

THE sun was shining in the heavens most brilliantly, and the face of nature seemed everywhere to wear a gladsome smile, which ill-accorded with the melancholy occasion that had gathered us together. Both springtime and death are, however, Divine institutions. That they should thus synchronize is due to the state of exile from God in which the human

race has been placed because of sin. The ordinances of heaven and earth will not forever be in apparent dissonance with the condition of man, and the time will come when the outbursts of human lamentations shall no longer be heard together with the cheery notes of the song-birds, and when the light of the sun shall never more shine upon a company of mourners going about the street.

The mortuary at length was reached, and the coffin placed in the center of the building. A selection from various parts of the sacred writings was read, after which we made in substance the following remarks:

Our sister may be said to have died for a different reason from that which explains the occurrence of death in the case of mankind in general. They die, and return to their dust in harmony with the sentence which was originally pronounced upon their progenitor by whom "sin entered into the world and death by sin." But *she* rests not beneath that law. She was under it by natural birth, but she has escaped from it by a Divine arrangement provided for that purpose for all the sons and daughters of men who are willing to avail themselves of it. "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus made her free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. viii. 2). There was, therefore, no legal necessity for her death. Had she "by reason of strength" been enabled to live until the return of Christ from heaven, she would not have required to taste of death at all, but would have been changed in a moment from a state of mortality to one of incorruptibility and endless life, at his appearing and his kingdom. We may say, therefore, concerning her, what Martha said to Christ touching Lazarus, her brother—"Lord, if thou hadst been here" our sister "had not died." The reason why the friends of Christ die, is to be found in his absence from the earth, and in the fact that God had ordained that there shall occur no change of nature

in any of His people until the arrival of a set time, when it is His purpose that they shall all be glorified together.

Our sister is not dead in the *final* sense. She is only so in the sense of a temporary suspension of being. She is not conscious of that suspension, for "the dead know not anything." Illimitable duration elapsed before her birth, without appearing either long or short to her, and the interval during which she will remain in the death-state will similarly to her perceptions be no interval at all. She will suddenly stand again and for a moment wonder how it is that all her dreadful sufferings have gone! And then the glorious reality upon which she had learned to place her expectation and desire, will dawn upon her consciousness, and she will immediately understand that Christ is once more upon the earth, and that she is one of myriads belonging to various generations who have been recalled to life by his Power.

It may seem that there is a great demand upon our faith in this doctrine of resurrection from the dead. To us here assembled under the distressful circumstances of this day, it may require more than ordinary trust in the promises and power of God to enable us to exercise hope in the direction of a future life. Nature is silent touching any such resumption of being. We interrogate her in vain with the inquiry: "If a man die shall he live again?" The blossoms of this beautiful season of the year are not the same as those which perished last year. New and perfectly distinct forms of life are continually being produced by the processes of nature. How come we, then, to cherish the expectation that the very same identity which disappears in death will be restored, and that our sister will look on us again, and know assuredly that she is herself?

We have this hope because God has promised that it shall be so, and because He has raised up Christ from the dead,

who is the first fruits of them who sleep. We have thus a well-attested historic fact as the foundation of our hope. The thing for which we look has already happened in the case of Christ, and the possibility of the resurrection is placed beyond dispute by what has already transpired. It is to us no incredible thing that God should raise the dead. So far as we are concerned, the resurrection has passed beyond the region alike of the possible and the probable, and takes rank among the absolute certainties which we employ in the regulation of our daily lives.

In this assurance our sister was enabled to rejoice. She had been planted in the likeness of Christ's death, and in the grave of baptism had terminated her connection with the first Adam, in whom all die, and had established for herself a relationship with the second Adam, "the Lord from Heaven," to whom God has given jurisdiction over all flesh, that he may bestow upon His chosen ones the great gift of an immortal nature.

Our sister's hope was not directed toward the unreal fancies which are indulged by devout persons of almost all classes. She did not expect that in any sense she would depart to heavenly bliss the moment her last pulse had completed its feeble throb. She knew that she was really and truly going to die and that she would remain dead until the appearing of the Lord Jesus, with as little consciousness as she had before she was born. The sadness necessarily incident to the approaching triumph of death over early womanhood did not shake her confidence in God's promise to restore her from the desolations of the grave.

The hope of that Gospel which was preached by Christ and the Apostles, and by which alone life and immortality have been brought to light sufficed to soothe and tranquilize her mind in the prospect of dissolution, and amid all the pain

by which it was preceded. There is in truth nothing else that can afford substantial solace under circumstances such as were hers. If ever we should like our feet to feel the rock it is when it becomes evident that we must soon go the way of all the earth. And the only rock there is, is that of Jehovah's promises made to the fathers of the Israelitish nation, and confirmed in the death of His well-beloved Son. With those promises our sister had become familiar, and they were her only hope, and the supreme inspiration of her mortal life. She knew the truth, and rejoiced therein, and it was her aim in all things to do the will of God. Those who had opportunities of observing her walk and conversation during her brief probation could speak with confidence of the varied excellences by which her character was adorned. Everything else, so far as she is concerned, has ceased to occupy a position of the least importance. It is for us, the living, to lay this fact to heart. In the natural order our turn will assuredly come, and we know not how soon. But this we know, that when we are lying as is our beloved sister in the cold embrace of death, the only matter that will be of any consequence to us will relate to the manner in which we have occupied the period of our vanity. The resurrection will not give us characteristics we fail now to acquire. No progress is made in the grave in the direction of spiritual-mindedness. We appear before Christ with precisely those affinities and dispositions which cleave to us when we die. If we are in love with this present evil world in any degree, let us consider how entirely such love excludes "the love of the Father" who raised up Jesus from the dead, and let us bethink ourselves how mean and vain will all worldly affairs appear when death is in immediate prospect: and how absolutely certain it is that all is ephemeral except those things which are unseen, and which relate to the mighty purpose of God in Christ.

STEPHEN.

WE instinctively contrast our own circumstances with those of our brethren in the first century, who in their Master's service were called upon to surrender both liberty and life, and whose testimony on behalf of the Gospel brought them into frequent collision with the rulers of the nation. We run no risks of this sort in our day. It was doubtless a great privilege to be so intimately and personally associated with Christ as the Apostles had been; but it was a privilege for which they had to pay a great price. It meant much fear and trembling and many tears and tribulations which do not enter into our experience in anything like the same degree. Our troubles take other and less dreadful forms. We are not required as a matter of actual deed to seal our witness for him with our blood, but can speak out the thoughts of our hearts without risk of molestation from without.

Stephen was one of "seven men of honest report" full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, who were chosen by the brethren to take charge of the temporal affairs of the household, while the twelve Apostles gave themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word. He does not appear to have confined himself to the mere duties of his office, but to have also taken an active part in the exposition and defense of the faith. It was probably due, in no small measure, to his influence, that "a great company of priests became obedient to the faith." Whether the obedience of these priests was a lasting thing or not, we do not know. The day will declare it. Their case receives mention in the narrative concerning Stephen, perhaps as an illustration of the extraordinary potency of his example and speech. Be that as it may, we find that he greatly distinguished himself in the general work con-

nected with the Apostolic ministry. He was "full of faith and power and did great wonders and miracles among the people."

One would have thought that these facts would have given him the reverence and admiration of all classes in Jerusalem and that the people, without exception, would have rejoiced to find such a man living in their midst. But it was much otherwise. There began to dispute with him certain who belonged to the synagogue of the Libertines and Cyrenians and Alexandrians, who, together with Jews from other parts, were soon engaged in vehement debate with him. They were, of course, thoroughly worsted in the discussion, and "were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." But they were not ingenuous enough to confess it—conquered disputants seldom are. To cover their defeat and hide their shame, they resorted to some most disgraceful tactics. They bribed a number of men who were apparently lost to all moral sense, and got them to bring a charge of blasphemy against him. These men did their dirty work effectively. They stirred up the people, and arrested Stephen and brought him before the council, and summoned false witnesses who were ready at a price to swear away his life. There was great excitement as the members of the Sanhedrim took their places for the purpose of investigating this important case. Stephen was now before the highest tribunal among the Jews—a tribunal consisting of seventy-one members, all of whom would doubtless be men of imposing presence, for it is said that all candidates for a seat in this council were required to be physically as well as morally blameless. They were moreover required to be middle-aged, tall in stature, wealthy, and learned both in divine law and in divers branches of secular science. They were also required to know several languages, so that the council might not be dependent upon

an interpreter in the event of any foreigner being brought before it.

These officials, we may be sure, would not be predisposed in Stephen's favor. The fact of his prominent connection with the name of Jesus of Nazareth would itself disqualify them for an impartial examination of his case. He likely enough felt from the first that his fate was sealed, and that he was about to fall a victim to the blindness and malignance that had characterized his nation in every period of its history. Did the prospect overwhelm him with confusion and dismay? Nothing of the kind! "All that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." Angelic faces have been peculiar to Israelitish and antediluvian history. There must have been that about "the face of an angel," which was not to be seen in an ordinary human countenance. We should think so if we saw one! How many faces one beholds from which every Elohist trace has departed—faces, indeed, that would hardly look amiss if they were attached to the bodies of some of the inferior animals—suggestive of scarcely anything save brutality, passion, cruelty, and lust. A man's character is generally readable in his face. Stephen's was. No man can subject himself for a number of years to the ennobling and purifying influences of Divine truth without showing it in facial assimilation to the power which refines him. There is that about the countenances of an assembly convened on the basis of a hearty and intelligent acceptance of the Gospel, which is never visible in an ordinary congregation of men and women. The people who gather together for political, scientific, or even ecclesiastical reasons, do not show much in their faces that can be called angelic. The phenomenon in Stephen's case was, to some extent, supernaturally caused there and then. The fact that he was "full of the Holy Spirit," would go far to account for

it; but his mental condition, as one who was filled with Divine wisdom, and possessed of an all-consuming sympathy with all that appertains to God, would also largely contribute to the explanation of his striking resemblance to one of the Elohim.

It is the purpose of God that none other than angelic faces—as far as the human form is concerned—shall eventually be seen upon the earth. They that are accounted worthy to attain that *aion* are “equal unto the angels,” and reflect the beauty and glory of the Lord their God. The repulsive and misshapen countenances which now speak of vice and degradation and misery, will pass forever away, and immortal survivors will know fully what some affirm the Elohim meant when they said—“Let us make man after our image, and in our likeness.” We can endure the present nightmare forms, in this blessed hope. The dreadful and disgusting faces so common everywhere now, will one day be seen no more forever, and only forms of beauty and affection and intelligence and strength and harmony will remain.

The character of Stephen's defense illustrates the fulfillment of Christ's promise to his disciples, that when they were brought before rulers, it should be given them in that same hour what they should speak, and that, therefore, it would not be necessary for them to arrange their defense beforehand, or be in the least anxious as to what they should say. Many pure-minded laborers have had occasion to weep and lament this vanished power. “It is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.” It would be a mistake to conclude that such assurances apply to an age like ours, from which the spiritual gifts granted to the Apostles and others in the first century are withheld. Such an assumption would inevitably create absurd situations, and lead to unnecessary failures. We can only use the helps and materials that are available.

But in the case we are considering, we have the Spirit addressing these rulers in Israel by the mouth of Stephen, and rehearsing the leading facts of their national history from the very beginning. We have thus a Divine confirmation of Old Testament occurrences which served as a refutation of the charges which had been brought against Stephen of hostility to the temple and the law. They listened attentively to the various interesting details which illustrated Jehovah's care and regard toward the posterity of Abraham, and doubtless approved all that was said up to a certain point. That point was where Stephen began to make an application of his remarks to his illustrious hearers themselves, and to charge them with treading in the footsteps of the rebellious generations that had gone before. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did so do ye." That Sanhedrim knew not who was responsible for this scathing utterance, nor whence it had originated. Their anger and vengeance were wreaked upon the instrument of this denunciation; they drowned his voice with their indignant clamor and without a formal trial seized him with one accord, and cast him out of the city with murderous hands.

Attention has been called to the fact that, on this sad occasion all the just and noble precedents in which the Jewish Sanhedrim took pride were wholly discarded. It is said that the humane and benevolent feelings of the members of this council toward the people whom they represented were especially seen in their administration of the law. It was their wont to act upon the principle that the accused was innocent till he could be proved to be guilty; and they are said to have always manifested an anxiety in their modes of conducting a trial, to clear the accused rather than secure his condemnation, especially in matters of life and death. "The president

of the council would, at the very outset of the trial, solemnly admonish the witnesses, pointing out the preciousness of human life, and earnestly beseeching them, carefully and calmly, to reflect whether they had not overlooked some circumstances which might favor the accused and tend to establish his innocence."

Whether Stephen's arraignment before them was accompanied by such anxiety on their part to secure his acquittal of the capital offense with which he was charged, we do not know. If such desire ever existed among them it was speedily quenched in this frantic outburst of passion and rage, which has forever stamped with disgrace the reputation of that judicial assembly.

He was soon a bruised and mutilated corpse outside the city walls. They show you "Stephen's Gate" to-day, but what Jew can think of the history without blushing to the very roots of his hair! The martyr's probation was short, but how much was crowded into it! It is not the length, but the manner of the service in which the true importance lies. There is more in some men's existence for a single day, than in the entire lifetime of others. We need not commiserate Stephen on account of his dreadful death. It would soon be over, and when once the stones had done their work there was no more that rage and hate might do!

In the peaceful oblivion of the grave, where devout men carried him, this noble witness-bearer sleeps, awaiting the day which will cover his adversaries with shame, and place him side by side with the Master, to whose death he was then so early conformed. He will know the power of *his* resurrection. When he awakes his first thoughts will be connected with the respectable but infuriated mob at whose hands he met his doom—it will seem as though they were once more stooping to gather the stones to hurl at his defenseless head,

for it will take Stephen some time to realize the fact that he has been dead so long, and that the "young man whose name was Saul," and who was a conspicuous figure in that tragic and atrocious history, has since then been an ardent exponent and defender of the very faith he then labored to destroy, and himself become a martyr in the cause of the Nazarene! But these sensations of bewilderment and surprise will at length give place to unspeakable tranquillity and joy, as Stephen's mind opens to a full realization of the bliss that will then become his portion forevermore. No more weary and bootless argument! No more unreasonable and wicked antagonists! No more violence, and perversion of judgment and justice! No more feverish and painful excitement! But the "face of an angel" something more than a surface splendor—the glory of God something more than a vision—and the Lord Jesus an actual, visible, personal, and permanent reality at his side.

PAUL.

"WHEN the blood of thy martyr Stephen, was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him." Paul could never rid himself of the dreadful reminiscence. It is impossible for us to say precisely what impression the spectacle of Stephen's fidelity and suffering produced on a mind naturally sensitive and benevolent. The collision between sentiment and conviction of duty in Paul's case must have been very severe. And when the discovery was made that he had only exercised an unenlightened firmness, and had really been engaged in persecuting the saints of God, his sorrow was proportionately intense. Probably there was a necessity for such antecedents.

Without them the Apostle of the Gentiles might never have become such, or might not have been so eminently suited as he was for the work to which Christ called him. It will be interesting to learn, as we hope eventually to do, the exact part performed by the events of our experience in the formation of personal character. We shall doubtless see how needful many occurrences were on which it is impossible for us to reflect with satisfaction. There may have been an important sense in which Stephen's martyrdom was necessary to Paul's conversion to the faith he then destroyed.

The juxtaposition of these two names gives enormous strength to the argument for the divinity of the Gospel. It is matter of unimpeachable history that this man was once possessed of the enthusiastic conviction that he "ought to do," and actually did, "many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." Men do not experience so complete a revolution of feeling toward any person without good reason. And we know how good the reason was in this particular instance. "Have I not seen Jesus Christ the Lord? and did he not appear unto me to make me a minister and a witness of what I then and afterward beheld?" We are not in the position of being able to say that our eyes have looked upon Christ (would to God we were!) but the next best thing to that, is undoubtedly to have access to the well-accredited testimony of one who has seen him, and particularly of one who saw him under the most unlikely and unlooked-for circumstances.

Regarded in any other light than as a thing of Divine authority and appointment, the Apostolic enterprise would certainly seem to have been one of the maddest and most hare-brained undertakings ever started in the history of the world. It would have presented the extraordinary puzzle of intellectual power and disordered reason side by side! Calenture of the brain, coincident with the calm and unfevered

mental sobriety which Paul exhibited on all occasions! It is simply impossible. That a man of acknowledged culture and good sense should have suddenly changed front in relation to a public movement which had engaged the attention of the authorities; and that he should have done this against all his interests and predilections, simply at the bidding of his own imagination, and have steadfastly persisted in such a course during a long and painful career, in which there was every chance of hallucination being rectified, and every conceivable motive to induce careful reconsideration of the step! This must surely be pronounced unimaginable. It is equally impossible to suppose that such a case was the literary invention of any writer who personated Saul. The motive for such a freak would be as absent as the capacity necessary for its accomplishment.

Men sometimes change what they are pleased to call their religion on very slight and unsubstantial grounds. It is a matter of policy or preference with them, rather than of painfully acquired conviction. One church is more respectable than another, and better for business; the preacher discourses more eloquently, or the music is finer, or the place is more conveniently located. At a loss for any better reason to account for Paul's conversion to the faith of Christ some writers have gone so far as to credit him with an *arrière pensée* of this unworthy character. They trump up a spiteful story of Jewish invention to the effect that, having aspired to the hand of the daughter of the High Priest and been rejected, he allowed his mortification to take the form of personal identification with the sect of the Nazarenes! We thank them for the ridiculous and unauthentic suggestion. It illustrates the straits to which hostile criticism of the Pauline history is necessarily reduced.

The Apostle never displayed pique toward his kinsmen.

according to the flesh. He bore them witness that they had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. He had great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart on their account. To them belonged the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises. He was never embittered toward them, though he had great occasion so to be. It was, indeed, because his respect for the faith of his fathers was profounder and more enlightened than theirs, that he made the change. He did not make it in a moment of passion, nor through any love of sensationalism or novelty. There were memories connected with Judaism which he felt to be of the tenderest and most hallowed description. There surrounded the whole system a traditional glow which indicated a Divine ordination. Its ceremonial had been angelically communicated to Moses. The Divine breath had quivered upon the lips of its Prophets, and the light of God's mysterious presence had flashed forth from between the cherubim in its most holy place. No devout son of Abraham was in advance of Paul in grateful and enthusiastic appreciation of all that appertained to that "pattern of things in the heavens." It needed a strong and unmistakable demonstration of the Divine will to convince such a man that the system which had so engaged his affection had "waxed old and was ready to vanish away." And so irresistible was the evidence supplied, that he never faltered, nor went back upon it after it had once been given.

Tried by every human test, Paul's life must be pronounced an ignominious failure. He sacrificed honor, friendships, prospects, and every conceivable worldly interest, to his hope in Christ. The alternative was odium and persecution of the most malignant kind—a life of privation and misery, with few alleviations, and many tears and perils. Mere stubbornness would never have held out so long. There

was a strong backbone of sanctified logic which supported his firmness to the last. Christ himself, every now and then, was present at his side. Friends could not seduce him, gold could not bribe him, place could not tempt him, suffering could not daunt him, treachery could not move him, death could not appal him. He had reckoned matters up, and counted not his life dear unto him, so that he might finish his course with joy. His was a clear case of a man who has given up all idea of comfort and enjoyment in the present life, and who has done so not by compulsion, nor hastily, but voluntarily and deliberately. He saw that the processes of nature were hurrying mankind, without exception, along the path that leads to the open grave. In a few years, the cares and toils of mortal existence would be over and gone forever. In Jesus of Nazareth, God had been pleased to place an instrumentality by which men might be rescued from the power of the grave. There was no other way. The problem was that of attaining unto a resurrection from among the dead. It was a problem in whose practical solution Paul judged it wise to be ready to do and suffer anything that might be divinely demanded of him. With the life to come there would be associated every conceivable satisfaction. It was not to consist of the bare consciousness of being. There was honor, and power, and glory connected with it, such as had never entered into the heart of man. There would be the gratification of seeing the world wisely and beneficently governed in a day when the abhorred dominion of Rome would be a vanished terror, and himself taking an active and prominent part in the glorious work—the joy of seeing the earth populated by intelligent, obedient, truth-loving, contented human beings; the wicked rooted out of it, and every square yard of its surface flooded with the light of the glory of God—the pleasures of science and benevolence and companionship such as no mortal ever realized—

the ecstasy of a nature from which the law of sin and death has been eradicated, a nature which knows no sensation of weakness or inefficiency or dullness or pain.

Paul was fully persuaded of all this, and being so, he counted all else as dung and dross. Who would not applaud his decision?

THE FALSE AND THE TRUE.

IT is useless to pretend that the faith preached by the Apostles gradually gained ground in the Roman Empire until it became the established religion. It did nothing of the kind. On the contrary, it almost went spark out, as the Apostles themselves expected it would. They expressed themselves in tones of unmistakable despondency regarding the immediate upshot of their enterprise. Evil men and seducers were to wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Instead of the bride of Christ being formed in a position of honor and power in the earth, we have a woman of a very different sort, in ecclesiastical ascendancy over the nations. The Apostles would have repudiated with sorrowful indignation the entire system which went by the name of Christianity two hundred years after their death. It was hard work for them to make converts—supernaturally endowed though they were. The instincts and passions of human nature were all antagonistic to the faith they preached. And when their powerful influence was withdrawn, the state of the case was one of practical failure and collapse. Even while they were living they had more than they could do to keep those who professed the faith of Christ up to the mark of his teaching and requirements. There were continually occurring outbreaks of schism and unfaithfulness which called for their

censure and reproof. We are not astonished, therefore, that matters should have grown worse after their removal from the scene. That which subsequently became a powerful organization was not the Christianity of Christ, but something entirely different, except in name. It was propagated at the point of the sword. It was not the purity of the system which was the secret of its spread, but the fact that it was a gross and impudent caricature of that which Christ had taught. For more than three hundred years, historians tell us, Christianity was a struggling and comparatively unimportant sect until the Emperor Constantine avowed himself a Christian for reasons that wont stand much investigation. Eighty years after, the pagan worship was entirely prohibited by the Emperor Theodosius, who issued an edict against its sacrifices. And what have we round about us to-day but the most recent phase of the historical continuity of this very system? It has become consolidated and crystallized and has grown venerable, but it is the same still, and can only be confounded with the Christianity of the New Testament by those who are incapable of comparing the two. It is not a Divine reality, but a purely human device, which kings and priests have found too profitable to abandon and forego. The question needs to be revived and pressed home. What makes a man a friend and follower of Jesus Christ? Who so competent to settle such a question as Christ himself? And he says, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in Heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother." "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven." Now where shall we look for the practical reality corresponding to these statements? The command-

ments of Christ—who begins to try to live according to them? Is it the Christian nations who are ever ready for a pretext that may serve as ground on which to massacre half-civilized communities, and annex their territory, and who are instantly up in arms to avenge an imaginary insult? Is it the Christian merchant or tradesman whose one great aim in life is to amass a fortune? Is it the Christian statesman who, on entering upon his parliamentary duties, swears himself in? It is clearly useless to extend inquiries like these. We must look elsewhere for something that bears any resemblance to the varied forms of obedience which Christ enjoined. The Divine reality is only to be found in those persons (by whatever name they may be called) who are daily endeavoring to carry out his precepts in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. These recognize the fact that Christ's friends are those only who make his revealed will the standard of their behavior, and who do what he has told them. Anything outside of this simple and reasonable definition is also outside the circle of his recognition and is not Christianity, however pompously it may put forth its claim to be so considered, and however swiftly learning, and rank, and station, and wealth, and numbers may rush to the support of its false and baseless pretensions.

PART III.

Things that have Struck Me.

THINGS THAT HAVE STRUCK ME IN DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

I SAM. IV. 18.—The mention of the capture of the Ark of God appears to have affected old Eli with a more poignant grief than either the slaughter of Israel by the Philistines, or the death of Hophni and Phinehas—his two sons. How few there are, whose fear toward God would ever expose them to the danger of breaking their necks? This form of peril is rare indeed, from such a cause. What are the limits of my individual enthusiasm in this regard? Do sons and daughters, or other fleshly claimants upon my sympathy dominate my sentiments, and thrust forth the thought of God from the supreme occupation of my heart and mind? If this were the case, I certainly should never incur the risk of coming by my death because of “the Ark of God”: but then I should show how totally disqualified I was for a place in an arrangement of things in which God alone will be exalted and the flesh be demonstrated to have profited nothing.

ISA. XLIX. 15.—A mother’s tender compassion toward her offspring, the exquisite metaphor by which God illustrates His regard toward Zion and her sons! This is stronger even than Psalm ciii. 13, for a mother’s yearning affection may be thought to exceed a father’s pity. Both forms of speech are declarative of His mind with whom we have to do. What an absence of coldness and harshness in the disposition of the Lord God of Israel! In no manifestation of love will He be outdone by any of His creatures. There have been cases in which the mother has forgotten; but He never! It is said

that the sons of Israel were wont, on their arms and hands, to make a representation of the temple by certain indelible stains. "Behold," saith God, "I have graven thee upon the palms of *my* hands." We can never be more interested than He himself in all that relates to His purpose. What a guarantee is here of its final accomplishment in the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, and the blessing of all the families of the earth in Abraham and his seed.

REVELATION.—The Apocalypse grows upon the intelligent student. All the finer faculties of the brain are stimulated and developed and refreshed by its attentive perusal. It is a luxury to read it with the understanding—a luxury now within the reach of all in the Providence of God. The human mind could not have invented a symbolic book like it, that yields such wonderful results on the application of a competent research.

I SAM. XXIII. 9.—"Bring hither the ephod." We know but little about the ephod, or the manner in which it was used. It was a priestly garment, made according to a divine pattern, "for glory and for beauty," like the other holy vestures mentioned in Exodus xxviii. 4. However, it sufficeth us to know that by means of a holy garment God chose to speak to His servants in ancient times. We have no access to God by an ephod, but we are scarcely less advantaged. We have those oracles in our hands which "counsel and guidance still impart," suitable to all possible emergencies that may arise in our experience. So that for all purposes connected with our "instruction in righteousness," we may say, each morning, before we enter upon the toils and dangers of the day, "Bring hither the ephod." Unwise are they who venture forth into the battle without first consulting it.

In chapter xxiv. we see David at his best, fearing to raise his hand against a divine institution, though that institution were an adversary. The like fear of God was never exhibited by Saul. It is perhaps not too much to say that no man of the flesh would have foreborne to dispatch his implacable enemy under such circumstances.

MATT. XI. 7, 8.—John the Baptist was remarkable for a couple of characteristics which Christ here negatively describes. He was not a reed shaken with the wind, and he was not a man clothed in soft raiment. I never read these words without wondering admiration of their expressiveness, and of the splendid character they portray. We must have firmness and fortitude. And we must not be too careful lest we soil our clothes. “Behold they that wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses.” And the door has not as yet been opened in these heavens for men of the Baptist’s stamp. “Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”

II SAM. VI. 10.—Obed-edom is here a Gittite; whereas in I Chron. xv. 18, 21 he is a Levite. The explanation probably lies in the fact that the designation “Gathite,” or “Gittite” (which is the same), was applied to him because he was born in the Levitical city of Gathrimmon, or because he lived at Moresheth-gath. It is well to apply the same care necessary to discover these nice points of historical criticism to the investigation of the weightier matters of the Divine testimonies. Dog-like is the disposition that is always in quest of bones. To such a state of mind an apparent discrepancy is a genuine revel, and a good elucidation of the difficulty lowers the spirits.

JEREMIAH IX. 2.—Jeremiah was sick at heart, and well he might be. All Jerusalem thought him bilious and out

of order, probably—they, alas! could not diagnose his complaint. There was no society for him. At least he wished to get away from such as there was. To be the keeper of a caravansary in the desert, where his intercourse with his species would be surface-like and ephemeral, would, he thought, be a welcome change from metropolitan life, in its then depraved and apostate condition. He had seen more than enough of mankind. Yet God intended he should see a little more. Solitude is good and even necessary as an occasional thing; but is not for always. It is hurtful when misused. The Sodoms and Samarias and Jerusalems of the earth are splendid spheres for the trial of patience, and for the development of the character that is wanted for rulership in the kingdom of God.

MATT. XXI. 44.—It is indisputable that a sort of moral mutilation ensues upon willful antagonism toward Christ, as when a man is cast over the precipice and falls on the solid crags below. The whole Jewish nation were consciously, no doubt, the worse in this respect for their treatment of him. They could not deny the presence of the supernatural in him. Their hostility to him was to them the occasion of such moral maiming as could not well be recovered from. To fall on that stone, as they did, was to be broken beyond all surgical avail. And this is but preliminary to what transpires when the stone itself begins to move. “Ground to powder” would be an atrocious metaphor for either eternal torment, or the theory of the Universalist.

II SAM. VI. 11.—“The Lord blessed Obed-edom, and all his household”—because the ark of the covenant was under his roof. When the antitypical ark is manifested, all families of the earth will be blessed, and then (David-like) men will dance before Jehovah with all their might.

JEREMIAH.—It is remarkable that an entire absence of miracle characterized his prophetic career. The rebellion of Judah was so inexcusably perverse that God refused to show His hand. All classes in Jerusalem had apparently sunk to the lowest depths of moral degradation, and the people had become infamous in God's estimation. An age immersed in wickedness may not demand a miracle. "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it"—of the sort it would have. God will not move out of His way to oblige blasphemers and libertines. Their change of mental attitude would hardly justify any suspension or modification of natural law. Jeremiah's predictions, therefore, were pure dogmatism. They rested neither on argument, nor on any other kind of proof, but simply on the direct word of Jehovah. Probably the incredulity of his hearers received impatient and even indignant expression. They would perhaps say—"Who's to decide whether this Jeremiah has really had these revelations, or whether he is simply prophesying out of his own head?" Why, surely, this unsparing rebuke, and persistent complaint, and tearful lamentation, all pitched on so high a moral key, admit of but one explanation. The false Prophets were not given to frequent and expostulatory allusions to current evil-doing. It was characteristic of God's authenticated messengers exclusively that they invariably assailed and denounced the spiritual wickedness that prevailed in the high places of the land. These were they whom Jerusalem stoned (Matt. xxiii. 37).

MATTHEW XXVI. 53.—The perfection of will which Christ brought to bear upon the work the Father had given him to do is marvelously illustrated here. A word from him would have brought upon the scene more than twelve times three thousand angels, any one of which could have scattered that rout

as chaff before the wind. But that word was not spoken. Of all the "times to keep silence" *that* was surely the most momentous. Part of Christ's obedience just then consisted in his not praying to be delivered out of the hands of those who came against him, as against a thief with swords and staves.

II SAM. XXI. 1-9.—It was a law in Israel that the children should not be put to death for the fathers (Deut. xxiv. 16). Here, however, seems at first sight a case in which regard was not had to that Divine ordinance. Saul's grandsons, it would almost appear, were hanged because of what he had done. He had violated the covenant with the Gibeonites, and a three years' famine was sent upon all Israel in consequence. The connection of the one with the other having been disclosed to David by Jehovah, he acceded to the demand of the Gibeonites for the destruction of seven men of Saul's sons. They doubtless (like the Jews in Christ's day) "allowed the deed" of their grandfather, as is intimated in the phrase, "*Saul and his bloody house,*" and so made themselves partakers of Saul's sin. That sin consisted in the willful breaking of a solemn pledge. The famine which ensued, and the putting to death of these seven men, were events well calculated to teach us how God regards acts of treachery and covenant breaking. Let brethren and sisters learn how necessary it is that they should keep their promises, and pay their vows. "These things happened as ensamples; and they are written for our admonition" (I Cor. x. 11).

ROMANS XVI. 1-16.—How "the love of the Spirit" helps the recollection even of names! It would be difficult in ordinary circumstances to remember sixteen verses of nomenclature, and to intersperse the list with appropriate personal allusions; but such acquaintanceship as the truth begets stamps

itself indelibly upon the brain. As a mere mnemonic performance, the recital of 28 names that have no connection with each other, either in the way of sense or sound, is a task of some difficulty, as any one would find who attempted to repeat them off book. But when each of those names has come to represent some distinct affection for the things of God, the effort of the memory is materially assisted. It is to be noted that Paul used discrimination in thus conveying his sentiments of brotherly love and good will to these brethren and sisters, and did not content himself with a general salutation. A reader of the Greek Testament will see more sisters in this list than an ordinary English reader would suppose. Tryphena and Tryphosa, for example, are thus shown to be the Lord's sisters and ours. They labored in His name, and we never read that they instituted a quarrel with, or became at all jealous of, "the beloved Persis, who labored *much* in the Lord." Nor are we aware that Quartus threw the whole thing up because Paul simply styled him "a brother" (ver. 23). The facts are to be stated in our communications with each another, if it be not as well to resort to the alternative of silence, as touching personalities.

I KINGS IV. 30.—A wonderful versatility characterized the wisdom of Solomon. He was statesman, poet, proverb-maker, natural-historian, theologian—and all of the highest order. There is no branch of knowledge which will be forbidden to the saints in the kingdom of God. Solomon, with all his wisdom, was not endowed like one of them. The immortal nature will bring glorious capabilities with it, both executive and scientific, which will put in the shade the most splendid gifts that have ever adorned the character of men. At present, the Lord's brethren do not shine as lights in the world of letters, and such wisdom as is theirs is of small

account indeed in the estimation of the great ones of the earth; but they are establishing for themselves a connection and close intimacy with Solomon's great antitype, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

JEREMIAH XXXII. 9-15.—When a man's faith in the promises of God is strong enough to enable him to go into a falling market as a buyer at its bidding, he has not believed in vain. Hanameel thought that property was fast becoming valueless in Judea, and that he had better realize at once. The Prophet was nothing loath to make the purchase from his uncle's son, for he believed that real estate would again fetch its price, because he believed what God told him. In our day, there are no divine communications that can be made the basis of any commercial transaction, except those general directions scattered throughout the Scriptures for the use of diligence, and the practice of fidelity and truth-speaking in all our manipulation of the unrighteous mammon. The observance of these, though perhaps it may be scoffed at by the men of this world, is yet the only really shrewd and far-sighted policy, with whatever immediate disadvantages it may be accompanied.

MARK IV. 11, 12.—It would be hard to say whether Christ's parables were better adapted to *conceal* or to *convey* the truth. They had this double intent. They effectually disguised his meaning from all who did not care to inquire further; and at the same time they made his doctrine luminous to every earnest mind. He came for judgment, "that they who saw not might see, and that they who saw might be made blind." The trouble is always with those who think they know. Alas! of what ignorance is their knowledge the synonym! God's plan does not succeed with these shallow

and superficial natures, and vegetation might sooner sprout and flourish on the flags than the plant of righteousness thrive on the soil of average humanity.

I KINGS XII. 13.—Rehoboam had not profited by the counsel of the Spirit in Moses to respect the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man (Lev. xix. 32). His neglect of this precept lost him the allegiance of ten tribes out of the twelve. Nothing could have been more reasonable than the demand made by Israel for some remission of the burdens which Solomon's policy of extravagance had imposed upon the State; and the advice to those aged persons, who had had experience of its injurious character, was good. It augurs a corrupt state of society when the judgment of men of advanced years and wisdom is set at nought, and light-headed youth is put in supremacy and honor in their place. The aged brethren are entitled to be heard, and when youth is properly instructed, it will not thrust itself forward in their presence.

JEREMIAH XXXIX. 11, 12.—It is pleasant to find Jeremiah in something like good hands, so far as his personal comfort and safety are concerned. The Gentile potentate had learned that he was no ordinary man, and that it was worth anybody's while to pay strict attention to what he said. Nebuchadnezzar had a suspicion that his words would come to pass. Therefore he gave orders to his general to see that no harm befell him. Thorough devotion to the will of God compels a kind of reverence sometimes in quarters where anything of the sort would be least expected; and "when a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

MARK XIV. 4, 5.—Judas on the doctrine of utility! But we may not receive instruction on such a subject from such a source. There are other than commercial values. Waste does not necessarily mean substance spent without an actual equivalent in £ s. d. If it did, many of the brethren would show themselves wasteful; for from a Judas point of view they are throwing money away in thus perfuming the moral atmosphere by the precious spikenard of the truth. Christ has a different estimate of such like deeds, and delights to see a case of extravagant and what some would consider reckless demonstration of love toward his name. Such cases have never been too numerous. The general practice has inclined more to the side of Judas than Mary.

I KINGS XXII. 14.—“What the Lord saith unto me that will I speak.” The entirely disinterested character of all prophetic communications is their conspicuous feature throughout. How much pleasanter in every way for these men to have always been the bearers of welcome tidings! The world has ever lent a willing ear to flattery and shown itself eager to be cajoled. The spurious in religion *takes* far better than the real and true. Ahab hated Micaiah for the absurdest and stupidest of all possible reasons—just because what he said jarred on his tympanum. No inquiry into the *truth* or otherwise of his message; it wasn't nice to listen to, and that was enough! The Prophets attested their own inspiration by their uniform indifference to royal and popular sympathy and their personal comfort and safety. What man among the sects is there with a tithe of their disregard to such considerations? Christendom cannot reveal his wherabouts.

JEREMIAH XLVIII. 11.—The bad moral qualities of Moab are here attributed to the comparative absence of evil circum-

stances from the history of that nation. Wine requires to be poured off from the dregs, for if allowed to settle the flavor becomes coarse and it lacks bouquet. The people in question had been subjected to no process suggestive of this analogy, and, therefore, the Prophet could explain their attachment to Cheemosh and their contempt for the Lord of heaven and earth. The Psalmist accounts for the impiety of his enemies in a similar way: "Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God" (Ps. lv. 19). A succession of troubles is not, therefore, an unmixed evil. The affections easily take root around adjacent objects and there is need for periodical detachment and severance. We may welcome anything that serves to estrange us from the present vanishing scene, and that leads us to fix our aspiration and love on invisible and eternal things.

I COR. VI. 13.—"The body is for the Lord." But whatever will the Lord do with *some* bodies that profess to be his and for him? Will he cleanse them from long accretions of filth, which a little soap and water would fetch away? and will he fumigate them to destroy the stench of the nicotine which they contain?

Ver. 20. "Glorify God in your body." If the "your" in the case were an entity separable and distinct from the body as the churches teach, it would be difficult to understand this Apostolic exhortation or to perceive any particular necessity for crediting the body with the power to perform godly functions. Let those who have renounced tradition here, be consistent, and treat their bodies as themselves. We may not do as we please.

II. KINGS VI.—A strange collection of incidents is presented in this chapter. Iron swims. One man tells another

what a third says in the solitude of his bedroom; and so, for the behoof of a prophet, rare acoustic properties are made to belong to the air. Hosts excelling in strength, and what look like immortal horses, suddenly burst upon the dazed vision of the beholder. A whole group of people become mysteriously blind. A mother boils her son and eats him. A king has sackcloth within upon his flesh. But few strokes of the pencil are required on the part of the sacred historian to depict those scenes, whose distinctness, both of outline and detail, is yet so surprising. Any historian of the Gentiles would have wanted more than a single page for his effective exhibition of such thrilling facts.

Ver. 17 is a glorious illustration of the fact that angelic hosts are not far off when trouble is nigh a saint. We see not their beautiful forms, nor hear we the music of their speech, but their existence does not depend upon our optical power. "Though a host should encamp against us, our hearts shall not fear; though war should rise against us in *this* will we be confident":—"they that be with us are more than they that be with them."

LAMENTATIONS III. 25.—"The Lord is good unto them that wait for him." It may not immediately seem to be the case, however. Jeremiah—"a derision to all his people and their song all the day—filled with bitterness, and drunk with wormwood"—might not appear to be a special object of God's kindness, and yet he it is who attained this conviction. When everything is halcyon-like, and life is full of smiles, the goodness of God is not a hard problem. The prophet knew that it was simply a question of waiting and holding on. Evil is not a permanent ingredient in the cup He gives His saints to drink, and the promised good will be all the better for what has gone before. Let us, therefore, "hope and quietly wait for

His salvation," for not until it comes shall we fully realize how GOOD a thing it is!

Chap. iv. 6.—We have here a punishment greater than "the vengeance of eternal fire" spoken of in Jude, 7th verse.

I COR. XIV. 38.—Ignorance is often wishful to pass for something other than it is. Sir, you ought to take a back seat. We would like to hear some people acknowledge that they do not know. Luke says (chap. i. 3), that he took up the pen because he had perfect understanding of all things he wished to write about from the very first. Good! Let no man begin to write or speak on any subject unless he can say the same.

II KINGS X. 15.—There can be no fellowship worth the name unless the heart goes with the hand. By the heart, we of course don't mean the fleshy organ which goes by that name in the terminology of physiological science and common discourse. The pulsations of two hearts might beat together exactly, and register precisely the same number of throbs per minute, and yet their respective owners be at mortal enmity one with another. A true heart stands for all that produces affection and enlightenment and good understanding in the fear of the Lord, and he who is conscious of it naturally looks out for corresponding qualities in him who would take him by the hand in the sense of fellowship. When this is the case, how vastly diminished are those reservations which more or less characterize all human intercourse beneath the sun! In the kingdom of God all sympathies will beat alike in relation to all questions whatsoever, and the glorious work of that aion will not be marred by a single misunderstanding or the shadow of an alienation in mind or love. But just one word to the warm-hearted Jehus of the present generation. Re-

member, Jehonadab's hand may not be as tough an instrument as yours, and if your grip is too much like a blacksmith's vise, what otherwise would be a pure spiritual satisfaction will degenerate into a physical pain.

II COR. XI. 29.—How entirely Paul fulfilled the law of Christ in relation to his brethren and bore the burden of their infirmity! It was no unwarrantable sense of spiritual superiority which led him to use a plural and say, "*We* then that are strong." Yet that strength must often have been sorely taxed. For never was a brother weak in faith or conscience, but Paul felt his infirmity as if it were his own; and never was one of them betrayed into apostacy and sin, but all that was within him kindled for very shame! "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended (or stumbles) and I burn not?"

I CHRON.—Why be at the pains, once a year, to wade through the deluge of names which meets us on the threshold of these Chronicles? For several good reasons, to wit: (1) Because these are among the whatsoever things were written aforetime for our learning (Rom. xv. 4) and we are commanded to read these things. (2) The act of reading them is a good spiritual discipline, and tends to heighten our appreciation of the more interesting parts of the holy oracles. (3) There are here and there oases, verdant and refreshing spots, of which we should miss the advantage were we to pass these genealogies wholly by, e.g., chap. iv. 9-10. (4) We hope to make the personal acquaintance, in the kingdom of God, of some who are here mentioned, and it is well that we should not be ignorant of the fact that their names appear in this register at the time of our introduction to them. It would be embarrassing to be told that Jabez was in our presence if

we had never seen his name in the records. He would not (speaking from the mortal-man point of view) be put at his ease by our ignorance. (5) They contribute powerfully to the many "evidences" of historic genuineness and veracity which diligent reading and reflection of the holy oracles discover to the reason.

LUKE XII. 7.—Here is a sample of Divine arithmetic. It is better than Colenso. The power that can count so accurately, and to such an extent, is surely equal to anything else that may be required. He who numbers every hair can take care of the entire organization to which the hairs of the head belong. He can supply its daily needs, and preserve body, soul, and spirit in blamelessness to the coming of the Lord. He can put the whole man together again, and rebuild him from the desolations of the grave—hair and all! "Fear ye not therefore." And yet in the verse but one before Jesus says—"I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear. . . . I say unto you, Fear *Him*." The reconcilment is easy. The grounds for fear toward God lie not in him, but in ourselves. He will do his part,—never fear,—if we do ours. We are not a thousandth part as intensely interested in our own salvation as he is, if so be that we have engaged his sympathy at all.

I CHRON. IX.—How well ordered was the house of Israel! Each man and each family in their appointed place of service. Subordination here, and authority there, and no scope for the one-man-is-as-good-as-another principle in any of these divinely initiated arrangements. It was an honor to be "Zechariah, the son of Meshelemiah, porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation," and a satisfaction to "lodge round about the house of God." No such immediate privilege is ours, but we are hoping for the substance of these shadowy

things, and aspiring to a station in the kingdom of God, when the whole world will know the blessedness of submission to His most holy commands, and all social questions will have received their final and effectual quietus and solution in the enlightened contentment of every class. If the poorest position in God's kingdom were thrown open to general competition, how clamorous would men be after it! It will, however, be allotted according to immutable rule—a rule which will exclude entirely the spiritually disqualified and unworthy, and make the way plain to him that hath clean hands and a pure heart.

EZEKIEL XX. 32.—“That which cometh unto your mind shall not be at all, that ye say,” etc. Much comes into the natural mind in our day that is doomed to frustration and disappointment. “The counsel of the *Lord* that shall stand.” It is useless for men, who, like Israel, have known the truth, to try to divest their minds of all traces of the better habit. The profession of godliness may be abandoned, and the whole heart be given to the ways of the heathen. But there will always remain a mental difference between him who has once seen the right way and them who serve their own imaginations and desires. We defy any man to forsake wisdom, and then *exactly* resume his unenlightened state of mind. This means that his folly will be accompanied with superlative wretchedness as long and as often as he allows memory to operate upon the things in which he once took pleasure.

LUKE XVII. 7-8.—The servant's *needs*, even, are not to be first consulted—how much less his *pleasures*! The Master will have prior attention, and has no approval for those who “seek their own,” and not the things which are his. It is possible to keep the eye always on Christ's affairs, and to let existence find all its springs and motives in him. He is insulted

by the tardy and beggarly consideration he sometimes receives on the part of those who first "sit down to meat" themselves, and *then* perhaps bestow a thought on him. No master would brook such treatment.

I CHRON. XV. 22.—"Chenaniah instructed about the song, because he was skillful. No doubt the rest were content to be under his leadership. The quarrels of musicians are proverbial. There is probably not a choir or singing class among the Gentiles that has not or will not experience disagreement with the man at the head. Those, however, who consent that another be placed in control of any particular department ought to surrender to his decision in matters about which it may be presumed he knows best. There has not enough of attention been given to Chenaniah's branch of service in the brotherhood. He would scarcely have been charmed with the vocal efforts of some in our day, who might really do a little better if they would only try. To those who would object that God does not want fine singing, it might be said, neither takes He pleasure in discordance. Let us give Him the best we can always. He has a right to it.

EZEKIEL XXXI. 16.—"Pharaoh and all his multitude" are here taking comfort in the very place where, according to popular tradition, there is little comfort to be had. They are cast down to the *sheol*, or *hades*, in which the rich man of Luke xvi. 23 is "tormented." But of them and him it may be said, according to Ezekiel, that *they* are comforted, while *he* (though inhabiting the same region) is tormented. This is worth thinking about by our orthodox friends.

GALATIANS I. 24.—"And they glorified God in me." A triumphant conclusion to any chapter! The declaration, brief

though it is, gives us a penetrating glance into the core of Paul's character, and helps us to get at his motives. It was not himself for whom and to whom he labored and lived. He cared not for personal deferences and attentions unless they originated in God, and led straight back to their source. To get men to glorify God is the aim of all enterprise that is truly Apostolic. When this result is secured, the man who has been instrumental in producing it is satisfied, whatever becomes of himself and his reputation. Those, however, who thus "glorify God in him" will take care that they accord him the treatment which befits the agent of so sublime and rare an exercise of enlightenment, and affection, and will.

II CHRON. VI.—The prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the Temple, if not actually inspired at the time it was offered, must have been placed on record by the Spirit's operation on the mind of the historian. There is no evidence that it was a liturgy composed for the occasion. It certainly was not *read*. It bears all the marks we should expect to see in the spontaneous production of a devout and capable mind. In our public approaches to the Deity, we cannot do better than study these old Bible models. If their plan be closely followed, we shall not fall into the mistake of delivering ourselves of a wearisome theological disquisition, or of attacking the doctrine of the immortality of the soul when professedly making known our requests to God. Nor, when called upon to give thanks for the bread and wine, shall we pour forth a stream of observations not in the least germane to the matter in hand, as we have often heard brethren do.

Another point. Solomon did not pray this prayer with his chin on his chest, nor mumble so that nobody who stood ten cubits off could hear what he said. "If thou dost not exert thyself and speak aloud, so that all can hear, how shall

he, that occupieth a place at the rear of the building, say Amen at the giving of thanks, seeing he cannot tell what thou sayest?"

On this memorable occasion, Solomon seems to have entered the very presence-chamber of the Eternal King. There can be no real freedom and spiritual enjoyment in the exercise of prayer and praise, so long as we are hampered and restrained by the thought of who's there. We must "draw nigh unto God," and only heed one another's presence to the extent of considering our diversified circumstances of gladness, or sorrow, or necessity, as the case may be. A stilted and unnatural form of supplication may be well rounded, as far as mere phrase is concerned, and embrace many topics; but it is open to a similar criticism to that which was once expressed by a newspaper reporter, with reference to a prayer by Henry Ward Beecher, to the effect that it was the finest prayer *that had ever been addressed to a Brooklyn audience!*

JOHN XV. 9.—It is difficult to make a single selection from John, the materials are so abundant and rich. But here are five words in which all the rest is summed up, so far as we are personally concerned: "Continue ye in my love." He could have no interest in immortalizing any who have extruded themselves from the circle of his affection. The possibility is thus suggested of our not continuing to be the objects of his love. We know what that must end in. He cannot be expected, on any reasonable ground, to use his transforming energy at the last on behalf of those whom he has ceased to love.

II CHRON. XX. 21.—"The beauty of holiness,"—there is none to compare with it, for it is "the beauty of the Lord our God" (Ps. xc. 17). Moses was commanded to make *holy* gar-

ments for Aaron his brother, for glory and for *beauty* (Ex. xxviii. 2). "Ye see your calling, brethren." This beauty is the only thing in human character that can command the Divine admiration. The natural man hath it not. "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. xvi. 7). "The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" is not purchasable at the jeweler's, nor can the draper measure it off by tape or line. It is at an utter discount in the world of fashion, but, oh, how lovely and pleasant a thing it is! Those holy and beautiful garments are to be kept "unspotted from the world." Let not the swine rub against them. Soil them not by any form of moral filth. "Keep thyself pure." For only by this means canst thou attain at last to that "perfection of beauty" which will transform the body of thy humiliation, and make thee as the king's daughter—all glorious within and without. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the *beauty* of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple" (Ps. xxvii. 4).

DAN. II. 28.—"There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets." Is there, or is there not? If there is not, whence the prediction of the exact rise and development of these mighty dynasties which displaced each other in their turn, as indicated beforehand? What human brain was ever of itself equal to so astounding an effort of prognostication? How came it to pass that many were "waiting for the consolation of Israel" exactly 70 weeks of years from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king? If the secret was not re-

vealed, how happily Simeon, and Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, and others also, managed their guessing.

ACTS VI. 15.—“The face of an angel.” And yet they that looked on it were able to bruise and lacerate it with stones. What greater devil than flesh and blood. But how came that radiance on Stephen’s countenance? The truth within, and the spirit without, would explain the phenomenon entirely. Angelic faces are never seen where business, pleasure, natural science, or any form of mere carnal-mindedness hold sway. They will, however, be common objects of vision by-and-by, when “equal unto the angels” the friends of Stephen and of Christ shall exercise dominion under the whole heaven, and under their beneficent administration the mortal inhabitants of the earth shall regain the elohistic type, and become perfect in comeliness and grace of form.

II CHRON. XXX. 5.—“They had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written.” It was of no use attempting (as a regular thing) to do it in any other way. The laws for the observance of the passover were minute and explicit enough, and Israel possessed no warrant for the alteration of any of their details. (Hezekiah had to intercede for some who had not duly cleansed themselves.) Man has always exhibited a wonderful proclivity toward either neglecting Divine institutions or meddling with them. The sects of Christendom are conspicuous illustrations of this perverted instinct.

VERSE 26.—“So there was great joy in Jerusalem.” An unwonted occurrence certainly. A whole metropolis rejoicing in its obedience to God! None of the cities of the Gentiles have ever been in such a case. Yet His name shall be great among them from the rising to the setting of the sun, and incense shall be offered to it in every place (Mal. i. 2). There

can be no form of reasonable enjoyment which excludes the recognition of God, as there can be no satisfaction to compare with that which arises from hearty and intelligent subjection to His will. Society is destined to be established on this solid and immutable basis.

DAN. V. 23.—“The God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified.” Belshazzar was not the first or the last monarch of whom such words might be spoken. God is not in all the thoughts of mere natural men such as he. The thrones of the nations are therefore built on iniquity, and destined to be “cast down” to make way for that empire of universal righteousness, whose prevailing characteristic will appear in its exaltation of the great Jehovah’s name. “Glory to God in the highest,” and *then*—never before—“peace on earth and good will among men.” It is not surprising that all candidates for rulership in the kingdom of God should be required first to grow out of the Belshazzarean habit of mind toward the Most High, and accustom themselves to the reasonable sentiment and service which this Babylonian king failed to exemplify.

ACTS X. 46.—“They heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.” “All thy works praise thee, O God!” The gifts of the Spirit which belonged to the Apostolic age, led back to their source. God has never done a thing whose tendency has been to interfere with His own supremacy in the moral and intellectual realm. The Scriptures are marvelously uniform and persistent in the prominence they give to this one idea, which must inevitably have fallen into the background at one time or another, on the supposition that the Bible was the product of the mere human brain.

EZRA II.—This list of “the children of the province that went up out of the captivity” (of which we have another edition in Nehemiah vii.) does not add up according to the total given in verses 64, 65. The discrepancy is the Goshen of the skeptic wherein he luxuriates. It amounts to a matter of more than twenty thousand persons *less* in the detailed account than in the total specified. But there is not necessarily a contradiction, for the probability is that the historian gave the names of the principal families, and then did not think it needful to enter into particulars respecting the rest, but simply mentioned them in the general total. If the detailed list had amounted to *more* than the sum given, the case would have had a serious look about it.

HOSEA IV. 17.—“Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone.” Darwin, in a private letter to a correspondent, is reported to have said that his religious views were of no consequence to any one but himself, but he confided to him the fact that he had always been the subject of great mental fluctuations—first inclining toward ultra-naturalism, and then for a while uneasily gravitating in the direction of a belief in a Supreme Being—but never very certain anyhow. Ephraim was apparently much in the same way as regards his attitude toward God. At one time he was his “pleasant child,” at another he was “like a silly dove without heart.” Such is the instability of the natural mind. No wonder the Divine patience is at length overtaxed, and that God resolves to let things take their course. “A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.” He will have to take his chance along with the multitudes, whose affairs are shaped entirely by the fortuitous and accidental forces which govern the concerns of

those whom Deity allows to walk every one in his own ways. There is no hope for those whom He lets alone.

COLOS. I. 9.—“That ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” This is the only knowledge that can permanently avail us, and if we have it, we shall certainly subordinate all other intellectual pursuits to its illustration, and learn to look on all things from a spiritual point of view. The true and perfect science comes after the attainment of immortality, which meanwhile is the object of our supreme and all-engrossing ambition.

Nehemiah.—His name (*comforted of Jehovah*) accords well with his experience and mission. His countenance was sad, and he suffered from intense sorrow of heart, which did not escape the notice of Artaxerxes the king. This rendered it possible for him to *be* Nehemiah. We can never know Divine, or any other consolation, if we are never in trouble. To be of real value, our comfort must rest on facts, as Nehemiah's did—not on fancies or speculations of the natural mind. We must be as sure as he was that “the good hand of our God” is upon us.

COLOS. IV. 5.—“Walk in wisdom toward them that are without.” There are all sorts “without”—character represented both by the cunning of the fox, the ravenous disposition of the wolf, the slimy subtlety of the serpent, the contemptibility of the dog, and the uncleanness of the swine—all which are forms of inspired allusion to human nature, which impress us as being singularly appropriate and unexaggerated. It is toward this world of gross and varied moral evil that we are required to walk in wisdom. A conversation which the writer overheard in the tram-car, the other evening, between three

respectable-looking Gentiles, revealed the fact that though the brethren were regarded as something very nearly akin to religious monomaniacs, they were yet held in exceptional esteem for the uprightness and consistency of their lives, and one party assured the other that in all the intercourse he had had with them, he had invariably found them above the average in these important respects. This was satisfactory evidence that some, at least, had paid regard to Paul's exhortation and striven to walk unblameably in the presence of their neighbors. The ridicule of the Gentile is quite acceptable on such conditions. But even if it were not so, and all professing godliness could be proved to be consummate hypocrites, godliness itself would remain the Apostolic standard, and the truth would not be one whit less worthy the confidence of earnest and pure-minded men. The incident above related shows how careful we ought to be, and is demonstration of the fact that we are not so completely unobserved as we may suppose. We have the opportunity of illustrating to the men of this generation what is meant by practical subordination in all things to the will of Christ. How seldom the world has a chance of seeing what a man is like who does what Christ has told him to do! It is very certain that if his own brethren do not afford it such an opportunity, no one else will.

ESTHER VI. 1.—“On that night could not the king sleep.” He knew not the reason why. But there was a very important necessity for his somnolence. He only thinks to while away the weary hours; but God uses the occasion on behalf of his servant Mordecai. Some say the book of Esther is unentitled to a place among the Canonical Scriptures, because the *name* of the Deity does not occur in it. This, however, is a superficial objection. The *hand*, if not the name, of God, is clearly discernible in the sleeplessness of this pagan

monarch. We have here, without mistake, a way of Providence; and we see on what apparently trifling circumstances the all-wise Father can make issues of vast and vital consequences to hang. He generally has more purposes than one to serve by the complex movements of those events that come within the circle of His invisible interference. We may not, therefore, account any matter unimportant to a son of God, unless we know that it has no relation to the great design which God has in view in all the discipline to which He subjects His children. And we are sure that the events of their varied experience are not fortuitous, but that for them "all things work together for good." We see, too, how helplessly the Ahasueruses and Nebuchadnezzars of all history may be in the Great Manipulator's hand. They have never meant to be the hammer or sword of him who used them as such.

AMOS VII. 14.—"A herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit," called to go and prophesy unto the house of Israel! It is remarkable how generally God has made choice of the things which are base and contemptible in the world's estimation. This was so apparent to Paul, that he must needs call the attention of the brethren at Corinth specially to it (1 Cor. i. 26-28). The fact also similarly impressed itself on James, who finds occasion to state it with triumphant emphasis (Jas. ii. 5). It goes far to reconcile us to the present abasement of Divine things among men.

But although the pre-prophetic circumstances of Amos were of so very humble a sort, there is no lack of majesty in those communications of which he was made the medium. They are on a par with all the rest of the Prophets, in that they bear unmistakable traces of a supernatural mind operating upon the brain of the man who wrote.

PHILEMON.—It is impossible that this epistle could be excelled for the courtesy and tact it displays, and for the insight it gives us into the true character of the man who penned it. Wisdom is needed even in our approaches to brethren in whom we have unabated confidence, and we shall certainly never outrage any of the proprieties, if we take a hint or two from this charming specimen of epistolary communication which was not from Paul only, but from the Lord to Philemon.

JOB VIII. 11.—“Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?” All things in nature depend for their development upon the due adaptation of their surroundings. The vegetable growths require conditions appropriate to their structure. That mysterious principle within the organism which explains its existence, soon perishes if it be not fostered by a suitable environment. So it is with the plant of righteousness. The life unto God demands a cultivation and an element in which it may flourish, which are peculiar to itself. Spiritual death inevitably ensues when the congenial influences are withdrawn, and vitality cannot survive the lack of daily contact with the vivifying word. When the means of Divine nourishment are not applied, and the brain is saturated with the poisons which the world so abundantly distills, the certain consequence (whereat none need wonder) is that of utter incapacity and disinclination in spiritual directions, from which recovery is all but hopeless. The body to which a downward motion has been imparted, necessarily gathers momentum in its progress, and the force needful for its arrest becomes greater every moment.

MICAH VI.—Many portions in the prophets are read with thrilling interest in the light of Peter's declaration that the

Spirit of Christ was in these holy men of God, "testifying beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." This chapter will be found to contain some fine illustrations of the truth of this statement. The state of religious society in the land of Israel finds exact prophetic portrayal in the opening verses. Christ's personal relation thereto receives affecting and plaintive description in the picture in the poor grape gleaner, who seeks in vain a solitary cluster that may have been left in the vintage. In these circumstances, what could Christ do but wait for the God of his salvation? (ver. 7.) And though his adversaries might achieve a temporary triumph over him, and consign him to the darkness of the grave, yet Jehovah would surely be a light unto him (ver. 8), and when he fell would cause him to arise in joyful and everlasting conquest over death, and over all that might gather themselves together against him.

JAMES III. 1.—"Be not many masters"—or teachers. If this counsel was necessary in an age when the brethren possessed the gifts of the Spirit, how much more so is it now, when we have no supernatural endowments to supplement our exertions! The position of an instructor of men in Divine things may have too many aspirants, and some of these may not find their proper level so immediately as is desirable. There is little in it to gratify the inclination of those who are most qualified for it, for the reason James assigns, namely, that "in many things we offend all," and are, therefore, liable to incur their censure.

JOB XXXIII. 15, 16.—A dream would seem a strange medium of Divine communication. The state of the brain while one is on, is, so far as our experience goes, very unfavorable to the accuracy or permanency of the impressions then

received by the sensorium. Ordinarily, the logical faculty is much warped, if not entirely suspended, in a dream. Dr. Samuel Johnson relates that he once dreamt that he was worsted in an argument, which circumstance gave him great annoyance. But he afterward reflected that he had necessarily furnished his antagonist with all his arguments out of his own head. He considered that his not being aware of this fact at the time was complete evidence that his judgment, while dreaming, was not as active as his imagination. The poet Milton speaks of the higher powers of the mind as "retiring into their private cell when nature sleeps." There have, however, been dreams during which all the moral and perceptive faculties have been completely astir. The Elohim of God have made distinct and unmistakable appearance to men while in this mental state. Our non-acquaintance with all the secrets of nature, and mysteries of mentality, prevents our describing the *modus operandi*, to be sure, but are we therefore to leap to the conclusion that nothing of the kind ever happened? or to make our experience in these dark days the measure of the possible? God forbid! In the absence of a complete standard of Divine revelation such as we have in the entire Scriptures, it was not surprising that God should have "opened the ears of men, and sealed their instruction in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed."

ZECHARIAH X. 14.—"The Lord shall be seen over them." Those will be the days of "the visible hand of God," once more. Not, however, as of yore, in rare and intermittent display, but as matter of ordinary experience. The sons of Greece will fare badly in the presence of such a spectacle, and all the enemies of Israel will take to their heels. "All power in heaven and in earth" lies aback of the Divine purpose, and the

saints are to be the glorious embodiments thereof. Nothing short of this can suffice to bring the rebellious nations into a state of subjection to God. The remedy is stern, but it contains the germ of inconceivable blessedness, and Christ would have lacked an important and indispensable characteristic had he not also been constituted "a man of war." Will it be the reader's lot to "be seen" as one of the constituents of the great and terrible memorial name?

JUDE 3.—Earnest contention for the faith includes zeal on behalf of more than mere doctrine. "The faith" stands for the entire system of truth—commandments included—from which so complete a departure has occurred since the time Jude wrote this epistle. Such contention as he required of the brethren is the more necessary and difficult in our day, owing to the crystallized form the apostacy has taken. The man who stands up for the unadulterated form of Apostolic teaching is more likely to be accounted mad in this generation than in any preceding one. Men and women who are only half in earnest over this contention had better re-examine the grounds on which it is being conducted, and see if it is possible to substitute for them anything more divinely reasonable and sure.

HAGGAI II. 8.—"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts." If this is so, then its voluntary transference from one mortal hand to another, ought not to be so very embarrassing an operation. No wonder that "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver" when the thing given is really his own property! The donor but holds it in trust for the actual proprietor. Men are only stewards of His manifold grace. One here and there is actually to be found who lives in a recognition of the fact that may be considered more than

verbal. The coins of the realm may, indeed, bear Cæsar's image and superscription, but they form part of the Creator's universal wealth, and the day shall come when mankind will realize this, and "consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance to the God of all the earth."

I JOHN II. 5.—"Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." How full is the religious world of vain talk about the love of God—a sentiment which it utterly disconnects from all obligation to keep His word! A Unitarian minister once wrote us inviting us to occupy his pulpit, and said: "I am not concerned about your theological attitude; my pulpit is free—based on love to God and love to man." The freedom in the case was nothing in our line of things. For it meant freedom to deceive the people by the fallacy that God would love them whatever their "theological attitude" might be, and however they might be disposed to trifle with his Commandments. We elected to take our stand along with John and his Master, in preference to a "free pulpit" of the sort whose steps invited our ascent.

ZECHARIAH XIV. 21.—"No more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts." The word here rendered "Canaanite" also stands for "Trader" or "Merchantman." Should this be its meaning it would assign a date to the fulfillment of this prophecy posterior to the time of Christ, for *then* the Merchantman *was* in the house of the Lord, and had made it "a den of thieves."

REV. XXI. 27.—"There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth." It is to be a perfectly holy and unblemished corporation, selected on principles that can only ultimate in this one way. To what an elevation do we aspire!

The rustic peasant would not be at home amid the splendors of a court levee. Mankind even now choose their own associations according as their tastes may be vulgar or refined, and do not rest satisfied with surroundings that are unadapted to their sympathies. It is but reasonable that Christ should do the same. On what ground, indeed, can he be expected to do otherwise, and environ himself with companions who have no real love either for him, or for the glorious work that has been apportioned him in the good purpose of God!

GENESIS V. 24.—“Enoch walked with Elohim”—delightful companionship! but only in the estimation of here and there one. He was probably alone among the sons of men in the enjoyment of this great privilege. Had others shared it with him, it is but reasonable to suppose that their names would also have been mentioned in the same connection. The question has evidently never been one of arithmetic. An earnest man will make up his mind on this point, and be prepared, if necessary, to stand alone in the midst of universal ungodliness and folly. If there is a demonstrable proposition beneath the sun, it is that though “many are called, few are chosen.” When we realize that the choice is to be made not out of the ignorant multitude, but out of such as have made intelligent profession of the truth of Christ, we are prepared for a numerical result that will hardly bear comparison with the twelve hundred and fifty millions of human beings who are now said to populate the globe, to say nothing of the countless generations who have preceded them in the race of vanity and death. The walk of Enoch with the Elohim, no doubt, was to some extent a walk by sight, for the ancient saints were favored with occasional fellowship with them of a direct and visible character. In these dark days of the Gentiles, we walk by faith, but our intercourse with God need be

none the less real and comforting on this account. We may take solace from the assurance that He has as deep and tender and complacent a regard for those who think upon His word, and who walk in His way, as He had for His servant Enoch, who, in a generation different in many respects from ours, "had this testimony, that he pleased God."

PSALM XXII.—It is perhaps not a very generally recognized feature of the sufferings of Christ, as detailed beforehand by the Spirit so minutely in this wonderful Psalm, that he was acquainted with them prior to his actual experience of them. This was a very pathetic incident in his probationary career. After his resurrection, he upbraided his disciples for their lack of familiarity with the things that had been spoken by the Prophets and in the psalms concerning him. He must therefore have been himself, all along, in full view of the sufferings which awaited him. The sorrows of this mortal existence would be vastly increased if we knew all about them before they came. God mercifully veils them from our sight, so that "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." But as a student of this Psalm, it was given unto the Lord Jesus to anticipate the fearful distress and anguish of body and mind which he underwent in obedience to the Father. Equally, however, did he discern the glory that was to follow, when, in the midst of a great congregation of brethren, he would sing praise unto God, and when he should be "the governor among the nations."

MATT. X. 31. —"Ye are of more value than many sparrows." The figures and analogies, drawn from the worthless and ephemeral things of the world, to represent God's estimate of mankind in general, have to be altered to suit the case of Christ's friends; while others are like dross, *they* are of

value. "The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price." We may well be content to let God attend to the concerns by which He sets such store. He will certainly do His part, if we, in all good fidelity and earnestness, will attend to ours. In the value He puts upon those who please Him, we have the guarantee of their deliverance from the power of death, and their exaltation to honor and permanence in His glorious kingdom.

GEN. XXXV. 4.—Up to the date of the incident here recorded, Jacob appears to have been too tolerant of his superstitious surroundings. His faults are never concealed, but detailed with a frankness and circumstantiality which would be absent from a fictitious narrative. The flaws in his character did not necessarily meet the Divine approbation, though they belong to the history. God loved him, in spite, and not because of, these moral blemishes. There were in him features that made him an object of interest to the Most High, and which will constitute the grounds of his final admission into the kingdom of God. He seems, however, to have but gradually attained a due sense of his responsibility as the head of his house. Else he would, at an earlier date, have made short work with the strange gods which never had any right to Israelitish recognition, and which he here hides under an oak, along with some earrings, which equally merited the oblivion to which all were consigned.

PSALM XXXIV.—The title of this magnificent Psalm refers to the occasion on which David changed his behavior before Abimelech. Achish, the Philistine King of Gath, was, however, the person in whose presence David "feigned himself mad" (1 Sam. xxi. 13). The name "Abimelech" must be

a transcriber's mistake. There does not appear to be much in such a circumstance to give rise to the lofty sentiments which find expression in the Psalm, and perhaps the authenticity of the superscription is justly open to doubt. There was a semblance of insanity in his change of behavior before Achish, but there is no lunacy about the 34th Psalm. His resolution that God's praise should be continually in his mouth was one that we may well adopt. If our mouths are too full of anything, let us have them filled with the right thing. There will then be no room left for much that is forbidden in the Scriptures.

PSALM XXXVI. 1.—The opening sentence here is less obscurely rendered: "The wicked hath an oracle of transgression within his heart; there is no fear of God before his eyes." The saint was wont to lift up his hands toward Jehovah's holy oracle, and would not trust for guidance to the promptings of the carnal mind. But the sinner's "oracle" is within himself.

MATT. XXII. 46.—There was in Christ a wonderful combination of tenderness and intimidating reserve, when occasion called for the exhibition of the latter. The most venturesome of his assailants were immediately cowed and put to silence by his thorough mastery of their motives. Many of them would be much older than himself, yet he was more than a match for all of them. The secret of his power is expressed by the word "Immanuel." When he comes again, he will make just as easy a disposal of the carping and captious sort. He will similarly silence all prating fools, and not a hypocrite or a blasphemer will there be that will venture to ask him a single question. Happy they who then have good ground for boldness in his glorious presence!

GEN. XXXIX.—The narrative of Joseph's cruel exile from his father's house, here begun, loses none of its thrilling interest by reperusal or the lapse of time. He must have a stout heart that can read it through without being half-choked with emotion. The most fertile imagination would be unequal to the invention of so touching a story. That all the untoward events which belong to this period of Joseph's history were divinely prearranged is beyond question. They could not have happened fortuitously. And that throughout the whole of these dismal experiences he should have kept his faith in God, and retained his purity of character, shows how eminently fitted he was to be a type of that still more illustrious one, who learned obedience and was made perfect by the things which he suffered at the hands of his brethren, and who will also disclose himself at the fitting moment to those who listened not to the voice of his distress in the day when God delivered him into their hands. If these well-beloved ones were not exempt from dire affliction, we may not suppose that any strange thing happens unto us when our way seems hid from the Lord, and our judgment passed over by our God. In all things let us consider the end.

PSALM XLIX.—There are several renderings of parts of this Psalm which are preferred by scholars, and which it may not be amiss to mention. Ver. 5 is sometimes read thus: "*Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of them that would trip me up, shall compass me about.*" Ver. 8. "*For the redemption of their soul is precious, so that he must leave it alone,*" i. e., it costs too much to find the wherewithal; no amount of wealth can compass this object, therefore it is useless for a rich man to entertain the idea. Ver. 11 (following the Septuagint) is read: "*Their sepulchers are their houses forever, and their dwelling places to all gen-*

erations, *who had called* their lands after their own names." This gives a fine touch of irony to the passage. Ver. 14. "Like sheep they are laid in the grave; *death is their shepherd*; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume away; *sheol is their dwelling*."

MATT. XXVIII. 17.—"Some doubted." The fact of Christ's resurrection was not, therefore, presented to people who were ready to accept it without proof, but to those who recognized their obligation to make rigid investigation of what was actually before their eyes. What they thus examined was sufficient to dispel their skepticism, and ought to be enough to establish a reasonable faith in the same event after the lapse of eighteen centuries.

GENESIS L. 25.—"Ye shall carry up my bones from hence." Dying men are not ordinarily much concerned about the disposition of their bones. It is the property, or the friends they are leaving behind them, or the welfare of their "immortal souls," that occasions them their chief anxiety. Joseph, however, did not waste his solicitude on anything that was not related to the Divine promise. He wished his remains to be carefully treasured and conveyed to the land which he knew would be the scene and center of the Divine operations in the far-off, yet coming day. His embalmment would be skillfully and thoroughly effected, and, perhaps, he is still lying, wrapped round in many a linen fold, in the Egyptian sarcophagus wherein he was placed—waiting the hour—now so much nearer—when he will hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth. But even if the spices and arts used by the physicians have failed to arrest the total disappearance of his bones in the dust of which they were formed, no obstacle to

the power of Christ is thus created. He can remake Joseph out of the stones, if necessary. The identical particles that were put into the coffin are not essential to his reproduction. The Joseph-character and identity and self-consciousness can be flashed by the spirit upon any brain-substance that may be produced for the occasion. The thing to be done is to cause him to stand upon his feet again, and to know that he is the same, and not another person.

PSALM LV. 17.—The Psalmist had his set seasons for prayer, and we shall do well to follow his example in this. Let it not be said that we are a prayerless people—given to debate, but inappreciative of the privilege which belongs exclusively to the brethren of Christ, of approach to God in supplication and thanksgiving. “In everything,” we are to do this; but it will be found helpful and profitable to specially devote a portion of each morning, noon, and evening to this purifying and uplifting exercise. A prayerful habit of mind will thus be generated, and the heart become established in holiness and the fear of God.

PSALM LVIII. 8.—“As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away.” It strikes me that the melting away of a snail would be a very unserviceable illustration for a man to use in the pulpit who wished to set forth the current doctrine of the destiny of the wicked. The Bible metaphors, on all subjects, are as befitting as they are vigorous and striking.

EXODUS IV. 10.—“O my Lord, I am not eloquent but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.” Moses was not entirely an exception in this respect. Jeremiah seems to have labored under a similar embarrassment, and Paul’s speech was held by some to be “contemptible.” There was, doubt-

less, design in the Divine selection of instruments having organic infirmity. It was important in each case "that the excellency of the power should be of God, and not of man." If the message be from heaven, the messenger is a matter of very secondary concern. Oratorical incapacity would tend to engage attention more on behalf of the Divine utterance, than the human channel through which it was conveyed. The delights of rhetoric are denied those who bear "the burden of the Lord." The great thing is to have the truth proclaimed. Thoughts about "style" and "delivery" are a waste of mental power. If the speaker's sympathies are properly attuned to the measure and gravity of his theme, he will speak earnestly and naturally, however defective in some respects his enunciation of it may be. It would certainly be a great gratification to have a tongue that could not falter nor stammer. The powers of the coming age will be abundant compensation for all mortal lack of every conceivable description. With such a prospect before us, we can even "take pleasure," as Paul did, in infirmities, that may meanwhile expose us to personal disdain.

PSALM LXXII 1.—"Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart." When a writer uses the word "truly" he may be supposed to have good ground for the statement he prefaces thereby. In the case before us the Psalmist had not arrived at the conclusion he exhibits, apart from full investigation of the facts involved. God's goodness to Israel was matter of very varied history and illustration. He had always been reluctant and slow to punish them for their transgressions, and swift to welcome signs of returning penitence in those who had strayed from His precepts. His goodness was indeed displayed in the very judgments He executed upon them for their rebellion. The Divine beneficence is not an easy-going disposition to let loose the reins of

order and law, but something rectoral in its character enabling and obliging him to bear the sword. But when the purpose is pure, and the heart clean, oh, how great is His goodness! The full measure of it awaits that final and glorious exhibition which He has determined in Christ, and which hath not entered into the heart of man.

ROM. XII. 17.—“Recompense to no man evil for evil.” This Apostolic injunction strikes us with fresh force each time we read it. We are not to pay Him back in His own coin, but rather be content to suffer wrong. The old Adam strongly resents this interference with what he conceives to be his rights. Vengeance, however, is a *Divine* prerogative. It is quite a proper thing, only it must be in the proper hands, and exercised at the proper time. It is not for saints to forestall God's retributions. Let them wait until He gives the signal, and the wicked become dust and ashes under the soles of their feet.

EXODUS XXX. 25.—The “holy anointing oil” here mentioned finds its true significance in the joy and gladness which will appertain to the glorified body of Christ in the age to come. Accordingly, the children of Israel were expressly forbidden to make anything like it. It was the symbol of that which should have no counterpart in the ordinary experience of the Adamic race. It was to be made throughout all the generations of the house of Israel, for all would need to be reminded of the glorious fact it was designed to set forth, and it is scarcely likely that the sons of Aaron would be continually observing all the details of the law without inquiry as to their meaning. None of this holy oil was ever to be put upon a stranger. The fitness of the symbol would have been destroyed by such a use of it. It was for Aaron and his sons to

consecrate them, that they might minister unto the Lord in the priest's office. The antitypical anointing of the Spirit is not intended for the common run of men, but for the "holy priesthood," which had its shadow in the law, whose institutions were of a character, and had a meaning that no mortal brain could ever have imagined or contrived.

PSALM LXXXIX. 20.—"With my holy oil have I anointed him." In the former case we have the *priestly*, here the *regal* feature portrayed. "The Lord's anointed"—with a view to the exercise of the Lord's own authority, God's hand shall be established with David his servant. His arm also shall strengthen him; and he will beat down his foes before his face (verse 23). The antitypical David has already received this "unction of the Holy One," and been made both Lord and Christ. His brethren wait their admission to the same inheritance of glory, and honor, and incorruptibility at his appearing and his kingdom.

I COR. I. 2.--"Them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus." It is sometimes difficult for us to realize how completely such a designation separates those to whom it applies from the present evil world. If in the appointed immersion we are really "baptized into Christ," we emerge from the water "dead to the world." In that symbolic grave we bury all our old enthusiasm for its God-dishonoring ways. Our citizenship is thenceforth with Christ in heaven, and nothing greatly concerns us that is not in one way or another connected with him. It must either be this, or entire separation from him. There can be no half-measures with the sanctification that is in Christ Jesus. It is either a matter of actual experience by us, or it is not. The separation from the world which it involves is not merely formal and external, but has the indorsement of

- our enlightened and ardent sympathy. In fact, the mind is in us which was also in him.

1 CORINTHIANS XII. 7.—“The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.” Included in this category of supernatural endowments were “the word of wisdom,” and “the word of knowledge.” That being the case, it might be supposed that the brethren at Corinth had in their very midst all necessary or possible means of instruction and guidance for the due regulation not only of their individual behavior, but also of their ecclesial life. For what higher or more complete authority could even Paul himself introduce to their notice than that which they already were possessed of? If the things that he wrote were “the commandments of the Lord,” so were also the things which were the outcome of “the word of wisdom,” with which, according to his own showing, some of their number were gifted. What need had they in such circumstances to write unto *him* concerning anything (chap. vii. 1), it may be asked? Was not the word of Divine wisdom sufficient to instruct them on such subjects as going to law with one another—the expediency or otherwise of marriage—the precise value of circumcision—the eating of meat offered in sacrifice to idols—the right of all who were divinely appointed to preach the Gospel to live of the fruit of their labor—the proper method of showing forth the Lord’s death at the breaking of bread—the head-gear of the sisters during prayer and the length of the brethren’s hair? What was the use of “the word of wisdom” if something extra to and beyond it was necessary to cover ground like this?

The answer is, that God had assigned to Apostolic authority a cardinal position in all the churches that had been established by their labors (1 Cor. xii. 28). All other gifts of the spirit were but subordinate and supplementary to theirs.

Exigencies arose which admitted of the illustration and recognition of this fact, and rendered possible the appropriate deference to those who occupied the first and highest place in the work of the Gospel. "Teachers," however supernaturally endowed, came "thirdly"; while "Apostles" came "first." And as Paul intimates (v. 29) all were not Apostles. Their proper function was not displaced nor rendered nugatory and superfluous by any faculty that had been communicated to subordinate officials.

Besides, there is evidence that the brethren at Corinth did not all pay due regard even to their spiritually empowered "teachers." They appear to have been envious of each other's gifts, and there was a strong "carnal" element among them, which prevented them from according reverence and submission where these qualities were really due.

There will be no such disorder and schism in the perfected and glorified body of Christ. Every member of that body will know its place and keep it. The head will not excite the jealousy of the parts that are "less honorable," nor ever abdicate its control. It is not mental degradation even now to recognize superiority. If brethren were pursuing personal ends, the case would be different. Every true saint has his befitting place and function, and his sole anxiety is to see the work of Christ well and effectively done, and to this solicitude he is always prepared to subordinate his own predilections and tastes.

NUM. VI.—Nazaritism seems to have existed in pre-Mosaic times, while the law simply recognized, regulated, and brought it into harmony with its Divine institutions. The vow is said to have been resorted to in sickness, with a view to recovery, or when starting on a long journey, or when the desire for children existed. It was regarded as a specially effectual

mode of securing the favor of God. There has been much disputation as to the etymology of the word. The consonants which form it are pointed in two ways, one of which makes it convey the idea of a circular ornament or decoration, such as might be suggested by the unshorn hair worn by the Nazarite. The other indicates selection, separation, choice.

There is not now commanded or divinely recognized any such method of consecration to the service of God. We are set apart to that service, it is true, but not by our long hair, or our refusal to drink wine or eat "moist grapes or dried," but by our belief and obedience of the truth. No particular virtue necessarily attaches under this dispensation to abstinence from the things forbidden to the Nazarite. Paul says, "every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving." The New England Reformers, according to Emerson, "made unleavened bread, and were foes to the death to fermentation. It was in vain urged by the housewife that God made yeast, as well as dough, and loves fermentation just as dearly as he loves vegetation. No; they wish the pure wheat, and will die but it shall not ferment." The glory of God is to be the inspiration of our eating and drinking, and of whatever we do.

No reference to Naziritship appears to be contained in Matt. ii. 23, where Jesus is called a Nazarene. Matthew seems to quote from an ancient oracle, of which we have no present knowledge. His reference is to the place of Christ's childhood and youth, which thus were connected with what was held by the Jews in extreme reproach. "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" His followers in Apostolic times were known as the "sect of the Nazarenes." He and they were no exception to God's usual method of choosing the base things of the world for His great purposes, "that no flesh should glory in his presence."

PRO. III. 5.—“Lean not unto thine own understanding,” be it ever so adroit and shrewd. For after all, it is but the product of purely natural influences, and there is no Divine element in it. It is incompetent to act as a comforter and an unerring guide. Men of the profoundest intellect (so esteemed) have found it a broken reed which simply lacerates the hand that unwittingly leans upon it. The late John Stuart Mill—who was in many respects the most accomplished metaphysician of his day—records in his *Autobiography* a period of terrible depression of mind through which he once passed. His great intellectual resources failed him for consolation. He had no real desire for the ends he had been so carefully fitted out to work for; no delight in virtue, or the general good, and just as little in anything else. The fountains of vanity and ambition seemed to have dried up within him as completely as those of benevolence. He tried music, but found that the octave only contained a certain limited number of tones. This kind of pleasure faded with familiarity and required either to be revived by intermittence, or fed with continual novelty. He had not learned to trust in the Lord with all his heart.

LUKE XXI. 24.—We often quote this remarkable prophecy of Christ's, and there is danger lest our familiarity with it should in some degree obscure the dread significance it had at the time he spake it. That generation invoked upon themselves, and their children, the awful retributions that form so conspicuous a factor in the history of the last eighteen hundred years. The mind that desires a perfect sensation of sickness and sadness, has only to read in Josephus the annals of the siege of Jerusalem by Titus. Decrees of bitter exile and slavery followed upon the destruction of the city. The first attempt to cast off the iron chains of Rome resulted in the

death of half a million of the remnant that survived its overthrow. Subsequently Hadrian imposed the most terrible penalties upon any Jew who remained in the land of his fathers. Not an oar might he pull on blue Gennesaret's waters. In fertile Esdraclon he might not own so much as to set his foot upon. At the holy hill of Zion—now a desolation—he might not safely steal a sorrowful glance. Nor even in Hebron—where his fathers slept—might he purchase the poor satisfaction of a grave, in which to lay his weary bones. He must henceforth wander an outcast among the nations, while his land was possessed by "the worst of the heathen." Historians have been compelled to take note of the fact that "though surrounding governments ran through all grooves of change, no reversal of the attainder came upon the disinherited Jew." While in "the holy city" all alien tribes, without distinction, could traffic and find shelter, for many long centuries its gates were closed against the seed of Jacob. The crucifix of the Papist, or the crescent of the Mohammedan, or the gleaming lance of the wild Ishmaelite might reflect the bright sunbeams on the summit of the minaret, but none of the symbols of the Jewish faith might anywhere be displayed. If Israelites are there to-day, they owe their presence to the fact that the cup of indignation and trembling is about to pass from Jacob's lips, and if they have any proprietorship in the soil it is because they have been allowed to "purchase this gift of God with money." All the Gentiles have conspired to make "their name a taunt, themselves a scorn." Even in English history there are dismal pages which chronicle their disabilities and pains, and it is on record how that "Saxon thane and Norman noble alike thrust them from the courtesies of life, and how even the swineherd and the jester dared insult the velvet gaberdine with ribald oaths and with unseemly scorn." But brighter days are about to dawn. Jehovah

retaineth not His anger forever, nor doth He draw out His wrath unto all generations. It is given unto us to behold the signs of favor returning to Zion. He will "build again her waste places, and make her wilderness like Eden and her desert as the garden of the Lord." Happy they whose sympathies and destiny are connected with the fate and fortunes of this peculiar people, "of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever."

NUMBERS XXXI. 18.—"Balaam, also the son of Beor, they slew with the sword." It is difficult to determine Balaam's precise relation to Israel. In 2 Peter ii. 16, he ranks as a "Prophet." In Numbers xxii. 18, he calls Jehovah "the Lord my God." The manner in which God addresses him is strongly indicative of his having been familiar with Divine communications. He was made the channel through which some of the most important revelations were made touching God's purpose with the chosen people. Peter and Jude do not speak of him as a stranger to the truth, but as a conspicuous example of one who held it in unrighteousness. Still, his mode of worship does not appear to have been in harmony with the requirements of the Mosaic law. His erection of seven altars, and his use of enchantment, are facts which demonstrate the extra-Israelitish character of his religious position. He must evidently be classed with such men as Abimelech, and Pharaoh, and Nebuchadnezzar, to whom God revealed Himself, in the course of the development of His purpose toward the house of Israel. He was merely a tool in the hands of the Divine artificer—of no further use, when the particular work for which he was required was done. He stands on the historic page as the type of a numerous class—men who will subordinate everything that is truly noble, to their love of honor, and their lust for gold. His case teaches

us that even inspirational endowments of the highest order are not necessarily a guarantee of personal righteousness and acceptance with God. A man might utter the truest and sublimest prophecies, and yet be an outcast from the Divine favor. Balaam dies on the point of an Israelitish spear—at the hand of the nation of whose future he had been made to discourse so inimitably. God had done with him. Now this happened unto him for an ensample; and it is recorded for our admonition upon whom the ends of the age are come.

DEUT. I. 17.—“Ye shall not respect persons in judgment.” One law for rich and poor alike! At present, broadclothed stands a better chance than fustianed villainy, and cultured crime than coarse. The rulers in Israel were the administrators of a judgment that was God's. That judgment was not born of the exigencies of political economy or ever-changing civilization, but of the will of Jehovah—the only basis of right in any period. What aion has ever had God so nigh unto it? Here is shadowed forth the Divine politics of the coming age. The magistrates of that aion will be distinguished by a little indiscriminating impartiality. They will rule for God, and there is no respect of persons with Him. The golden key of wealth will no longer avail to unlock the door of justice, and let the well-dressed and bejeweled transgressor go forth, while the poor are punished “with the utmost rigor of the law.” Girded with righteousness, and uninfluenced by adventitious surroundings of any sort, the representatives of the Most High will use no accommodation, and resort to no compromise for anybody's sake, and all classes may rely upon having meted out to them the measure of infallible and unbiased justice which may be their due. Who would not like to sit and judge the nations under a dispensation like that!

ECCL. IV. 2.—“I praised the dead, which are already dead, more than the living, which are yet alive.” How could Solomon have done anything of the kind if he had known that the vast proportion of the dead were undergoing excruciating torture without end? He speaks in a tone amounting to envy of their condition; and when a man has lived long enough to see that mortal existence is a vanity, even under the most magnificently regal conditions, and that there is really nothing in it, he joins the wise man in his apparently pessimistic utterances. The dead are no fit objects for commiseration. “Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but for yourselves and your children.”

ACTS II. 1.—“Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer.” They were men accustomed to pray. They believed in the utility of it, and that God was accessible to their supplications. They were not like those in Israel in the days of the Prophet who asked incredulously—“What profit shall we have if we pray unto him?” There were then stated reasons for prayer in the temple, and the Apostles availed themselves thereof, without burdening their thought with what is called “the rationale of prayer,” or troubling their heads with the speculative difficulties by which, in the estimation of some, the subject is beset. It would be three o’clock in the afternoon when they thus repaired to the temple. David prayed in the morning, at midday, and in the evening (Ps. lv. 18), and Daniel followed the same rule. This practice appears to have been quite voluntary on their part, there being no definite prescription in the law as to *hours* of prayer. In Apostolic times it seems to have become a recognized rule thus to interrupt the day’s proceedings by a tripartite visit to the place where God had chosen to put His name. We have no temple to which we can go for a like ennobling

purpose; but we have places of privacy which we can use thrice a day for supplication and thanksgiving to Him who seeth in secret. The effect of such a voluntary custom will be sure to tell on the spiritual man in course of time.

DEUT. XV. 7-11.—We have here a most ungentile precept! Fancy the House of Commons passing a measure which provided that a poor man in his distress should be entitled to go to a rich neighbor and procure from him a sum of money “sufficient for his need”! What an outcry would be raised by the privileged classes, whose chief anxieties are connected with the race-course, the billiard-table, or the hunt! The proposal that there should be distributed, among the widows and fatherless children of the country a fraction of the enormous wealth which belongs to its aristocracy, and which is often squandered in shameful gambling and vice, would be greeted with derisive laughter all round. It is a powerful argument for the divinity of the Mosaic code that it should have concerned itself so particularly with the case of the poorer part of the population, who have never been able to gain audience at headquarters under mere human rule. Those who deny that the hand of God was present in the affairs of Israel, impose upon themselves the tremendous obligation to account for the fact that Moses promulgated laws, which, though conceived in a spirit of the highest wisdom and beneficence, have never been duplicated in the whole history of Gentile legislation. “To the poor the gospel is preached.” There is no other solution of the “progress and poverty” question besides the Divine one, and the world is getting ripe for it.

ECCL. X. 18.—“By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth

through." Solomon leaves his readers to make their own application of this statement.

It is one we shall do well to bear continually in mind. This poor mortal flesh of ours is in frequent need of the whip. Spiritual ruin and desolation can only be avoided by continuous effort. The good already accomplished is soon spoiled by an indolent and half-hearted application to the matter in hand. We have got to look well to the building, or the fox will look out at the windows!

ACTS XX. 35.—"It is more blessed to give than to receive." These words of the Lord Jesus indicate a very lonely and unfrequented road to happiness. They are extolled as a magnificent specimen of Divine wisdom, and then practically disregarded. The modern world wants no such blessedness, especially when the giving has to be done on Christ's principles, and the donor's name is not allowed to figure on a subscription list. Mankind can never be made to see much that is desirable in those mental moods which come of secret and unostentatious conformity to the will of God. They only who have experimented in these directions know how real and solid the blessedness is. The saying is one illustration out of many which might be cited to show that Christ was continually uttering words which were the very antitheses of the maxims current in Jewish society and born of the natural mind.

JOSHUA VI.—This chapter records a notable illustration of the power of faith. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down" (Heb. xi. 30). Doubtless the children of Israel would look very ridiculous in the eyes of the inhabitants of the city, as they accomplished their daily march around it for a whole week. "What mean these people by their senseless peregrinations?"

They are surely very fond of exercise! Their philosophy—if they have any—is clearly of the peripatetic sort! Perhaps they are a large party of lunatics, who have formed a mad confederacy!" Nothing of the kind—ye men of Jericho! These are the servants of the Most High God, and they are not doing thus strangely to gratify your curiosity or their own liking, but in obedience to the command of the Creator of heaven and earth, who has told them so to do. Don't be too rash with your conclusions. Wait until the week is out, and you will know the reason to your cost! The morning of the seventh day dawned, and yet there was not a single crack in the city walls, and not a stone nor a fragment of mortar was displaced. For the sixth time on that day they compassed the place. Was Jehovah going to mock them after all? Try once more. The seventh time was the perfect number. Blow your trumpets, ye priests! Ye people, raise one united shout! Down comes the massive masonry that had been so long the pride and defense of the rebellious people it inclosed in apparent impregnability! What brought down those walls? Did Israel blow them down? or shout them down? or walk them down? or batter them down? No, *they believed them down!*

ISAIAH II. 2.—“And all nations shall flow unto it.” The only really effective international policy is here depicted. It is one which makes a full end of the geographical and governmental arrangements that now prevail and create ever-recurring jealousy and rancor among the tribes of the earth. Mankind sorely need a localized center of union, in place of the bitter disintegrations of the sword. This, God has provided in Christ, whose strong hand will in due time be placed upon the entire civilization of the Gentiles in true iconoclastic fashion, preliminarily to the establishment of a polity which

will insure to all people truth and righteousness, and "abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth."

I THESS. IV. 11.—"Study to be quiet." Some would find this study harder than Greek. While there are those who need to study so that whatever their hands find to do, they may do it with their might; others are of so restless and discontented a turn that they would do well to bestow much consideration on this Apostolic injunction. They can study all that supplies material for their pugilistic instincts, and are at home in mysteries and abstractions, and things which give play to the speculative faculty; but quiet and unostentatious conformity to the will of God has no charms for them. "And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle but tattlers also, and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not."

JOSHUA X.—The slaughter of the Canaanitish hosts and their kings as recorded in this and other chapters, was not, as the unbelievers allege, "for the crime of defending their country." It was "for the wickedness of those nations" that they were driven out before Israel and destroyed. The country was never theirs. They were simply allowed to occupy it on sufferance for a limited season. The land belonged to Abraham and his seed by a deed of gift on the part of the Maker and the Proprietor. Those alien populations were steeped in iniquity and utterly unreclaimable. Their extermination was, therefore, a matter of moral necessity, in whose accomplishment Jehovah had no delight. He did them no wrong in thus ridding His own universe of their presence, for they had no antecedent rights, and wrong can only be done where there are rights to infringe. They were but so many moving forms that could never have moved at all but for

Him; their breath was His, and so were all the bounties of which they had made so heinous and ungrateful an appropriation. The world will require some more Joshua-like work before its history is complete. After the type of his victories will a greater than he make his enemies his footstool, and reveal himself in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God.

ISAIAH XIV. 26.—“This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth.” It is comforting to be assured that the topography of the divine plan is of this universal character. It takes in the whole surface of the planet—the entire soil which its rivers water and all the cities by which they flow—the barren wastes and the fertile prairies and every island whose shore the salt wave washes—all are to pass beneath the inalienable jurisdiction of those to whom the administration of God’s purpose will be committed in the day of Christ. With unlimited power and wisdom and beneficence characterizing their policy, what transformations will be effected in all the conditions of mortal life!

I TIM. V. 24.—Some are not adroit in the art of concealing their true character from their fellows. Their sins march on in front of them to await their arrival at the judgment seat of Christ. Others are ingenious and successful in their use of the deceptive faculty, and will manage to pass as paragons of righteousness until they reach his presence who will not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears. Then, probably, a single question will cause the mask to fall, and cover them with shame and confusion of face.

JOSHUA XIII., *et. seq.*—These chapters record the division of the land among the tribes and families of Israel, and that

which at once strikes us as we read them is the fact that we are interested in such apparently dry historical details. We remember the time when we were not in the least concerned about these portions of the Scriptures. They had no conceivable connection with our system of doctrine. But the case is altered now. "The Land Question" of the Gentiles would be all the better for such a settlement as it had among the Hebrews of Joshua's time. The soil of the British islands is held by a handful of the thirty-five and one half millions who inhabit them. The life of many a rich peer is said to resemble that of a common attorney, in consequence of the extent of his affairs, while myriads have not so much as to set their foot upon! There were no such anomalies under those Divine auspices, by which every family in Israel was remembered and provided for. It will be so again. The laws will all be abrogated which now protect the excessive and unreasonable possessions of the rich, and God's bounties will no longer have so selfish and unequal an appropriation.

HEBREWS VII. 1-3.—It may seem strange that Melchisedec should have been called "king of peace," and yet should have blessed Abraham returning from slaughter. But peace has been only appointed to succeed righteousness in the Divine order, and Melchisedec was "king of righteousness" before he was "King of Salem." Many have stumbled at the declaration that he was "without father, without mother, etc.," and have wished to know more about him. Their curiosity must wait till God musters his immortal family, of which this greater than Abraham will be a prominent member. The Apostle probably only intends it to be understood that as a priest Melchisedec was without father and mother. He did not derive his priesthood from his parents, but was constituted a priest by the special ordinance of Jehovah. He was

“without descent” in the sense of not being related by birth to any other priest. And, as the time of the priest’s ministration under the law was called their “days”—beginning at the age of 30 and ending with their 50th year—the Apostle seems to call attention to the fact that the term of Melchisedec’s priesthood was not prescribed by this law, which subsequently regulated the service of the Levitical priests. In this respect he was an eminent type of the Son of God. He does not appear to have died, for this is a special point of contrast between him and others who received tithes. Of him “it is witnessed that he liveth.” There are, as Peter says, in Paul’s epistles many things which are hard to be understood, and it may not always be a mark of spiritual childhood or degeneracy for a brother to confess his ignorance. A little modesty looks more seemly than an affectation of knowledge which will admit the existence of no difficulties. Time, patience, and continual application to the study of the word will, however, make many things plain which were once obscure.

THE END.

The Bible Companion,

OR

TABLES FOR THE PROFITABLE DAILY READING OF
THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

January.

Day of the Month.	CHAPTERS TO BE READ.			
1	Genesis 1, 2	Psalms 1, 2	Matthew 1, 2	
2	Genesis 3, 4	Psalms 3, 5	Matthew 3, 4	
3	Genesis 5, 6	Psalms 6, 8	Matthew 5, 6	
4	Genesis 7, 8	Psalms 9, 10	Matthew 7, 8	
5	Genesis 9, 10	Psalms 11, 13	Matthew 9, 10	
6	Genesis 11, 12	Psalms 14, 17	Matthew 11, 12	
7	Genesis 13, 14	Psalms 18, 17	Matthew 13, 14	
8	Genesis 15, 16	Psalms 19, 18	Matthew 15, 16	
9	Genesis 17, 18	Psalms 19, 21	Matthew 17, 18	
10	Genesis 20, 19	Psalms 23, 22	Matthew 20, 19	
11	Genesis 22, 23	Psalms 23, 25	Matthew 22, 23	
12	Genesis 24, 23	Psalms 26, 28	Matthew 24, 23	
13	Genesis 25, 24	Psalms 29, 30	Matthew 25, 24	
14	Genesis 26, 25	Psalms 31, 31	Matthew 26, 25	
15	Genesis 27, 26	Psalms 32, 32	Matthew 27, 26	
16	Genesis 28, 27	Psalms 33, 33	Matthew 28, 27	
17	Genesis 29, 28	Psalms 34, 34	Matthew 29, 28	
18	Genesis 30, 29	Psalms 35, 35	Matthew 30, 29	
19	Genesis 31, 30	Psalms 36, 36	Matthew 31, 30	
20	Genesis 32, 31	Psalms 37, 37	Matthew 32, 31	
21	Genesis 33, 32	Psalms 38, 38	Matthew 33, 32	
22	Genesis 34, 33	Psalms 39, 39	Matthew 34, 33	
23	Genesis 35, 34	Psalms 40, 40	Matthew 35, 34	
24	Genesis 36, 35	Psalms 41, 43	Matthew 36, 35	
25	Genesis 37, 36	Psalms 42, 43	Matthew 37, 36	
26	Genesis 38, 37	Psalms 43, 44	Matthew 38, 37	
27	Genesis 39, 38	Psalms 44, 45	Matthew 39, 38	
28	Genesis 40, 39	Psalms 45, 46	Matthew 40, 39	
29	Genesis 41, 40	Psalms 46, 47	Matthew 41, 40	
30	Genesis 42, 41	Psalms 48, 50	Matthew 42, 41	
31	Genesis 43, 42	Psalms 51, 52	Matthew 43, 42	
	Exodus 1, 2	Psalms 53, 55	Romans 1, 2	
	Exodus 3, 4	Psalms 56, 57	Romans 3, 4	

February.

Day of the Month.	CHAPTERS TO BE READ.			
1	Exodus 5, 6	Psalms 58, 59	Romans 10, 11	
2	Exodus 7, 8	Psalms 60, 61	Romans 13, 12	
3	Exodus 9, 9	Psalms 62, 63	Romans 15, 14	
4	Exodus 10, 10	Psalms 64, 65	Mark 15, 16	
5	Exodus 11, 12	Psalms 66, 67	Mark 1, 1	
6	Exodus 13, 14	Psalms 68, 68	Mark 2, 2	
7	Exodus 15, 15	Psalms 69, 69	Mark 3, 3	
8	Exodus 16, 16	Psalms 70, 71	Mark 4, 4	
9	Exodus 17, 17	Psalms 72, 72	Mark 5, 5	
10	Exodus 19, 18	Psalms 73, 73	Mark 6, 6	
11	Exodus 20, 19	Psalms 74, 74	Mark 7, 7	
12	Exodus 21, 21	Psalms 75, 75	Mark 8, 8	
13	Exodus 22, 22	Psalms 76, 76	Mark 9, 9	
14	Exodus 23, 23	Psalms 77, 77	Mark 10, 10	
15	Exodus 24, 24	Psalms 78, 78	Mark 11, 11	
16	Exodus 25, 25	Psalms 79, 80	Mark 12, 12	
17	Exodus 26, 26	Psalms 81, 82	Mark 13, 13	
18	Exodus 27, 27	Psalms 83, 84	Mark 14, 14	
19	Exodus 28, 28	Psalms 85, 86	Mark 15, 15	
20	Exodus 29, 29	Psalms 87, 88	Mark 16, 16	
21	Exodus 30, 30	Psalms 89, 89	1 Cor. 1, 2	
22	Exodus 31, 31	Psalms 90, 91	1 Cor. 3, 3	
23	Exodus 32, 32	Psalms 92, 93	1 Cor. 4, 4	
24	Exodus 33, 33	Psalms 94, 95	1 Cor. 5, 5	
25	Exodus 34, 34	Psalms 96, 99	1 Cor. 6, 6	
26	Exodus 35, 35	Psalms 100, 101	1 Cor. 7, 7	
27	Exodus 36, 36	Psalms 102, 102	1 Cor. 8, 8	
28	Exodus 37, 37	Psalms 103, 103	1 Cor. 9, 9	
29	Exodus 38, 38	Psalms 104, 104	1 Cor. 10, 10	
30	Exodus 39, 39		1 Cor. 11, 11	
31	Exodus 40, 40		1 Cor. 12, 13	

Day of the Month.

CHAPTERS TO BE READ.

1	Leviticus 5,	6	Psalm 105	1 Cor.	14
2	.....	7	.....	.....	15
3	.....	8	.....	.....	16
4	.....	9	108, 109	2 Cor.	1
5	.....	10	.....	.....	2
6	.....	11	110, 112	.....	3, 6, 7
7	.....	12	.....	.....	5, 6, 7
8	.....	13	113, 114	.....	8, 9
9	.....	14	115, 116	.....	10, 11
10	.....	15	117, 118	.....	12, 13
11	.....	16	119, v40	Luke	1
12	.....	17	v. 41-80	.....	2
13	.....	18	v. 81-128	.....	3
14	.....	19	v. 129-76	.....	4
15	.....	20	.....	.....	5
16	.....	21	120, 124	.....	6
17	.....	22	125, 127	.....	7
18	.....	23	128, 130	.....	8
19	.....	24	131, 134	.....	9
20	25	135, 136	10
21	26	137, 139	11
22	27	140, 142	12
23	143, 144	13, 14
24	145, 147	15
25	148, 150	16
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March.

Day of the Month.

CHAPTERS TO BE READ.

1	Numbers 15	Proverbs 11	Luke 24
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April.

May.

Day of the Month.	CHAPTERS TO BE READ.			
1	Deut.	Eccles.	Acts	9
2	10
3	12
4	Song	13
5	15
6	17
7	19
8	20
9	22
10	24
11	26
12	Isaiah	27
13	28
14	29
15	30
16	31
17	32
18	33
19	34
20	44
21	1
22	2
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25	5
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28	8
29	9
30	10
31	11

June.

Day of the Month.	CHAPTERS TO BE READ.			
1	Joshua	Isaiah	Heb.	6
2	8
3	9
4	10
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12	19
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24	31
25	1
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30	6

July.

Day of the Month.	CHAPTERS TO BE READ.			
1	1 Sam.	13	Isaiah 56, 57	Rev. Matt. 21, 22
2	14	.....	.....
3	15	.....	.....
4	16	.....	.....
5	17	.....	.....
6	18	.....	.....
7	19	.....	.....
8	20	.....	.....
9	21, 22	.....	.....
10	23
11	24	<i>Jeremiah</i>
12	25
13	26, 27
14	28
15	29, 30
16	31, 32
17	2 Sam.	1
18	2
19	3
20	4
21	5
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24	8, 9
25	10
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August.

Day of the Month.	CHAPTERS TO BE READ.			
1	2 Sam.	18	<i>Jeremiah</i>	22
2	19	23
3	20, 21	24
4	22	25
5	23	26
6	24	27
7	25	28
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September.

Day of the Month.	CHAPTERS TO BE READ.			
1	2 Kings	Lament.	1 Cor.	15
2	16
3	2 Cor.	2
4	2
5	1, 4
6	3, 4
7	5, 7
8	8, 9
9	10, 11
10	12, 13
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October.

Day of the Month.	CHAPTERS TO BE READ.			
1	1 Chron.	Eschiel	Luke	24
2	Gal.	1, 2
3	3, 4
4	5, 6
5	1, 2
6	3, 4
7	5, 6
8	1, 2
9	3, 4
10	5, 6
11	1, 2
12	3, 4
13	5, 6
14	1, 2
15	3, 4
16	5, 6
17	1, 2
18	3, 4
19	5, 6
20	1, 2
21	3, 4
22	5, 6
23	1, 2
24	3, 4
25	5, 6
26	1, 2
27	3, 4
28	5, 6
29	1, 2
30	3, 4
31	5, 6

November.

Day of the Month.	CHAPTERS TO BE READ.			
1	2 Chron.	Daniel	Acts	10
2	11, 12
3	13
4	Hosea	.....	14, 15
5	16, 17
6	18, 19
7	20
8	Esra 1, 2	.....	.....	21, 22
9	23, 24
10	25, 26
11	27
12	28
13	Colos.	1
14	2
15	Nehemiah 1, 2	.....	.....	3, 4
16	1 Thess. 1, 2	4
17	5
18	Joel	.....	6
19	2 Thess. 1, 2	7
20	8
21	Amos	9
22	1 Tim. 1, 2, 3	3
23	4
24	2 Tim.	1, 2
25	3
26	Esther	4
27	5
28	6
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30	Obadiah	8

December.

Day of the Month.	CHAPTERS TO BE READ.			
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